

RICHARD GRENIER

# Bleeding heart hawks

I always thought it a bit of a stretch to compare Saddam Hussein with Hitler. But comparing Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic with Hitler is fanciful in the extreme, as he is just your ordinary, vicious Balkan tyrant.

And if the American people knew more about the Balkans, they'd perhaps have been less stunned by the television footage — horrible as it is — of emaciated Bosnian prisoners in Serbian detention camps.

Yes, these are the "Slavic Brothers" (so called at the time), who, after the great victory of Serbs, Bulgars, Montenegrins and Greeks against the Turkish Empire in 1912 in a series of bloody battles virtually driving the Turks out of Europe, instantly turned against each other (Romania obligingly joining the band in a series of equally bloody battles fought a whole new war among themselves.

Canada's Major Gen. Lewis MacKenzie, departing as commander of UN forces in Sarajevo, says he's never in his life seen such intensity of hatred as among these people. But he is exactly what visitors to the Balkans said early in this century: "enormous hatreds among neighboring neighbors, feuds and raids of village against village, wholesale military, savage massacres of whole communities.

MacKenzie said disdainfully that the entire Balkan region of bloody anarchy, of "shreds and tatters," was

"not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier."

Although a little embarrassing, it's a fairly safe bet that before the present troubles all most Americans knew of Sarajevo was that it was the site of the 1984 winter Olympic Games. (And it shouldn't be lost on believers in the international good will created by sports that Serbs and Bosnians are now killing each other at the foot of the 1984 bobsled run.)

On a higher level, a distinguished

and learned newspaper columnist informed us we should be wary of underrating the Serbs because these people struggled with the Turks "for 1,000 years." Since the Turks arrived in Serbia in the 14th century, this misses the mark by more than 500 years. A comparable chronological error in the Western Hemisphere would have us Indians sitting in our wigwams waiting for the arrival of this new fellow Christopher Columbus.

As for "Bosnia," American ignorance is more understandable (take it from one who's been over the land), because there really is no Bosnia. Although we've now recognized it as a sovereign state, Bosnia is an artificial entity. There are no Bosnians.

Bosnia was a satrapy of the old Turkish Empire, which, as the Empire fell to pieces, became an administrative unit of the "Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes" that

Woodrow Wilson's principle of "self-determination" gave to the world in 1918. After a stormy period in the 1920s, replete with political turmoil and assassinations, the country's name was begrudgingly expanded to "Yugoslavia" (South Slavia). Who is fighting now in Bosnia? Certainly not Bosnians. The Orthodox Christians who live there call themselves Serbs. The Roman Catholics call themselves Croats. And the Muslims call themselves . . . well, Muslims, because, as descendants of Slavic peasants converted to Islam in bygone days by Turkish overlords, there is no nearby national or sub-national group to which they can attach themselves.

The Muslims of Bosnia speak Serbo-Croatian, of course, but so does everybody else, and it doesn't mean a thing. And one of the reasons few of the Balkan peoples fit Woodrow Wilson's idea of nationhood is that much of 19th century nationalism just passed the Balkans by. In Bosnia today, abetted by their traditional tribal bloodmindedness, these people are engaged in a savage, premodern religious struggle reminiscent of the 17th century's ferocious Thirty Years War — which wiped out more than half the population of Germany.

America in recent months has seen the rise of the "bleeding-heart hawk," an anomalous human breed that will certainly be first to show the white feather if the going ever gets rough. These people have watched for months devastating television footage of people dying in far greater numbers in Somalia, but now that those suffering are Europe-

ans they've worked themselves into a positive frenzy of moralism.

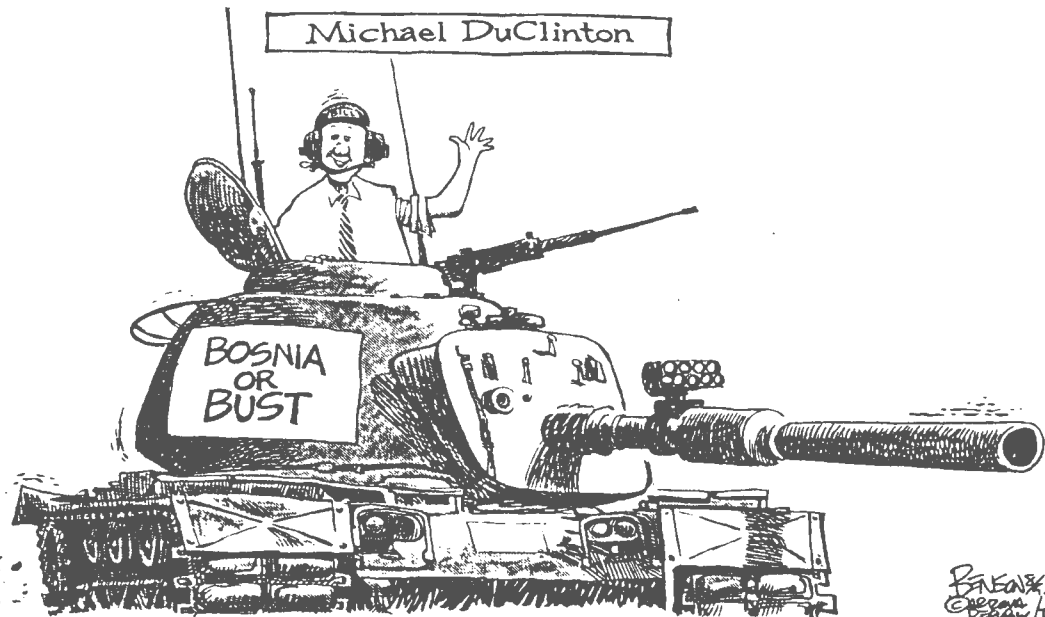
Margaret Thatcher, conqueror of the Falklands, is obviously not a bleeding-heart hawk. But there's something unseemly about this woman lecturing us so stridently about America's moral duty to assume leadership in settling what's after all a European affair — and one difficult to imagine destabilizing the whole postcommunist world.

Slobodan Milosevic, as disgusting as are his methods of "ethnic cleansing," is not out to conquer Europe, or even the world's oil supply. He has not embarked on a policy of extermination (Auschwitz), but one of extraordinarily cruel deportation, attempting to build a homogeneous "Greater Serbia" in the manner of many another brutal national leader before him.

Canada's Gen. MacKenzie, moreover, has often been misrepresented. The favorite Serb weapon in the hills around Sarajevo, he says, are easily concealed and movable "backyard mortars" against which air strikes would have little effect.

Worse, he stresses, the more we talk of strong-arm methods against the Serbs, the more Bosnian authorities are convinced that heaven-sent outside forces, like the cavalry, are going to gallop to their rescue.

Gen. MacKenzie has never seen a military confrontation end without both sides sitting down together, and Bosnian leaders, although they'll talk with officials in far Belgrade, at this writing still won't talk to the Serbs surrounding them in the hills. According to Gen. MacKenzie, we're on exactly the wrong track.



Richard Grenier is a columnist for The Washington Times.

WP: 8-15-92

*William Raspberry*

# Indifferent to Suffering—or Just Helpless?

Americans, it is being said, are indifferent to pain and suffering that don't affect us directly. The evidence: our virtual paralysis in the face of ethnic slaughter in Bosnia and Hercegovina, the enforced starvation of thousands of peasants in Somalia and, to a lesser degree, the plight of Haiti's desperate boat people.

There is also a corollary to the accusation: The less European the victims, the greater the indifference.

There's truth in the charge, but maybe less than some of us think. Unquestionably Americans (like people everywhere in the world) tend to care about tragedy in the proportion to which they can identify with its victims: in geography, in culture, in mutual interest. Make the Haitians white and America would not be plucking them out of the ocean to send them back home. Transform the besieged Bosnian Muslims into Western-looking Christians and there'd be a greater urgency to find a way to save them.

But that's not all of it. It is true that America's leaders have had

little to say about what is happening to Somalia's victims of famine and civil war. But that silence is not just a white phenomenon. Maybe the Congressional Black Caucus, the Organization of African Unity and other defenders of ethnic interests have been busy on the Somalian question, but I haven't seen the evidence in public statements, press releases or insistent demands for action.

Has indifference crossed the color line?

I don't think so. What is at work may have little to do with indifference and a great deal to do with impotence. We don't know what to do, or how (or to whom) to do it.

Our initial responses to all these catastrophes seem on reflection to be either inadequate or wrong. Take in the Haitian boat people rather than send them back to an uncertain fate? Yes, of course. But then what? Let bravery substitute for normal requests for asylum? Grant temporary refugee status to anyone who manages to get beyond Haiti's territorial limits? Besides, there is the fact that the more

desperate souls we pluck from the sea and settle in the United States, the more will be tempted into the sea.

And besides all that, the Haitian refugees aren't the problem; Haiti's political situation is. The popularly elected (but by many accounts brutal) Jean-Bertrand Aristide has been deposed by a military junta and is now in exile. International sanctions aimed at forcing the junta to restore the priest-president to power have the unintended but undeniable effect of further impoverishing the peasants. So do we drop the sanctions? Arm the refugees? Have the U.S. Marines escort Aristide back to Haiti and protect him there?

We don't know what to do.

Every proposal for military action in the former Yugoslavia triggers its own set of dilemmas. Do we airdrop guns and ammunition to permit the Muslims to defend themselves a little longer against a brutal "ethnic cleansing"? Do we send United Nations troops to rescue them, knowing how treacherous and effectively defended is the

mountainous terrain those troops would have to attack? Or do we merely beg leave (so far denied) to give them safe passage out of their homeland—in effect making the "ethnic cleansing" voluntary?

If the Somalian difficulties stemmed primarily from the famine that has afflicted the region, our response would be fairly easy to figure out, though not necessarily of much long-term help. Remember the worldwide response to African starvation a few years ago? It began only after TV footage put the plight of the starving millions on our conscience, and it ended (though the hunger didn't) with everybody singing "We Are the World."

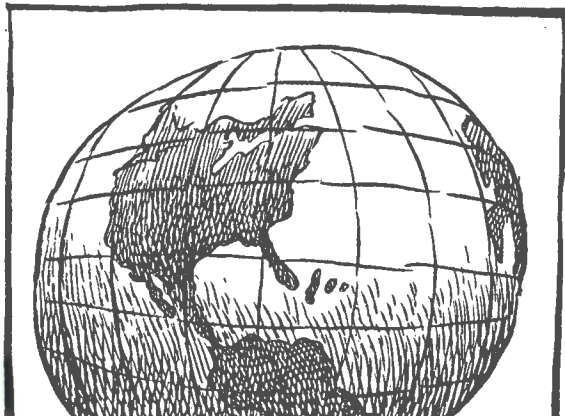
But famine only exacerbates the bloody clan-based warfare that has wracked that pitiful neighbor of Ethiopia. People are dying, because they are being killed, because there is no food and because food is being kept, quite deliberately, from them. It isn't indifference that keeps us from responding. The International Red Cross, which is devoting a third of its worldwide budget to Somalian

relief, says a third of the population—as many as 2 million people—are threatened with starvation.

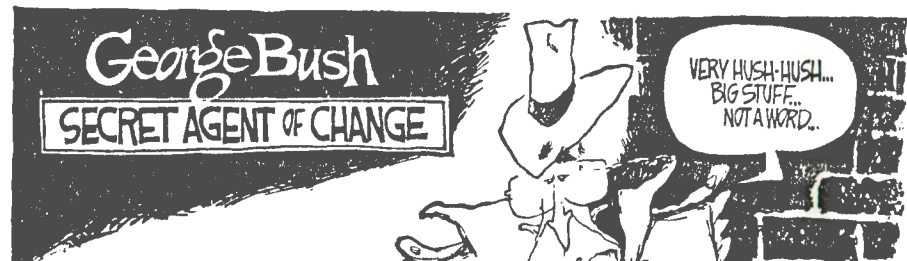
So complete is the world's impotence at fashioning an end to this awful situation that just the other day we were reduced to cheering the announcement that a U.N. official had persuaded one of Somalia's main warlords to permit the delivery of food supplies to the starving masses. Thousands of tons of internationally donated food have sat unused in port-side facilities, almost within eyesight of starving peasants.

The warlord's concession is, of course, good news—lifesaving news—to those whose lives hang in the balance. But it is no solution to the civil war—anarchy, really—that has marked Somalia since the January 1991 overthrow of President Mohamed Siad Barre.

The difficulties are exacerbated by race, culture and, yes, a degree of indifference—but by nothing so much as sheer impotence. We don't know what to do.



## Drawing Board





# ARNOLD BEICHMAN Sat. Aug 15, '92 WT

With a harsh bluntness not heard around the White House, Whitehall or the Quai d'Orsay, the AFL-CIO has lashed out at Serbia and President Slobodan Milosevic "and his neo-communist government ... for instigating the violence" that erupted more than a year ago in the now fragmented Yugoslavia.

The anti-Serb statement, which appears in the current bulletin of the AFL-CIO Department of International Affairs, says the Milosevic regime is being "justly blamed" for Serbian atrocities that have grown in intensity and horror, including concentration camps.

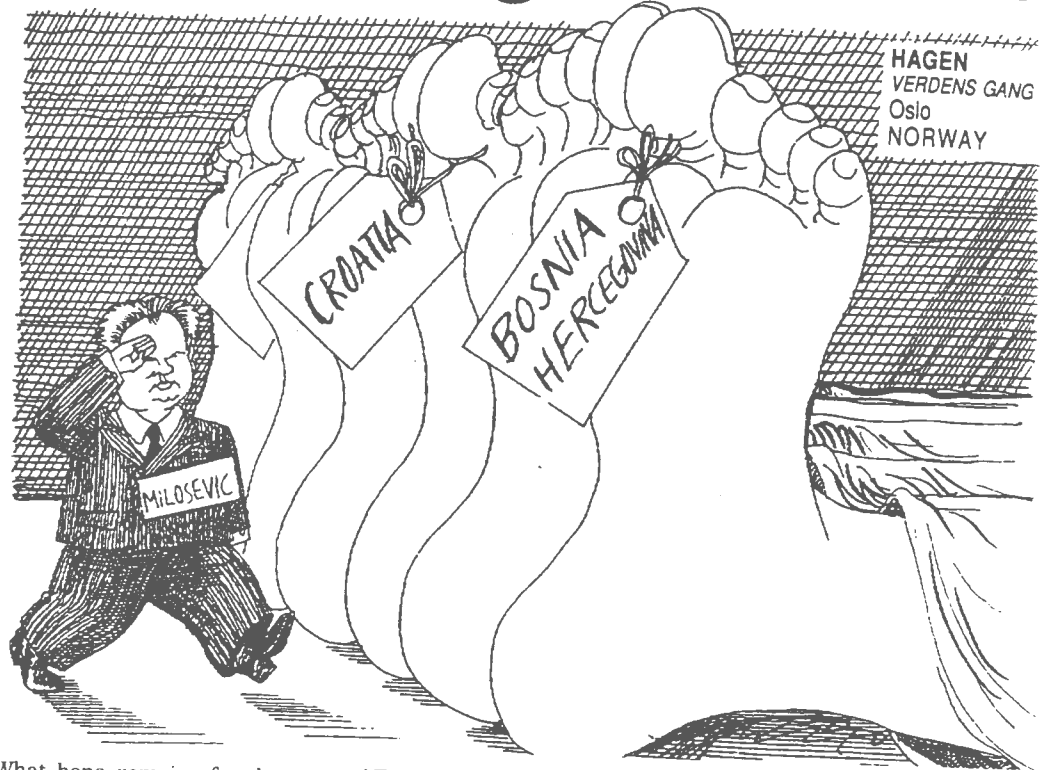
"While communist regimes have fallen all across Eastern and Central Europe," the AFL-CIO said, "Milosevic has successfully used traditional communist control tactics — police crackdowns, restricted access to independent sources of information, and manipulation of ethnic antagonisms — to hold on to power."

Such singling out of the regime's communist background and of Mr. Milosevic himself has not been sufficiently stressed. Yet despite the century-old traditional interethnic Balkan feuds, one cannot easily write off the almost 50 years of Yugoslav communist totalitarian rule and expansionism as an irrelevant factor in determining war guilt.

The AFL-CIO revealed that the economic situation in Serbia proper is worsening as international economic sanctions take hold. Inflation is so severe that store merchandise is being marked up twice a day. Some workers are no longer being paid at all. Instead, they are offered worthless shares in closed factories. Theoretically, workers now have the right to strike, but the right is so restricted that those on strike end up forced to work at reduced hours and no pay. Intimidating ultranationalist mobs through the streets of Belgrade and do as they please without interference, most recently beating up striking taxi drivers, according to the AFL-CIO.

Arnold Beichman, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, is a columnist for *The Washington Times*.

## Bosnia through labor's lens



What hope remains for democracy in a post-communist Serbia depends upon a fledgling movement, "Democratic Movement of Serbia," which called a successful strike and opposition rally at the end of June. The movement is led by the independent "Nezavisnost" confederation of trade unions, headed by Branislav Canak, and religious leaders, students and intellectuals. It was this group, supported by the AFL-CIO, which boycotted Mr. Milosevic's bid last May to gain legitimacy through what were described as fraudulent elections. A silent group of 150,000 Serbs observed the boycott by marching through the Serbian capital carrying a mile-long black banner. There have also been sporadic anti-war demonstrations since the fighting began, including protests by mothers of Serb regulars being sent to the Croatian front.

The Democratic Movement, with

AFL-CIO backing, is soliciting from trade unions abroad food and medicines for Muslim, Croat and Jewish refugees. It has announced as its three basic demands:

- (1) Resignation of the Milosevic government, the Assembly and all other officials.
- (2) New elections and a new constitutional assembly.
- (3) Economic reform.

Whether peace could break out among the warring republics of ex-Yugoslavia if President Milosevic and his neo-communists were ousted is not easy to answer, even though their potential successors are not former communist leaders. The yearlong civil war has created such ghastly memories and has so intensified age-old hatreds against Serbia among the non-Serb peoples that it is hard to imagine the successor republics can be turned into lands of stability and islands of freedom in the short term.

There is no doubt that a lot of the Serbian people are infuriated by the war and by the strong anti-Serb feeling in Europe and the United States. Strikes and demonstrations grade clearly show that the from unanimous Serb opinion continue a war that could easily into Kosovo with its 90 percent Albanian population, or to Voivodina a concentration of Hungarians to Macedonia, whose border with Greece is a potential hot spot.

The U.N. Security Council seeking an end to this genocidal civil war raises a question to which little thought has been given: Who will succeed the communist Mr. Milosevic and his bloody thugs if they are ever ousted? The "Democratic Movement of Serbia," may be the vehicle that the Western and U.N. encouragement could begin the process of these tormented lands.

## HART

From page E1

that Mr. Bradley, estimable as he is, made a boring speech, and Mr. Cuomo reminded everyone that he can speak but not pay the bills in New York. The Democrats' overall message was that Mr. Bush is not much good, but everyone already knew that.

When the Republican "A" team comes to bat in Houston, the TV audience will see a much more impres-

marked that the imminence of execution concentrates the mind. The imminence of a Democrat in the White House will bring the "A" team to Houston.

Pat Buchanan, who dramatically exposed Mr. Bush's vulnerability, is scheduled to give a prime-time stem-winder and will lure back the wandering "Reagan Democrats."

Defense Secretary Richard Cheney will be on display. They will not have to ask: "Do you want Patsy Schroeder to be your Secretary of Defense?"

## ROBERTS

From page E1

tion, and the exclusion of capital gains from the alternative minimum tax.

These incentives can be safely expected to boost the economy's growth rate by 1 percentage point, and the growth dividend on both the revenue and spending sides pays for much of the tax cut. The higher growth rate recovers part of the rev-

cuts defense spending by an additional \$21 billion per year, an offset federal assets. As the program utilizes only half of the savings, the Reason Four program has shown to be feasible, more aggressive deficit reduction is possible. The federal government's and mismanages massive areas of real estate, grazing, mining and oil rights, airwave assets that could be sold.

If these assets were put in a productive, tax-paying hands, the

Sim: 8/12/92

## History Returns to Yugoslavia

William Pfaff's latest assessment of the Yugoslav crisis ("603 Years After the Battle of Kosovo Field," Aug. 3) is charged with passion and indignation. It lacks only one thing, accuracy.

According to Mr. Pfaff, the entire order of Europe is threatened by the specter and example of Serbian aggression, and he offers us Munich as an analogy. I don't agree.

Eastern Europe was never a part of the "Western" order of things. It was handed over to Stalin and the Communists in 1945, and they kept that entire part of the continent under an iron-fisted rule for decades. Nationalist sentiments were unnaturally repressed, with resentment building steadily beneath the surface.

When Communist rule collapsed, these inter-ethnic hatreds soon exploded throughout Eastern Europe. Also, let us not forget that

in the case of Yugoslavia, the dictatorship of Tito was eagerly bankrolled by the West for decades.

In a very important sense, what is taking place now in Yugoslavia is the natural force of history re-asserting itself.

As for an analogy, I'll offer you two.

The first is the early days of independent India, as it violently split into Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India. Incompetent, rival native elites allowed the situation to degenerate into local, communal warfare.

Once this started, it was nearly impossible to stop. Casualties soared into the millions. And the British, as the former colonial power, couldn't get out soon enough.

The second analogy is our own American Civil War. Recall such unpleasant instances as Grant's starvation of Vicksburg, the inhu-

manity of Southern and Northern prison camps, Sheridan's rape of the Shenandoah and of course Sherman's destruction of the heartland of three Southern states.

No, the Yugoslav situation does not threaten the Western order of things, nor does it threaten Europe unless, of course, foreign powers intercede and expand the conflict.

It should be viewed as violent civil war, entry into which must be avoided at all costs. One can be certain that an attempted international rescue of Sarajevo, with attendant air strikes, would not accomplish anything except to further enrage the Serb forces.

It would be as if the European powers in 1864 had threatened Sherman and Grant, ordering them to lift their inhumane sieges of Atlanta and Petersburg.

**Drage Vukceovich**  
**Catonsville**

# Trappings of a treacherous quagmire

The crisis in Bosnia has come at a most inconvenient time for President Bush. As de facto leader of the world's nations, he may be forced either to acquiesce in the atrocities the Serbs are committing against the Bosnians or put an end to them by the use of as much brute force as necessary.

Still, presidents are rightly expected to make these tough calls, even during campaigns. Thus far, it seems to me, Mr. Bush has gotten it about right. Working through the United Nations (a fig leaf if there ever was one), and exhorting the major nations of Western Europe to play the leading role, he has increased the pressure on the Serbs to the point of approving airstrikes if necessary to ensure that humanitarian aid gets through to Bosnia.

At the same time, he has resisted growing demands for any escalation of the pressure in ways that might require the commitment of American ground troops. For one thing, Mr. Bush knows very well how fast

*We blithely ignore the slave labor camps of China, the ongoing barbarisms of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and the unspeakable cruelties of Fidel Castro. Why? Chiefly because the world's TV cameras have not yet been able to film them.*

American public opinion can change when the bodies of American soldiers start coming home. For another, he understands the enormous difference between the threat Saddam Hussein represented to the global economy in August 1990 and the cruel but internationally irrelevant atrocities that occur in Balkan wars.

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the whole Bosnian crisis has been the reappearance of outright Wilsonian idealism as a major feature of commentary on the subject. The lead editorial in the Aug. 17-24 issue of the New Republic (titled "Rescue Bosnia") declares that "The United States ought firmly to explain to its allies that we and they have a vital interest in the sanctity of internationally recognized borders."

Now "vital interest," as the New Republic's editors know, or ought to know, is a diplomatic code phrase for an interest for which the nation asserting it is prepared to go to war. One good recent example was its use by Jimmy Carter in proclaiming the "Carter Doctrine," which rightly warned the Soviet Union in 1980 that Soviet military intrusion into the Persian Gulf would be considered an assault on the "vital interests" of the United States. Moscow got the message, and never set foot in the region.

Is "the sanctity of internationally recognized borders" henceforth to be considered a "vital interest" of the United States? Are the world's nations supposed to freeze forever inside their present borders, on pain of war with America?

Ah, but the Serbs have been guilty of atrocities! So, it seems,

they have. But the world is awash in atrocities. We blithely ignore the slave labor camps of China, the politically inspired mass starvation in East Africa, the ongoing barbarisms of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and the unspeakable cruelties of Fidel Castro. Why? Chiefly because the world's TV cameras have not yet been able to film them.

Instead, we are treated to endless footage of Bosnian prisoners grouped photographically behind a barbed wire fence, with the boniest of them (one of the few, coincidentally, without a shirt) in the center foreground. Thanks to the wonders of modern science, we actually hear one man whisper in the world's ear that he doesn't want to lie about camp conditions and dares not speak the truth.

To emphasize the parallel with Nazi Germany still further, a Serbian expression, translated as "ethnic cleansing," is trotted out and compared to "the final solution."

Please understand: I condemn the Serbians' atrocities as much as anyone. But where will those TV cameras be, I wonder, when the body bags start arriving at Dover Air Force base? And how many moralistic commentators will remember, on that gray afternoon, how loudly they blew the trumpet back in August?

*William A. Rusher, a senior fellow of the Claremont Institute, is a nationally syndicated columnist.*

## THE FILLMORE FILE

ONE MORE BUS TRIP LIKE THAT ONE, AND MY FANXY WEENIE IMAGE WILL BE A THING OF THE PAST, RIGHT, GUYS?



LOVED YOUR PLAN TO GO OVER AND KICK SOME SERBIAN PATOOTIE, WILLIE!

AND HOW 'BOUT MY LINE ABOUT CALLIN' OUT THE ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD?



PURE GENIUS, SIR. WE COULD POSE YOU IN A TANK...

...MAYBE I SHOULD DECLARE WAR ON LOUISIANA!...



MIGHT HELP ARKANSAS' ECONOMY, SIR.

by Bruce Tinsley



*Jim Hoagland*

## Two Shotguns For Bosnia

America, Russia and the NATO allies have begun to sketch an endgame for the cruel and bloody war in Bosnia.

They still lack the negotiated settlement that is the centerpiece of the emerging big-power strategy. For the first time it is possible to see how this war could end by a truce instead of a final bloodbath on the battlefield.

U.N. negotiators are trying to squeeze a political accord out of the warring Serbs, Bosnians and Croats. If they succeed—and everyone acknowledges this is a tremendous “if”—the major powers may provide troops for a large multinational military force that would be organized by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on behalf of the United Nations.

That's a new world force. It would possess and be able to use muscle that past U.N. operations have lacked. It would engage the prestige and resources of the world's two greatest nuclear powers working together. And it would provide NATO with a role and an experience for a future: containing the world's most dangerous civil wars and ethnic conflicts instead of continuing to fight the Cold War.

This vision may remain no more than a vision—a grand international idea that will be blocked by the ambitions, fears and hatreds of local forces in Bosnia, fighting out centuries of conflicting memories and claims that outsiders can barely understand, much less resolve.

But the intensifying discussions about this vision suggest that the international community has begun to wrestle seriously with its failure in ex-Yugoslavia and with the questions that the Bosnian conflict poses for global stability. It is no longer possible to treat that conflict as a brutish but isolated local war without strategic meaning.

It will be of small comfort to the people trapped in that small hell, but the blood and tears of Bosnia have washed away the euphoria and the flawed sense of historical determinism that sprang from the end of the Cold War and the triumph of Operation Desert Storm.

The suffering of the Bosnians makes clear that it is not enough to proclaim a new world order; it must be built. The wars of ex-Yugoslavia suggest in fact that life is too arbitrary for there to be a new world order. We must settle for the next best thing: some new rules of the game beyond the Cold War and a clear international willingness to punish those who flagrantly break them.

Who would do the punishing or, perhaps more important, whose threat of punishment would be sufficiently credible to deter new aggression and atrocities? The multinational force now being discussed to enforce the U.N. guarantees for a peace accord in Bosnia sounds like a candidate to me.

A standing U.N. force run by NATO with American and Russian participation might restore the image of an international community ready to counter local aggression that flourished briefly two years ago after Desert Storm. That image of deterrence quickly disappeared in the mountains of Bosnia.

George Bush assumed that the overwhelming American military power demonstrated in expelling Iraq's army in Kuwait would automatically deter aggression elsewhere. But Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic calculated that despite Desert Storm—or perhaps because of its unfinished nature—America and its European allies did not have the political will to oppose his ambitions on the ground. Milosevic drowned Bush's new world order in Bosnian blood.

Although tentative, several key steps have been taken to bring this force into being:

The way was cleared for a significant NATO role in the Balkans on Jan. 4, when President Bush persuaded French President Francois Mitterrand to agree in principle to an ad hoc NATO command for a peace-enforcement army. Mitterrand's assent, which has not been publicly disclosed, lifted a French veto on an alliance command.

France and Britain have also agreed with the Clinton administration that the no-fly zone over Bosnia approved by the United Nations in October would be enforced by alliance aircraft once the U.N. peace plan is accepted. From Russia Washington has obtained approval of tightening the trade embargo that is aimed primarily at Serbia and a public statement that Russia is considering contributing troops to the multinational force.

The U.N. peace effort is at a make or break point in these final, worsening weeks of the Bosnian winter. Casualties are again mounting among the Muslims, whose hopes for survival are pinned on American actions. The new activism of Washington and Moscow introduce uncertainties into the calculations of the Serbs, who depend on Russia for diplomatic support.

“This is like arranging a shotgun marriage, except that you need two shotguns,” says Martti Ahtisaari, the experienced Finnish diplomat who is helping design and sell the U.N.-sponsored Vance-Owen plan to divide power and territory in Bosnia to get a cease-fire. “A Russian shotgun gives us a better chance.”

Despite all its shortcomings the Vance-Owen effort can serve as a useful device to stop the killing in Bosnia. Settling for that modest goal is an acknowledgment of failure by the major powers, who have not created a new world order. But pray that the U.N. effort leads to an effective multinational peacemaking force that could deter future Bosnians. It is a long shot, but one worth pursuing.

# It's Not a Holocaust

## Rhetoric and Reality in Bosnia

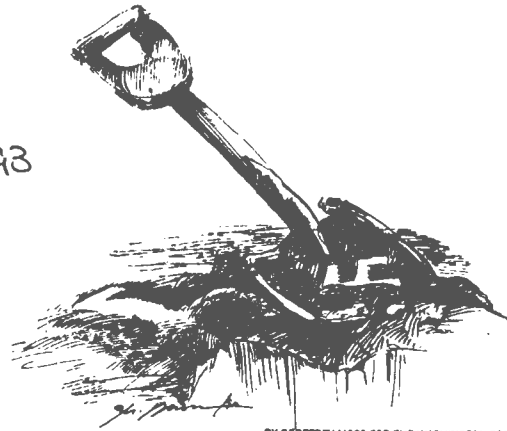
WP; 2-28-93

By Richard Cohen

**L**AST AUGUST, an ad appeared in the New York Times. "STOP THE DEATH CAMPS," it was headlined. "An Open Letter to World Leaders." Citing media accounts, the ad accused the Serbs of operating camps "in which humans, forcibly incarcerated because of their ethnicity, are once again being systematically slaughtered." It went on to liken the Serb camps of Omarska and Brcko to the more familiar ones of Auschwitz and Treblinka and asked the question: "Is it possible that 50 years after the Holocaust, the nations of the world, including our own, will stand by and do nothing, pretending we are helpless." It was signed by the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League.

The ad was typical—typical of other ads placed by Jewish organizations, typical of their press releases, typical of the arguments and the pleas they have made to both the Bush and Clinton administrations. It was characteristic also of arguments made by a bevy of col-

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BY GEOFFREY MOSS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

umnists and editorial writers who find U.S. policy toward the former Yugoslavia both flaccid and immoral. In the New York Times columns of Anthony Lewis George Bush was compared to Neville Chamberlain the British prime minister who appeased Hitler. Other writers have used the words "holocaust" and "genocide" to suggest that Europe has seen "ethnic cleansing" before. Elie Wiesel gave it a name: the Holocaust.

The arguments advanced by these Jewish organizations are important for two reasons. In the first place

See BOSNIA, C4, Col. 1

# It's Not a Holocaust

WP; 28-93

BOSNIA, From C1

they represent a constituency of extraordinary political sagacity, energy and influence. That helps to account for the urgency given to the plight of Bosnia on America's editorial and op-ed pages that does not seem to be shared by the population at large. It also explains why Jewish organizations, and the intelligentsia in general, seems so much more exercised about the situation in the former Yugoslavia than, say, about ethnic fighting in Ethiopia or in the exotically named republics of the former Soviet Union.

Even Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress and someone who has likened the Bosnia of today to the Europe of the Holocaust era, notes that American-Jewish organizations were far less indignant about the so-called Cambodian auto-genocide of the Khmer Rouge, which may have taken as many as two million lives. By contrast, the war in the former Yugoslavia has killed anywhere from 20,000 to 100,000 people.

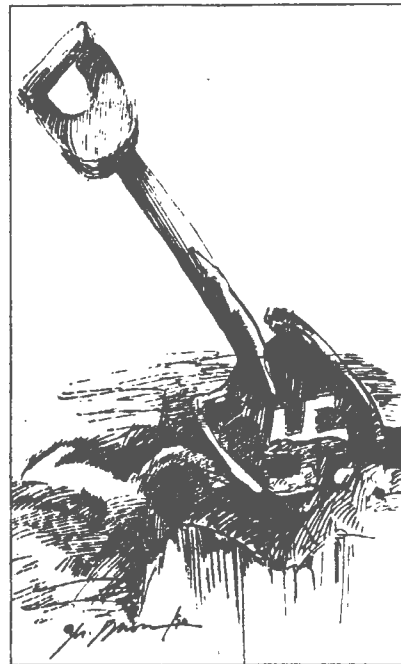
Second—and more important—if these organizations are right, then the United States and its Western European allies really have pursued a morally vacuous and supine policy. For once the labels "genocide" or "holocaust" are attached to a government policy, once detention camps of some kind are likened to the Nazi death camps of Auschwitz and Treblinka, then human beings with an ounce of morality have an obligation to intercede—no matter what the consequences. "Never again" is not a mere slogan. It is a solemn obligation.

For that reason, it's imperative to exam-

ine whether these claims are correct. That would be true under any circumstances, but it's particularly true when it comes to events in Bosnia. If the United States is somehow eventually going to intervene, it must do so on the basis of reason, not emotion—especially if the emotion is based on a misreading of events, a headlong rush from certain particulars (brutal detention camps) to an unwarranted generalization (genocide). If that is indeed the case—and I think it is—it is nevertheless also understandable. The similarities between today and yesterday are unmistakable.

**T**he Bosnian Muslims are yet another non-Christian European people. They are loathed by the Serbs mostly for what might be called tribal reasons (the Muslims, Croats and Serbs are all Slavs who speak Serbo-Croatian), not their politics or ideology. The Serbs have established detention camps, have committed unspeakable horrors and have given their policy the Holocaust-suggestive name of "ethnic cleansing." Moreover, the Bosnian Muslims are more or less the innocent victims of Serbian aggression, and it is they, not the Serbs, who have lost territory. It's the Serbs who are besieging Sarajevo, randomly shelling the civilian population, inflicting a torture on innocent people that, really, is unimaginable to most Americans. And, yes, to concede or at least acknowledge a kind of ethnocentrism, these events are happening (once again) in Europe and not in some place where, as much as we don't want to admit it, we half-expect people to be more casual about human life.

But for all of that, there are clear differences between the Bosnia of today and the Europe of the Holocaust era. In the first



BY GEOFFREY MOSS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

place, the Jews of Europe had neither a state nor an army. The Bosnian Muslims have both—and their army has, in fact, managed to stop the Serbs for the time being. Second, ethnic cleansing, while indefensible, is not genocide, the attempt to eradicate a people. It is something else—an effort to rid certain Bosnian areas of Muslims. It has been accompanied by killing and terror, but the Serbs would be content for the Muslims simply to leave what they consider to be Serbian areas. The eradication of the Muslims as a people does not appear to be a goal of the Serbian Bosnians.

Moreover, it's not clear to what extent the parallels between Serbian atrocities and Nazi ones are based on fact. The so-called Serbian death camps were certainly brutal

places and almost certainly innocent people were tortured and murdered there. But the core business of Auschwitz was murder—not just the murder of captured combatants, intellectuals or nonconformists of one sort or another, but when it came to the Jews, of everyone. Similarly, while the Serbs have undoubtedly engaged in rape, that's not exactly an innovation in the Balkans. In 1903, Turkish soldiers reportedly raped 3,000 women in Macedonia, one of them 50 times before she was killed. Such barbarity predates the Holocaust and, moreover, serves as historical justification for vengeance extracted nearly a century later on people totally innocent of the original crime.

But these assertions, both as to the matter of policy and to the numbers of women raped, are hardly indisputable. Writing in *The Nation*, the human rights activist Aryeh Neier notes that a European Community study (reported on the front page of the *New York Times*) estimated that 20,000 Bosnian women and girls had been raped. "Unfortunately, the study cited no evidence to support this estimate," Neier writes. In a similar vein, Western journalists discovered that reports of starvation deaths in a particular Bosnian town—replayed over short-wave radio by a supposed witness—turned out to be a fabrication. Truth is indeed the first casualty of war.

For all of that, there's little doubt that the Serbs have behaved abominably. But so, too, on occasion have the Muslims who, when it has suited them, have broken cease-fires or placed their artillery in places where retaliation would produce civilian casualties. Still, the consensus of Western observers, journalists and diplomats alike is that the Serbs are the bad guys in this war.

**N**ot only do I have no quarrel with that assessment, but I share with many of my colleagues a presumed desire to be proven historically correct. We all feel, I think, that had we been writing in the late 1930s, we would have gleaned the truth about Hitler and alerted the world to his intentions. To even suggest to a commentator that he or she missed the story the second time around is not a criticism; it is a moral rebuke, an accusation of the most grave professional failing.

But the world is full of bad guys and usually the mostly liberal American intelligentsia has rarely, if ever, united behind U.S. military intervention. Bosnia has been different. In last November's *Commentary* magazine, Joshua Muravchik of the American Enterprise Institute observed that the war there has managed to reunite neo-conservatives and liberals. Both groups favor some sort of Western intervention, while old-line conservatives by and large do not. Some of these same liberals, though, opposed the Vietnam War, Operation Desert Storm and, really, every U.S. military intervention since the Korean War.

Earlier this month I asked Muravchik if instead of writing about neo-conservatives and liberals on the one hand and conservatives on the other, his categories should have been "Jewish" and "non-Jewish." He agreed. "It's striking that the people who are eager to do something in Bosnia are Jewish," he said. Of course, we are both generalizing here. Many non-Jews favor U.S. military intervention and some Jews do not—syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer is one of the latter. But the transformation of one-time doves into hawks—the virtual unanimity of the largely liberal organized Jewish community—suggests that ethnic background, even if we are only talking about a keener historical memory, has played a role. A glance at the signatories to most of the statements issued by organizations protesting events in Bosnia finds a paucity of Christian organizations. Typically, a Jan. 16 press release calling for the United States to do more in Bosnia was

signed by 18 organizations, 11 of them either Jewish or Muslim but not one identifiably Christian.

It could be that these Jewish organizations are simply exhibiting their well-known and laudatory humanitarian activism. But Siegmund of the American Jewish Congress acknowledges otherwise. A Holocaust survivor himself, he finds the Bosnian situation redolent with awful memories. "All of this smacks of what happened to me in Nazi Germany," he said.

**I**n my career as a columnist no issue has vexed me as much as what to do about Bosnia. I wonder—I have to wonder—if the major Jewish organizations are right and if the distinctions I find between the Holocaust and present-day events amount to quibbling. The heads of these organizations are people I know. I have differed with them over the years, but never over morality or, if you will, the lessons of history. And as someone who has visited Bosnia and Croatia recently, I share their indignation at the Serbs and wonder what effect Western policy will have on goons elsewhere in the world.

And yet, if the West and the United States intervene in the former Yugoslavia, we must do so not because of any superficial similarities to the Holocaust but because our own national interests are threatened or because something so awful is happening that we would be morally diminished to stand by and do nothing. My own assessment, re-examined almost daily, is that for all the horror of Bosnia, no Holocaust is taking place and the Bosnian Muslims are not the contemporary equivalents of Europe's Nazi-era Jews.

Indeed, to my mind, the comparison exaggerates the crimes of the Serbs and diminishes those of the Nazis—and, of course, obscures suffering elsewhere: Afghanistan, Angola, Liberia and Sri Lanka, just to name several on-going civil or ethnic wars. All of these conflicts are horrible in their own right without, of course, making historical comparisons freighted with the language of the Holocaust. "I'm against using that language," Elie Wiesel told me. "I never compare."

The late Arthur Koestler once rebuked a fellow British intellectual for not protesting Hitler's treatment of the Jews: "As long as you don't feel . . . ashamed of being alive while others are being put to death, you will remain what you are, an accomplice by omission." When it comes to Bosnia, the American-Jewish community, no matter its reasons, cannot be accused of that.

But if peace is ever going to come to the Balkans—and only rarely since the late Middle Ages has that been the case—then the situation there must be assessed on its own terms. It's foolish to cite the first or second Balkan War as determinative when, of course, the great power patrons of those conflicts (Imperial Russia, Wilhelminian Germany, Austro-Hungary, Ottoman Turkey) are no longer players.

Similarly, it's ahistoric to compare Serbia—no threat to Europe, incidentally—to Nazi Germany. Such references not only exaggerate the problem and inject emotional terms into the debate, they also hold the Serbs to a standard of evil that they may be unwilling or unable to meet. Murder, rape and torture do not necessarily amount to another Holocaust, but they remain unspeakable crimes nonetheless. If the United States and the West are going to intervene, the decision has to be based on a realistic appraisal of the situation and what is best for the Bosnian Muslims—not a pathetically tardy response to Nazism. History has moved on, and if it indeed does repeat itself, there's more reason to think that in Bosnia it will come back not as the Holocaust, but as Vietnam.



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# The Roots of Bosnia's Anguish

## An Ancient Heresy Shapes Today's Turmoil

When Yugoslavia was still a country, foreigners complained that political arguments seemed never to get beyond the year 1945. After Yugoslavia crumbled, startled outsiders discovered that Serbs spoke of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 as if it had happened yesterday. Now that horizon needs another shove: the sources of blood hate are even remoter in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

A plurality of Bosnians — about 44 percent — identify with the Muslim faith. Americans have come to understand that this Slavic tribe converted to Islam long ago. What hasn't come through clearly is why. After all, nearly all other Slavs — notably Serbs and Bulgarians — stubbornly clung to Christianity during long centuries of Ottoman rule.

The explanation is that Bosnians themselves were once Christian. But it was a controversial kind of Christianity that was treated with greater tolerance by Muslim Turks than by the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches. This ancient antipathy underlies the strife rending Bosnia today.

In Christianity's earliest years, contending schools argued fiercely about the nature of Christ. One group, whose adherents stressed the human aspects of Jesus, was known as the Manichaeans. They were inspired by the teachings of Mani, a reformer and prophet born in Babylon in A.D. 216. Denounced as heresy, this underground creed nevertheless persisted and spread. By the 10th century a neo-Manichaean sect called Bogomils had taken root among Slavs.

Nowhere did Bogomilism, the name deriving from Old Slavonic for "God have mercy," find more devoted adherents than in feudal Bosnia. Their land was already known for its prosperous farms and rich mines, and for the blustery independence of its local nobles. And they now embraced a creed denounced as heretical by both Eastern and Western Christian churches, and with crusading fervor by the latter.

Beginning with Pope Innocent III, Roman Catholics in Hungary were urged to invade Bosnia and seize the lands and treasures of its blasphemers. Bosnian heretics were sold as slaves in Christian lands, a chronicler wrote, "because they were not regarded as Christian."

A particular feature of their creed caused special offense: its austerity. To recover the purity of the early church, Bogomils abjured elaborate rites, costly clerical

raiments and the corrupting sale of indulgences. Their doctrines were shared by the Albigenses in southern France, and anticipated the Protestantism of Luther. And this

hunger for a purer, simpler monotheism doubtless made easier the Bogomil conversion to the similarly austere beliefs of Islam.

By 1389, Turks had crushed the Serbs at Kosovo. Ottoman hordes surrounded Bosnia. Then, in an inspired stroke, the Turks in 1415 offered the Bogomils military protection, secure titles to their lands and freedom to practice their religion — if they counted themselves as Muslims and did not attack Ottoman forces.

In relating this history in her landmark book, "Black Lamb and Grey Falcon," Rebecca West remarks with justice: "Had it not been for the intolerance of the Papacy we would not have had Turkey in Europe for 500 years. Fifty years later, the folly had been consummated. Bosnia was wholly Turkish, and the Turks had passed on toward Hungary and Central Europe."

And so there flowered a kind of free Slavic state within the Ottoman Empire, in which Bosnian Bogomils enjoyed special autonomy and peculiar immunities. The Pasha of Bosnia did not make his capital in Sarajevo, but in Travnik, some 50 miles away; by law, the Pasha could not even spend more than one night at a time in Sarajevo.

Over the years, Bosnia's Bogomils, some blond and blue-eyed, settled in Istanbul and became part of the ruling elite, serving even as viziers. This unusual bonding helps explain Turkey's present deep concern for a people it has not ruled since 1875. That was when Bosnian Christians joined with Serbs and Montenegrins in a general uprising against Turks, with Russia's support. Seizing the opportunity, Austro-Hungarian armies invaded and occupied Bosnia, imposing yet another system of foreign rule.

In 1908, by imperial decree, Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby angering Serbia and Serbia's Slavic protector, Russia. Thus was assembled the powder magazine that exploded when Archduke Francis Ferdinand was murdered in 1914 by a pro-Serbian Bosnian.

How much closer this past now seems, and how timely its essential message: Magnanimity turns adversaries into friends; intolerance turns neighbors into permanent enemies.

KARL E. MEYER

**T**here are four possible justifications for intervention in the Yugoslav crisis. The first is humanitarian: to defend convoys and air missions to feed people in besieged cities, evacuate casualties and civilians, rescue prisoners in concentration camps, etc.

The second is to seize and punish war criminals. This, and the preceding, are supposed to be the subject of resolutions to be put before the U.N. Security Council.

The third is to defend or restore the international frontiers between Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, which have been recognized by the European Community and the United States but have been overrun, chiefly by the Serbs, to create a "Greater Serbia" uniting all of the ex-Yugoslav regions in which

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## The Nation's Desire to Live with Only Its Own Kind

By WILLIAM PFAFF

substantial Serbian populations exist.

The fourth is to halt the quasi-genocidal Serbian (and Croatian) campaigns of "ethnic cleansing" of the territories they have seized.

The first objective tends to contradict the third and fourth. Helping the besieged without ending the siege is merely to help the victims of aggression survive today to die tomorrow. Evacuating civilians and prisoners from territory meant by the Serbs for ethnic cleansing is to do the Serbs' work for them at international expense. In circumstances such as these, the second U.N. objective — punishing war criminals — is mere rhetoric and will never be achieved.

In short, the Western governments continue to search for ways to satisfy an outraged public opinion while avoiding the serious issue posed by this crisis. Once again, as at Munich in 1938, the chief concern of Paris and London — and today Washington — is not to prevent or reverse aggression, but to find a face-saving way to avoid doing so. We still refuse to deliver arms to the Bosnians, and embargo others from doing so.

(One thinks of the British and French ministers in Prague awakening Czechoslovak President Edvard Benes from his sleep at 2 a.m. on September 22, 1938, when Hitler had delivered his ultimatum, to tell Benes that if war broke out the Western powers "would hold the Czechs responsible for any catastrophe which followed.")

Behind what Serbia is doing is the superficially reasonable, but in practice pernicious, theory that every "nation" should have its



Martin Kozłowski—INX

own state. This was a product of the 19th-century breakdown of the dynastic system. Monarchies in old Europe ruled over different "nations," peoples and religions. Political unrest or rebellion might be generated by misrule, but not because the rulers belonged to a different nation or race: that was taken for granted as the way things always had been.

After the French revolution and Napoleon, people became convinced that they should fight not only for political and religious liberty but also against being governed by foreigners. The great 19th-century liberal historian, Lord

Acton, wrote that "protest against the domination of race over race . . . grew into a condemnation of every state that included different races, and finally became the complete and consistent theory, that the state and the nation must be co-extensive." He added that this was "a retrograde step in history."

As a theory, this was defensible. In practice, it has produced war, terrorism and what we have now learned to call "ethnic cleansing" — a Serbian contribution to the political vocabulary we would have been better without.





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It does so because, in Europe — the main place where this theory has been applied — the "nation" (what Acton referred to as the "race") has virtually no historical connection with the state. Britain, France, Germany, Spain, etc., all are combinations of many different ethnic stocks. The Prussians, who created modern Germany, are not Germans at all, but Balts, like the Lithuanians and Latvians. The Normans of France, who conquered England in 1066, were of Viking origin.

On the other hand, Serbians, Croatians and Bosnians are all the same people, speaking the same language, who profess different religions and have had distinct historical experiences, producing lasting hostility among them. There is no "ethnic" conflict in Yugoslavia. The war is one of religions and histories.

The ancient pattern of migrations from

*Once again, as at Munich in 1938, the chief concern of Paris and London — and today Washington — is not to prevent or reverse aggression, but to find a face-saving way to avoid doing so in the face of outraged public opinion.*

central Asia to Europe left each successive wave of peoples mingled with those who were before, or settled in overlapping areas. This mixture had relatively undramatic consequences until the modern idea of the nation spread to the backward regions of Eastern and Balkan Europe, then emerging from Hapsburg or Ottoman domination. Each individual "race" or nation there became convinced that it should have its own state and government, its own army, its own exclusive frontiers — which, naturally, it defined in as large and ambitious of terms as possible. In 1918 the United States lent its weight to this idea that every "nation" should have its own state.

In theory, one can accept an argument that if the Serbs want their own state, or the Croatians, they should have it. The practical objection is that they can only have it at the expense of others. If those two were capable of negotiating a new frontier between them, and a peaceful transfer of populations that would permit each the primitive satisfactions of living exclusively with members of its own "race," the international community would have little reason to object.

What is unacceptable is that they expand by aggressive war, conquest and "ethnic" — which in their case means religious — purg and murder. That would seem a simple enough principle for the Western powers to defend. Unfortunately, Washington, London and Paris seem unwilling to defend it, or even to admit that this is indeed the principle at stake.

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