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This is a press release dated August 31, 1990. Please note that the contact person is Ms. Mara Letica, the woman who acted as chaperone to the Senate delegation.

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Statement of U.S. Senate Delegation on Visit to Yugoslavia

CONTACT: Steve Hofman of Hager Sharp Inc., 202-466-5430; or Mara Letica, 313-652-0557, of the Parliament of Croatia

Washington, Aug. 31

Following is a statement issued by the United States Senate delegation which visited Yugoslavia:

During a three day visit to Yugoslavia, the delegation met with Federal President Jovic and Vice Prime Minister Pregl; the President of the Republic of Croatia Tudjman; officials of the Republics of Slovenia and Serbia; and both Albanian activists (led by the head of the democratic coalition, Dr. Rugova) and Serbian activists in the province of Kosovo.

The delegation was struck by the contrast between the rapid strides toward democracy and free enterprise economics in Croatia and Slovenia, on one hand, and the perpetuation of old line Communist repression in Serbia. The delegation's attempts to visit Kosovo were initially resisted by Serbian officials in Belgrade. The delegation subsequently learned that, while it was in Belgrade, Serbian military and police brutality dispersed a crowd of at least 10,000 Albanians who had peacefully assembled in Kosovo, in the hope of welcoming the delegation. The delegation is deeply disturbed at this fresh evidence that Serbian authorities are engaged in a systematic pattern of violating the human rights of Albanians. The delegation finally did succeed in reaching Kosovo, observed the aftermath of the morning's violence, and -- in its meeting with Albanian activists -- received additional information both on the day's events and the situation in Kosovo. The delegation pressed hard for assurances from Serbian officials in Kosovo that no harm would be done to any of the Albanians who participated in the meeting. The delegation remains deeply concerned about the safety and well-being of those Albanians who are working to achieve their human rights.

In all its meetings, the delegation stressed a clear agenda: support for democracy and human rights for all the people of Yugoslavia; the unity of Yugoslavia; a willingness to support aid to Yugoslavia (consistent with our own serious deficit problems), provided such aid would facilitate greater democratization and free market economics; and a desire to hear the candid views of every official and person with whom we met. The delegation believes that one essential element of the political system that evolves is that the human rights of all groups and people are respected.

The Serbians refused to acknowledge any of the Albanians' complaints, a senator said. The delegation's plans to go into the countryside to talk to citizens were canceled because of warnings it might be too dangerous, he said.

"It was a pretty exciting day," D'Amato said, "What we got was a view of an old Stalinist regime, the Serbian government is hardline communist, using the same old repressive tactics that everyone is moving away from."

Other senators in the delegation were Bob Dole (R-Kan.), John Warner (R-Va.), Jake Garn (R-Utah), Don Nickles (R-Okla.), Steven Symms (R-Idaho) and Connie Mack (R-Fla.).

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2:

From "The National Journal", published on March 23, 1991.

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Balkan Base in D.C.

By: Carol Matlack

Chaos has been the norm in Yugoslavian politics ever since the country was cobbled together from remnants of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires at the end of World War I.

So it's no surprise that things have gotten a bit complicated as two breakaway Yugoslav republics try to establish a foothold in Washington. The republics, Slovenia and Croatia, have taken the first steps toward declaring their independence and are seeking expert help to win support from the United States.

Slovenia and Croatia present a sticky situation, paralleling that of the Soviet Union's Baltic states. Though many Americans sympathize with the fledgling Balkan democracies, the United States doesn't officially recognize them.

"A lot of people around here are uncomfortable with the issue of how we deal with republics," a senior congressional aide said. "Members don't yet know the rules of the game."

One of the stickiest situations involves Slovenia, Yugoslavia's northernmost and most affluent republic. Late last year, the republic retained Peter Millonig, a businessman of Slovenian descent, to represent it in Washington. Since then, Millonig has visited congressional offices and squired Slovenian delegations around the city. He has written articles for U.S. newspapers and is helping the Slovenian government establish a permanent Washington office.

That's how Millonig tells it. But some supporters of Slovenian independence say he is operating illegally.

Karl Bonutti, president of the Cleveland-based Slovenian-American Heritage Foundation, said that the Slovenian parliament has not authorized Millonig's activities and is "in the process of asking someone else to represent them." Bonutti also accused Millonig of failing to register with the Justice Department as a foreign agent. In an interview, Millonig said that Slovenia's president, not the parliament, had recruited him. "I do have authorization, in writing," he said. Millonig acknowledged he had not registered but said he was delayed by visa problems (he is an Austrian citizen).

Things have gone a bit more smoothly for Croatia. The republic recently hired Norman A. Bailey, who worked at the National Security Council (NSC) during the Reagan Administration and now runs a Washington consulting firm. He is advising Croatia only on economic matters. "Until they get the political situation sorted out, it's very difficult to promote any kind of investment," he said.

Lobbying on Croatian independence falls mostly to the Croatian-American Association. The Pittsburgh-based group opened a Washington office early last year, headed by Adrian Madunic, the association's assistant director for political affairs. Association leaders testified at recent hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on European Affairs, as did Bonutti.

And the Croatian group has hired Ruder Finn Inc., a Washington public relations firm. Ruder Finn is monitoring developments in Washington and helped place a recent op-ed article in the Capitol Hill newspaper Roll Call, senior vice president James W. Harff said.

Ruder Finn got the account through Phyllis Kaminsky, another former NSC aide who is a senior international adviser to the firm. Kaminsky, who recently led U.S. delegations to observe elections in three Yugoslav republics, said she is informally advising both Croatia and Slovenia on their dealings in Washington.

Congress so far has paid scant attention to Yugoslavia. Croatian and Slovenian groups support legislation by Sen. Robert Dole, R-Kan., and Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, R-Calif., to provide U.S. aid to breakaway democratic republics. But its prospects are uncertain so long as the Bush Administration continues to support a unified Yugoslavia.

The push for Slovenian and Croatian independence has helped ignite violence in Yugoslavia, pitting the country's Serbian majority against other ethnic groups. Serbs are battling each other, too; anti-Communist protests touched off riots in Serbia this month.

Serbians, Croats and Slovenes all claim well-placed backers in the United States. Rep. Helen Delich Bentley, R-Md., is of Serbian origin; Reps. Dennis E. Eckart, D-Ohio, and James L. Oberstar, D-Minn., both have Slovenian backgrounds. And former Minnesota Gov. Rudy G. Perpich, who is of Croatian descent, was recently recruited to head Croatia's Chamber of Economy, an organization of formerly state-run enterprises that the republic's government wants to privatize. Perpich is moving to Croatia this month.

Against that backdrop, the leaders of Croatia and Slovenia face a tough job in Washington. "This is a new experience for them," Kaminsky said. "Most of them never used to be in politics, let alone in government."

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3:

This is a copy of a press release, dated August 15, 1991, regarding the war in Croatia, prepared by Ruder and Finn public relations firm. This is just a sample, to show what sort of lies they wrote in hundreds of press releases over the course of the past two years.

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Government of Croatia Disavows Illegal Attempts to Purchase Weapons

Distribution: To national and foreign editors

Washington, Aug. 15

The Office of the Republic of Croatia issued the following:

Officials of the government of the Republic of Croatia disavowed any knowledge of four individuals, and an organization they reportedly represent, who attempted to purchase weapons from a Chicago gun dealer for shipment to Croatia.

Dr. Frane V. Golem, authorized representative of Croatia in Washington, said: "The government of Croatia has absolutely no involvement with the individuals arrested last week in Chicago, nor do we in any way whatsoever condone their tactics. We are completely aware of U.S. laws prohibiting such transactions and are committed to abiding by them."

One of the men implicated in the arms deal was identified by U.S. Customs Commissioner Carol Hallett as a member of OTPOR, which she described as an organization affiliated with the "Croatian National Resistance" in the United States and Canada.

Dr. Golem said, "OTPOR is unknown in Croatia or the U.S. and has absolutely no affiliation or relationship with the government." The FBI has also confirmed that it has no information about OTPOR.

"While there is no question that the Croatian people are in desperate need of arms to protect themselves and their families from the Serbian terrorists operating in our country, we must rely on foreign governments who share our commitment to freedom and self-determination for military assistance," Dr. Golem said.

CONTACT: James Mazzarella of Ruder Finn, 202-466-7800, for the Republic of Croatia.

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4:

From "The National Journal", published on August 31, 1991.

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And now, it's greetings from Zagreb

By: Carol Matlack

A large multicolored Croatian flag, draped from ceiling to floor, dominates the small Capitol Hill officewhere Frane Golem recently set up shop as the Republic of Croatia's first authorized representative in Washington.

But what really dominates Glem's job nowadays is the revolution sweeping the Soviet Union.

Even as his fax machine hums with news of escalating warfare in Croatia, Golem has found that the turmoil in the Kremlin has crowded his cause off the stage of U.S. public attention.

The federal army of Yugoslavia, joined by ethnic Serbian rebels within Croatia, has mounted a series of attacks on Croatian territory since the republic declared its independence in June. The fighting has escalated substantially, with heavy bombing and artillery fire causing scores of casualties in recent days. Franjo Tudjman, the Croatian president, has said that if the attacks didn't stop by Aug. 31, the republic would declare all-out war against its foes.

Golem, who arrived in Washington in early July, has been trying to persuade U.S. officials to pressure Yugoslavia to withdraw its troops, permitting Croatia and the neighboring republic of Slovenia to become independent.

He has met with State Department officials, but so far their response has been disappointing: The Bush Administration has opposed the breakup of the Yugoslav federation and supported efforts by the European Community to negotiate a cease-fire.

For now, Golem and other Croatian partisans are trying to elbow their way back into the headlines.

The Republic of Croatia has signed a \$ 10,000-a-month contract with the Washington office of the public relations firm of Ruder Finn Inc., which is advising Golem and other Croatian officials on news media relations.

And the Washington-based Croatian-American Association, concerned about lack of news coverage, recently sent several of its members to set up a foreign press bureau in Zagreb, the Croatian capital. The association members serve as interpreters for visiting journalists and escort them to battle zones, Mara Letica, the association executive director, said in an interview. Their purpose is to counter "the Belgrade propaganda machine," she said.

And Letica's group is paying the Washington PR shop of Hager Sharp to monitor press coverage of the crisis.

Letica also visited Washington think tanks to drum up interest. One researcher that she met with, Janusz Bugajski, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, left on a fact-finding trip to Croatia on Aug. 28, she said.

Golem and Croatian-American groups have also lobbied actively on Capitol Hill and at the White House. On July 26, several thousand Croatian-Americans rallied on the Capitol grounds and sent a delegation to meet with Vice president Dan Quayle. Soon after, 14 Senators sent a letter urging President

Bush to send a special envoy to Yugoslavia to help mediate a settlement of the conflict. (See NJ, 8/17/91, p. 2032.)

The August congressional recess put a damper on Capitol Hill lobbying, though, and in recent weeks, much of Golem's activity has been outside Washington. He has crisscrossed the country, meeting with groups in Chicago, Cleveland, New Orleans and other cities with large Croatian-American populations. (There are an estimated 2.5 million Croatian-Americans nationally.) Many local groups are raising money for medical supplies and for humanitarian relief for an estimated 120,000 Croatian refugees who have fled the fighting, Golem said.

Golem, a former Croatian foreign minister and a surgeon who has done graduate work in the United States, said that while the Soviet crisis has temporarily drawn attention away from Yugoslavia, the demise of the Soviet Communist Party will severely weaken Yugoslavia's Communist government and its efforts to block Croatian independence.

The Bush Administration's apparent move toward diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union's breakaway Baltic republics gives hope to Croatians that they will soon be recognized, too, he added. His message to U.S. officials, Golem said, is that "Yugoslavia as a federation cannot exist any more. I came here to ask for help to create a democracy."

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5:

From "The Washington Post", published on September 2, 1991.

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Upheaval in Soviet Union Means Clients for Public Relations Firms;
Restive Republics, Would-Be Capitalists Look for U.S. Connections

By: Gary Lee

Two weeks ago, as Russian President Boris Yeltsin sat in his Moscow office defying coup leaders, calls were going out to American business executives and State Department officials on his behalf. The purpose of the calls -- to boost Yeltsin's image -- was less surprising than the caller: Philadelphia attorney and lobbyist Jerome Shestach.

On the day the Republic of Georgia declared its independence from the Soviet Union, Giorgi Gachechiladze, a Georgian spokesman, appeared in Washington to offer commentary, facts, figures and anything else needed for reports on his homeland. Who helped Gachechiladze get in touch with reporters? The public relations firm of John Adams Associates.

Last week, with Croatia headed for an armed showdown with the Yugoslav army, a raft of press releases on the crisis were distributed on behalf of the embattled Croatians to reporters and policymakers. The distributor: the public relations firm of Ruder Finn.

Shestach, Adams and Ruder Finn are all part of a circle of American lobbyists and firms who have moved quickly to capture the new clients fast emerging across the Soviet republics and Eastern Europe. The wide range of countries, business firms and individuals are all crying to make their presence felt in the United States.

For instance, leaders of Georgia, a republic to the south of Russia that has no official representation in Washington, have hired John Adams to help them make connections here. "We're doing PR, encouraging tourism, trying to inspire business interest, and so on," said Dan Priest, a spokesman for Adams. "We're kind of like a mini-embassy."

A small, Washington-based operation, Adams is one of few firms with experience in Eastern Europe. It helped Polish President Lech Walesa build his image across the United States during his rise as head of the trade union

Solidarity.

With lobbying and public relations firms here still hurting from the recession, the clamor for clients in Eastern Europe is starting to resemble a gold rush. "Everybody in Washington is claiming to represent somebody over there," said Mark Cowan, chief executive officer of the Jefferson Group.

The Jefferson Group, with offices here and in Moscow, represents clients in Russia and American clients with interests in the Soviet Union. For Americans doing business in Russia, Cowan said, Jefferson Group associates seek to provide the same services in Moscow that lobbyists try to offer in Washington: clout, access and cachet.

During the coup, the head of Jefferson's Moscow office seemed to be positioning himself to do just that: His son was holed up in the Russian parliament building, Yeltsin's stronghold.

For Soviet clients, Cowan added, his biggest service is easing their introduction to the fast-paced U.S. market. "You would think that they could also easily pick up the phone and call Mobil," he said. "But if you've never done it, the thought might not occur to you."

The failed August coup will probably lead to a boom in American business interest in provincial areas of Russia and other regions of the country, Cowan and others said.

The most important change resulting from the coup is that business relations -- like all other relations -- are dramatically decentralized, according to Alex Frishberg, an attorney for the firm of Hogan & Hartson. "The ones who will succeed most in this environment are those who keep ties outside of Moscow, in the provinces," added Frishberg, who specializes in U.S.-Ukrainian business ties.

But it is probably the governments of Soviet republics and East European regimes -- not business entrepreneurs -- that have the most pressing need for a Washington representative. They need direct access to U.S. officials because their country's diplomats do not always represent their interests.

The Soviet Embassy in Washington has closely toed the official Kremlin line, for example, concerning secession of the republics. "In this very sensitive situation," said Georgia's Gachechiladze, "we need to have our own line of communication with Americans."

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6:

This is a part of a transcript from a press conference held at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. on September 25, 1991.
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MR. HARFF: Good morning. First of all, we'd like to apologize for the delay. Weather at LaGuardia forced the delayed arrival of Dr. Separovic's plane. My name is Jim Harff. I'm with Ruder-Finn here in Washington, and we've been working with Dr. Frane Golem, who is the authorized representative of the government -- Republic of Croatia in Washington. Dr. Separovic, the foreign minister, is in New York and Washington to meet with UN officials there and State Department and congressional officials here regarding the very serious situation in Yugoslavia and Croatia today. He will make a brief statement and then answer questions.
Dr. Separovic.

MIN. SEPAROVIC: Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, I am here to meet some important people in Washington, DC, after being in New York attending the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council meeting. This afternoon it is a very important day for us, namely the war in Croatia. After being presented at the peace conference in the Hague, Netherlands, is now coming --

has been brought to the East River, to the UN. We are happy about that. There have been states, delegations who supported the idea. We are happy that the United States have been in favor of a resolution on Yugoslavia that might become a reality this very afternoon in New York.

I'm here to explain how bad war there is in Croatia. We would like to internationalize it as much as possible, to make it known, and to then those who will understand, support and help. We are also for the recognition of the independent state of Croatia, which has been declared on 25th of June of this year.....

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7:

From "The National Journal", published on October 5, 1991.

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Uh, Jim, Mind the Shrapnel

When public relations experts talk about poise under fire, they don't usually mean live ammo. But two Washington executives of the Ruder Finn Inc. PR firm, which represents the breakaway republic of Croatia, were fired at by Serbian snipers on a recent trip to Zagreb. And during a meeting with aides to President Franjo Tudjman, an air raid forced the two to take cover in Tudjman's bunker. But Ruder Finn vice president James W. Harff said that he and his colleague used their 90 minutes in the bunker to buttonhole other officials who had taken refuge there.

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8:

From "The States News Service", published on February 13, 1992.

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Milwaukee Congressman Notes Serbian "Abuses"

By: Dunstan McNichol

Milwaukee Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner, touring Yugoslavia at the invitation of Croatia's public relations firm, has reported witnessing "vast destruction and literally unspeakable human rights abuses."

Sensenbrenner, a Menomonee Falls Republican, said he has met with Croatia's president and with 10 other Croatian leaders since arriving in the war-torn republic on Tuesday.

He said he has used his meetings to personally tell Croatian leaders they should monitor members of their own Army for human rights abuses and should accept a proposed United Nations peace-keeping force.

"In my opinion Croatia has the moral high ground in this dispute," Sensenbrenner said. "It is obvious the Croatians are the people who are being aggressed against."

Sensenbrenner said he also met with Nenan Porges, president of the Zagreb Jewish community, to discuss allegations the Croatian government is anti-semitic.

"He says there is no anti-Semitism on the part of Croatia," Sensenbrenner said in a telephone interview from Zagreb on Thursday.

Sensenbrenner's trip is being paid for by the Congressional Human Rights Foundation, a private organization not affiliated with the U.S. Congress.

The trip was coordinated by Ruder-Finn, a Washington, D.C. public relations firm that is representing Croatia in the United States. The self-proclaimed independent republic is attempting to convince Congress to recognize its independence.

Croatia has been fighting with Serbian Yugoslavs since the republic declared its independence last year.

Sensenbrenner is traveling with seven other Americans, including Ruder-Finn executive Jim Harff.

He said the group on Wednesday toured the city of Ossiack, in eastern Croatia. He said the city, its hospital and cathedral have been repeatedly shelled, sustaining damage the mayor said would cost \$650 million to repair.

"I saw just vast destruction and literally unspeakable human rights abuses," Sensenbrenner said.

Sensenbrenner said Ruder-Finn had arranged his meetings with Croatian leaders.

He said he has met with no Serbian leaders, but would do so if a separate trip could be worked out.

"We have worked with Harff's agency as the only way to get access to high government officials in Croatia," Sensenbrenner said. "If Serbian officials would invite me, would guarantee my safety and would give me the necessary access to high government officials I would consider accepting an invitation from Serbia."

9:

From "The National Journal", published on August 15, 1992.

Balkan Wars on K Street

By: Rochelle L. Stanfield

The Washington public relations battle between the former Yugoslav republics is as passionate and bitter rhetorically as the ethnic wars being fought in the Balkans streets are bloody.

The Croats and Bosnians, who have hired the high-powered Ruder-Finn Inc. PR firm, have out-organized and out-gunned the Serbians, who are making do with a small, nonprofit PR operation in Chicago. The Croats and Bosnians have not only won this round, but they have also apparently acquired a powerful lobbying ally by winning the support of major Jewish organizations.

The big breakthrough occurred on Aug. 2, when New York Newsday ran a front-page story on Serbian internment camps in Bosnia and CNN broadcast video footage of emaciated prisoners in those camps.

A Serbian-American group tried to counter those stories with a demonstration that day in front of The Washington Post offices and a quarter-page advertisement the following day in The New York Times protesting what the group called biased reporting. These efforts were overwhelmed as the story took on its own life and momentum.

On Aug. 5, three major Jewish organizations -- the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress -- ran a quarter-page ad in The New York Times and held a rally in front of U.N. headquarters in New York City, recalling the Holocaust in World War II and seeming international inspection of the detention camps and an investigation of possible war crimes.

Ruder-Finn, which has contracts with both Bosnia and Croatia, used Croatian-Americans to tell the story. (Croatian-Americans estimate their numbers at 2.5 million; there are very few Bosnian-Americans.)

Before the detention camp pictures appeared on television, however, the

Bosnian and Croatian groups had made scant headway with the White House. But a combination of pressures from the news media, Democratic presidential nominee Bill Clinton, America's European allies, the Jewish organizations and Croatian-American Republicans came together during the afternoon of Aug. 6.

"In two hours, I felt a 180-degree change on [the Administration's] part as to what the White House wanted to signal to the Croatian-American community," Zdenka Gast, a Croatian-born Republican activist and fund raiser from western New York who met with White House officials that afternoon, said during an interview at the Washington office of New York City-based Ruder-Finn.

Serbian-Americans have had to resort to railing against a slick public relations campaign and to point out that Bosnians and Croats also have detention camps. "We have made some progress. There have been small nuggets of truth and fairness that have managed to break through a relentlessly one-sided, PR-driven official disinformation kind of scenario," said political consultant George Bogdanich, a Serbian-American in Chicago who runs the Serbian American Media Center, a nonprofit operation sponsored by SerbNet Inc., a coalition of Serbian-American organizations. "We're vastly underfunded compared to our well-organized opponents," he complained.

It was not always thus. Before the U.N. embargo on Serbia, Wise Communications in Washington represented Serbia's interests through a contract with Jugopetrol, the state-owned oil company. "But I haven't done anything for them since March or April," said Bill Wise, the firm's president.

The entrance of the Jewish organizations on the side of the Bosnians was the ultimate coup on the part of Ruder-Finn and a final blow to the Serbians. In the spring, both sides tried to enlist the Jewish organizations to their cause, reciting World War II anti-Semitism by the other side. The Jewish organizations refused to be drawn in.

"This is an entirely different story," said Jess N. Hordes, Washington director of the Anti-Defamation League. "There has been a tremendous sense of urgency to speak out in the shadow of imagery of the Holocaust and the inaction of Western countries when atrocities on this scale occurred."

10:

From "The Independent", published on August 21, 1992.

Truth is the first casualty in PR offensive

By: Tom O'Sullivan

The war in Yugoslavia has been fought brutally on the ground. But it has also been fought with almost equal ferocity in the field of public relations. Each side's PR offensive operates on two levels: the domestic front and the international arena. On their home ground, no holds are barred: both sides use their own television, newspaper and news agencies to demonise the enemy.

As important, however, is the use of PR to appeal to the international community. Record of the United States Justice Department show the extent to which PR and lobbying firms have been used:

Serbia - Wise Communications in Washington received a total of \$ 304,000 (pounds 157,000) from the Serbian-owned oil company Jugopetrol. The firm worked indirectly for the Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic.

In Britain, a group of Serbian businessmen hired Ian Greer Associates to organise a lobby of Westminster, communicate the Serbian message, and prevent economic sanctions by the European Community. Both companies stopped working on the separate accounts when the United Nations imposed worldwide sanctions in June.

Croatia - Ruder Finn Global Public Affairs was hired by the Republic of Croatia in August 1991 to lobby in Washington on its behalf. In the period to the end of 1991 it was paid \$ 46,000.

In Britain, Croatian representatives entered negotiations with lobbying firms, including Hill and Knowlton, offering pounds 500,000 for a campaign to win official recognition and raise the profile of Croatia.

Bosnia - Ruder Finn has also now been engaged by Bosnia-Herzegovina to raise its profile and lobby in Washington. The move is a reflection of the military pact drawn up between the two republics, despite Croatia's involvement in the carve-up of Bosnia.

Slovenia has established its own office in Washington to handle PR. It also employs Phyllis Kaminsky, an adviser to Ruder Finn, to handle some lobbying and PR work.

The roll-call of PR connections also includes Sir Tim Bell, who has advised the London-born Crown Prince Alexander, who last month staked his claim to the Yugoslav crown; Burson-Marsteller, which handled the media and political relations for the visit of the new Yugoslav Prime Minister, Milan Panic; and a host of Serbian information centres and individual lobbyists from both sides.

Major-General Lewis MacKenzie, head of the UN peace-keeping force in Bosnia up to the start of this month, alleges that both the Serbs and the Bosnians have shelled their own people in Sarajevo to gain an edge in the propaganda war. Both sides deny the allegation - while accusing the other of perpetrating such cynical attacks.

Jim Harff, president of Ruder Finn, insists: "It is illogical to suggest that the Bosnians are bombing their own people - on a practical level they do not have the weapons."

Then, there was the story of Serbian snipers being paid pounds 300 for each person they killed. It was alleged that children were popular targets for the killers because they were easier to hit.

The story reached the Western press via a New Zealand aid worker; his interview with a BBC radio journalist was broadcast on several radio programmes, including Newshour, the World Service flagship news programme. The nationality of the witness was crucial for "third party endorsement", as he was not a Croat and could not be accused of bias - but he could not say he had actually witnessed such mercenary killings himself. The allegations first surfaced in the Croatian media, before gaining a worldwide audience.

The Tanjug news agency in Belgrade has just been forced to retract a story that Serbian forces had found the corpses of 1,000 Serbs "butchered" in the northern Bosnian town of Odzak. The report originally surfaced in a newspaper published in a Serbian stronghold in Bosnia and was then picked up by Tanjug - it retracted the story on the grounds that there were no bodies.

The impact of stories such as these is difficult to assess. But they affect both the mood inside the country and international attitudes to the war, prepare international public opinion for military involvement and on occasions deliberately confuse the picture.

It is undeniable that the Serbian forces have been involved in acts of brutality. But so have the Croats and the Bosnian Muslims.

"Our role is to identify the aggressor and the victim which has been obscured by either a lack of information or Serbian propaganda," says Mr Harff. "The overriding objective was to develop a Croatian profile when competing against other foreign policy initiatives in Washington. Our main targets were the media, Capitol Hill and the Bush administration. There was a dearth of information among policy-makers on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

"There have been brutal incidents involving Croatian forces but they have been minuscule in comparison to Serbian actions."

The Ruder Finn strategy has been to build a congressional and Senate coalition in the US in support of Croatia. The strategy has included mobilising the 2.5 million Croats in the US to lobby their own representatives in Congress.

Central to all this activity was equating the Serbian forces with Communism and the Croats with Western freedom and democracy.

Ruder Finn is employing a similar strategy in its work for Bosnia "to help it fight the war and line up support and money'', according to Mr Harff. The agency is also continuing its work to secure a UN resolution in support of military intervention in Bosnia for "humanitarian reasons".

Bill Wise, president of Wise Communications, is much more reticent about his company's indirect role in working for the Serbs. "My contract was with Jugopetrol. Now if that work also served the interests of the Serbian government, then so be it.

"We arranged television interviews and placed articles in US publications for Slobodan Milosevic. Part of our role was to get some balance to the information coming out of Yugoslavia," says Mr Wise, adding that the contract is now "inoperative".

The danger is that the propaganda has fuelled those atrocities by heightening hatreds and inventing untruths. The propaganda has resulted in the inevitable backlash from the other, aggrieved side as they commit an act of revenge.

The author is chief reporter of PR Week

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11:

From "The National Journal", published on September 12, 1992.

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From the K Street Corridor

By: Carol Matlack

Ruder-Finn Inc., the New York-based public relations firm that represents the former Yugoslav republics of Croatia and Bosnia, has established an international public affairs division, based in its Washington office.

"We're formalizing what has existed for about 10 months," said James A. Harff, a Ruder-Finn senior vice president who will head the new operation, called Ruder-Finn Global Public Affairs. In recent months, the firm's Washington office has helped Croatia and Bosnia score some important PR wins against Serbian interests. (For background on the Balkans PR war, see NJ, 8/15/92, p. 1903, and 3/14/92, pg. 644.)

Two other members of Ruder-Finn's Washington staff, senior account executive James A. Mazzarella and assistant account executive J. B. (Jim) Bankoff, are being assigned to the new division. They will continue to function as employees of Ruder-Finn's Washington office, which as a staff of 20, Harff said. The division will also use several outside consultants.

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12:

From "The Calgary Herald", published on February 18, 1993.

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Spin Doctors: Murder and Mayhem Always get a Reaction

By: Mike Trickey, Southam News

Getting your story out first is now what's really important

Toronto - It was a preposterous yarn ignored by North American media but circulated in Islamic nations where it could do the most damage.

The story claimed Maj.-Gen. Lewis MacKenzie, Canadian head of the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in Bosnia, was raping and then murdering Muslim women supplied to him by the Serbs.

The charges were part of a smear campaign against the peacekeepers viewed by the Bosnian government as obstacles to their success in a civil war against rebel Serbs, MacKenzie recalls.

He asserts it was spread by the Bosnian government, with assistance from a major public relations firm.

"I can understand why they would do something like that," says the retiring officer. "If I had been in their position and found that the peacekeeping force was not what I had wanted, I can envision my devious mind working out a story to discredit them."

Character assassination, both of individuals and nations, is not a new tactic in war.

What's different today is the use of hired guns - the spin doctors of war - who have taken over much of the activity once exercised by government and military propaganda departments.

Even a country like Bosnia, with little expertise in media manipulation, can call one of the dozens of major western public relations firms that will do business with anyone willing to pay.

"All the poor old Bosnian government has is an IMARSAT (satellite telephone)," says MacKenzie. "It's not likely they could have done this on their own."

"It would appear, due to the widespread coverage that story got in Muslim nations, as well as in Germany and Croatia, that somebody familiar with the methods of distributing that sort of disinformation was certainly involved."

The use of professional public relations firms has grown substantially over the past 10 or 15 years, says Jerold Manheim, director of the National Centre of Communications Studies at George Washington University.

"These companies are applying social science techniques to evaluate the effectiveness of their message. They are much more strategic (than military propagandists) in structuring their campaigns and in determining who is to be targeted."

The nature of the message has also changed with the end of the Cold War, as there is no longer a single, easily defined opponent.

"Propaganda used to be much cruder," explains John MacArthur, author of *Second Front*, a book exposing the level of media manipulation during the Gulf war.

"It used to be simply to help our side win. What's scary now is that it's being done in the name of human rights and morality. The more you can get human rights organizations to designate one side as the aggressor and your side as the victim, the better chance you've got of gaining support for yourself."

As columnist Lewis Lapham notes in *Harper's* magazine: "Unlike the old Soviet empire, the kingdom of hell can be relied upon never to go bankrupt or to abandon the war for the soul of mankind."

Rapes and dead babies have always aroused strong reactions.

The best known episode of this type was the selling of the Gulf War by public relations giant Hill and Knowlton.

They produced a 15-year-old girl identified only as Nariyah, who testified before a congressional committee that she had seen Iraqi soldiers tearing Kuwaiti babies from hospital incubators.

The girl was subsequently revealed to be the daughter of Kuwait's ambassador to the United States and her story proved false, but not before it mobilized overwhelming public support for U.S. military action.

A similar approach is being taken in the public relations war in the former Yugoslavia, where all the combatants have hired western firms to get their message out and portray the others as bloodthirsty killers.

Jim Harff, president of Ruder Finn Global Public Affairs, which represents Kosovo and Croatia, says the public relations battle is as important as what's happening on the ground.

"In terms of persuading and convincing the UN to take the proper measures, it's even more important."

Documents filed with the U.S. Justice Department show Croatia is paying Ruder Finn \$ 10,000 a month plus expenses to present "a positive Croatian image to members of Congress, administration officials and the news media."

Bosnia is billed hourly by Ruder Finn for its services, which include "writing and placing op-ed articles, guest columns and letters to the editor," and to "fully communicate its positions in the United States on issues relative to its current state of war with Serbia."

Trying to counter public relations gains by their rivals, Serb representatives were canvassing Canadian firms recently, hoping to find a company willing to work for them despite the United Nations economic sanctions imposed on the country.

Though generally considered the aggressors in the Yugoslav conflict, the Serbs did not become international pariahs until last summer after sanctions moved London-based Ian Greer Associates to drop their contract.

"In situations where normal diplomatic channels fall down, this is an effective alternative method of communication," says Ann Pettifor, who worked on the Serb account. "They were concerned about the unbalanced reporting of atrocities and so it is natural they would seek out these methods and expertise."

Second- and third-hand reports of atrocities should always be regarded with a great deal of skepticism, advises Keith Krause of York University's Centre for International and Strategic Studies.

"There's a growing sophistication among factions at war about communications.

"That progression makes it more difficult to disentangle what's really happening.

"It also creates an ever-growing potential for the big lie."

In the Balkans, where the warring factions are physically indistinguishable, it's not uncommon for a video clip of a mass slaughter or other such horrible atrocity to show up on a number of different state-run television outlets, each carrying a different audio version of who perpetrated the crime.

Croatia became the public opinion winner in its war with Serb rebels after

it was able to shift international focus to Serbian aggression and away from its own fascist past and its modern adoption of symbols from that era.

"The Croatians were far more active than the Serbs during that period," says Manheim, adding that the worldwide Internet computer link for academics "carried a series of messages about all the terrible things the Serbs were doing, but there was nothing from the other side."

Ruder Finn, which has decades of experience in representing foreign governments in Washington, scored another coup in the final days of the Bush administration when the White House warned Belgrade it would not tolerate aggression against Kosovo.

"That was quite a change from the previous year when the emphasis was on the integrity of the borders. Getting (former secretary of state Lawrence) Eagleburger to name names and talk of war crime trials was a obviously a breakthrough," says Harff, who had worked for three congressmen over an eight-year period.

It is those kinds of successes, some of which could drag a third country into war, that encourage voiceless nations and factions to hire the lobbying pros.

"They certainly should," says Harff. "We can tell their stories to the people it has to be told to.

"We know the modern techniques, know how to develop and convey the messages. If you're going to win these wars, you've got to have public opinion in your corner."

(Trickey is a Southam News writer.)

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From "The Atlanta Journal and Constitution", published on February 28, 1993.
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Secret weapon: U.S. public relations firm sells Serbs as bad guys
New Balkan nations buy political sway

By: Matthew C. Vita, Washington Bureau

Washington - When the tiny republic of Kosovo declared its independence from Yugoslavia, its founding fathers produced a U.S.-style Bill of Rights to promote their commitment to democracy.

But the framers of the Balkans' newest constitution weren't from Kosovo. They weren't even from Yugoslavia.

They were public relations operatives from Washington hired to make the republic's case to the White House, Congress and the American media.

"They [the Kosovans] knew their rights," said James Harff, president of Ruder-Finn's global public affairs division. "We helped formulate the message in a way that Americans could identify with."

The Kosovan publicity campaign intensified this month with a six-city U.S. tour by the republic's president. The trip was organized by Ruder-Finn to draw attention to Serb human rights abuses of Kosovo's Albanian population.

It mirrors similar public relations efforts waged by the other combatants in the former Yugoslavia's ethnic killing fields.

Marketing human misery

This battle for public opinion is the second front of Yugoslavia's 20-month-old civil war.

When Ross Perot talks about the menace of foreign lobbyists, he's not talking about Yugoslavia. He's referring to agents hired by Japan, Germany and America's other economic competitors.

But Yugoslavia is an example of a less publicized playing field in the Washington lobbying game. It is the marketing of human misery, where the stakes aren't dollars or yen, but human lives.

Downtrodden, abused governments or groups believe that if they can convince Americans that their cause is just, political support, financial assistance - even U.S. troops - may follow.

Tale of Iraqi atrocities

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1991, the oil-rich sheikdom mounted a \$ 12 million lobbying campaign that many believe helped drum up American public support for the Persian Gulf War.

In one memorable incident, the Washington publicists Hill & Knowlton, retained by Kuwait, orchestrated the congressional testimony of a young woman who spoke of alleged Iraqi atrocities in occupied Kuwait. Only later was it revealed that the woman was the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador.

The files of the Foreign Agents Registration Act office, the arm of the Justice Department to whom foreign lobbyists are supposed to report their activities, list more than 800 lobbyists for 272 countries and territories.

They include traditional allies such as Canada and Britain, longtime enemies such as Iraq and Libya, and a vast spectrum in between ranging from the Vatican to Bophuthatswana.

Making business of the Balkans

The Washington office of Ruder-Finn has carved a niche for itself out of the Yugoslav civil war.

It has represented Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina's Muslim leadership and now Kosovo in an effort to make the U.S. public more aware of allegations of Serb killings, rapes and "ethnic cleansing."

Together the three newly formed republics have spent nearly \$ 250,000. That's not a lot by Washington lobbying standards, though it certainly would buy a lot of woolen blankets for Sarajevo.

"We're complete amateurs," said Isa Zymeri, who is director of the Kosovo Information Center in London and accompanied President Ibrahim Rugova on his recent U.S. tour. "Visits look a lot better when you have someone professionally organize everything."

Last year, Ruder-Finn waged an extensive publicity campaign to promote Bosnia's Muslims and, according to a report filed at the Justice Department's Foreign Agents Registration Act Office, "counter the Bush administration's misinformation campaign, which incorrectly implied that the Bosnians were asking for U.S. ground troops to help them fight their war."

What PR dollars buy

The report gave some indication of how Ruder-Finn sought to get Bosnia's message across.

Between June and December, it set up more than 30 interviews with major U.S. news organizations and distributed 13 news releases, 37 "fax updates," 17 official letters and eight official statements.

It arranged meetings between Bosnian officials and vice presidential

candidate Al Gore, acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and 10 influential senators, including Majority Leader George Mitchell and Minority Leader Robert Dole.

It made 48 phone calls to members of the House, 20 calls to members of the Senate and more than 80 calls to newspaper columnists, television anchors and other journalists.

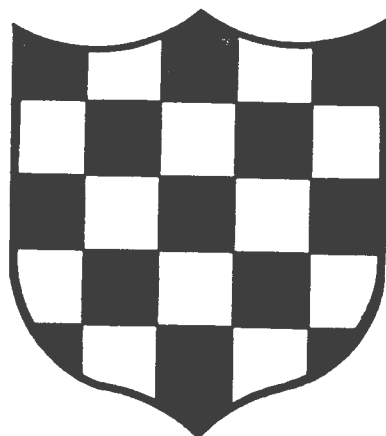
In addition to shepherding Bosnia's foreign minister through Washington, Ruder-Finn employees advised Bosnian delegations at five international conferences.

Bosnia paid Ruder-Finn \$ 82,648 in fees and expenses between June 1 and Nov. 30 and was billed for \$ 10,000 for work in December.

Now Kosovo's Albanians are seeking Ruder-Finn's help, fearing that their self-declared republic, which remains under Serbian domination, could become the war's next battlefield.

3RD ANNUAL

CROATIAN DAYS ON THE HILL



FEBRUARY 22, 23 AND 24, 1993

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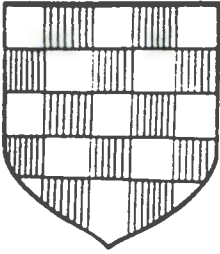
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CROATIA FORCED TO TAKE ACTION TO RECAPTURE OCCUPIED TERRITORY

Washington, D.C. (January 25, 1993)-- Because of the failure of United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in Croatia to achieve the objectives of the Vance Plan, the Republic of Croatia was forced over the weekend to deploy limited force to secure Maslenica Bridge, a vital economic and communications link between northern and southern Croatia. The Vance Plan, signed on January 3, 1992, called for U.N. forces to ensure normal living conditions, disarm Serb paramilitary formations, ensure the return of refugees to their homes, and re-establish normal traffic and other communications. As David Owen, co-chair of the Geneva peace conference stated, Croatia has legitimate grievances over the failure to achieve these objectives in occupied Croatian territory. The area around Maslenica Bridge was especially important because Croatia's economy, already overburdened by some 700,000 Bosnian refugees, could not function without normal transportation between northern and southern Croatia. Having already lost one tourist season due to the war, Croatia could not afford a similar loss of hard currency simply because tourists could not get access to resort cities like Dubrovnik.

While some suggest that this action could inflame an already tense situation, Croatia was left with no alternative given the complete failure of U.N. forces. It is important to keep in mind the following:

1. This is not a Croatian "aggression." Croatian forces acted to liberate and secure parts of their own occupied country. According to the Vance Plan, Serb forces were to withdraw from this area over a year ago.

2. This was not the "first major breach of the Vance Plan in over one year," as has been reported. Serb paramilitary forces have violated the cease-fire in Croatia over 7,000 times, according to the U.N. Furthermore, Serb forces have engaged in "ethnic cleansing" of occupied Croatian territory in the presence of U.N. forces.

3. The UNPROFOR forces in Croatia have a one-year mandate, which expires March 6, 1993. By all estimates, including that of Mr. Vance, the United Nations has failed to meet any of its objectives. The Vance Plan failed because the United Nations failed.

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Refugee Burden Is Impoverishing Croatian

Hosts

By CHUCK SUDETIC

Special to The New York Times

ZAGREB, Croatia, Nov. 22 — Faced with enormous economic problems and an influx of Bosnian refugees, people from across this former Yugoslav republic are looking with resentment and bewilderment on a world they see as too slow to send help and too quick to slam its doors shut.

"The kindest thing you can say is that this is hypocritical," said Croatia's Vice President, Mate Granic.

The republic's 4.5 million or so people are now host to 627,000 registered displaced persons, including 333,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, most of them Muslims, according to United Nations statistics. The Zagreb Government estimates that more than 100,000 unregistered Bosnian refugees also live in Croatia.

Appeal to Take Even More

This month and last, international relief agencies urged Croatia to open its borders to thousands of new refugees driven from Sarajevo and from Bosnian towns. At the same time, Britain refused entry visas to 180 Bosnian refugees for whom a private British charity had already arranged housing with families.

About 1,500 Bosnian men released from Serbian prisons and camps also remain in a squalid, "temporary" shelter in a Croatian town of Karlovac because Western Governments are reluctant to accept them. Thousands more prisoners and internees are stuck in the Serbian camps.

"It is as if 40 million Mexicans picked up and fled to the United States," said Michael Keats, a spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Zagreb.

But despite the refugees' problems, Croatians say they face adversity themselves. "I am sorry for these people, but they are a burden," said a 70-year-old Croatian housewife from Zagreb, whose \$23 monthly pension and welfare check does not cover her food costs, much less housing and utilities. "We are ourselves in great difficulty."

Severely Shrinking Economy

Unable to make ends meet, many of Croatia's people, who include Croats and Serbs as well as ethnic Hungarians, Albanians and Italians, have simply stopped paying their rent and electrical bills.

Croatia's total economy has slipped from about \$13.5 billion in 1990 to \$7.5 billion this year, Mr. Granic said. He estimated that the cost of maintaining the displaced persons and refugees exceeds \$50 million a month.

Croatia finds 25 percent of its territory, including critical road and rail links, controlled by rebel Serbs and 37 percent of its production facilities either in Serbian-occupied lands or in ruins. Some here complain that the war with Serbia last year and the flood of Bosnian refugees this year have damaged this country more than United Nations economic sanctions have damaged Serbia and Montenegro, the truncated Yugoslav federation.

"My God, this is devilish," said a man who gave his name only as Matija,

a 78-year-old retired postal worker.

"When Tito was alive we weren't given the freedom to talk," he said, referring to postwar Yugoslavia's longtime leader. "But at least people had something to eat. To hell with this kind of freedom."

Idle Hands, Devil's Playthings

In Zagreb, hard-pressed pensioners line up at night to buy cheap black bread before prices go up. Growing numbers of prostitutes haunt dark side streets. And idle young men and women, who have little prospect of finding employment anytime soon, linger for hours in cafes, nursing espressos.

"I am psychologically lost," said Tomislav Provic, an electrician who fled

from the city of Vukovar when it fell to the Serbs a year ago and now lives in a Zagreb hotel. "We cannot get permanent jobs because we lack residency cards, and we can't even apply for residency cards."

In addition to the 633,000 displaced persons and refugees, Croatia's Government must support 267,000 jobless, 120,000 police and military personnel, 800,000 pensioners and 150,000 others on some kind of welfare, according to Government statistics.

So far, the Government has paid its bills only by printing unbacked currency. Consequently, the monthly inflation rate has increased from 15 percent in July to 40 percent in November, Government statistics and estimates say.

"We are just below the designated level of hyperinflation," said Ante Cicin-Sajn, a financial expert. "That's when money becomes practically unusable."

"It is incredible that Croatia has held out so long without social unrest," Mr. Cicin-Sajn said, adding that despite the hardship, the country has main-

tained payments on its \$3.5 billion hard-currency foreign debt.

Croatia estimates that it has received \$1.5 billion in aid, including assistance from Croatian émigrés, international organizations and foreign governments since the war began here in July 1991.

"This has helped us maintain stability," Vice President Granic said.

"But Croatia needs help now to deal with the refugees and displaced persons," he said, estimating that the Government requires about \$50 million just to house the refugees.

The Government, he said, may soon be unable to pay to keep the refugees in hotels and private homes. In any event, it desperately needs to free up the hotel rooms they occupy, especially along the Adriatic coast, to have a chance of earning desperately needed hard currency from the 1993 tourist season.

"People here will soon be unable to provide the refugees housing," he said. "They will put them out, and this will create an uncontrolled movement."

The New York Times
11/23/92

Letter from Greater Serbia



Days before Christmas, supporters swept President Slobodan Milošević back into office in an election that was marred by fraud and vote rigging.

We are eating the grapes of the dead, and the grapes are delicious. Juicy, blue-black, sweet and tart, they hang in furtive ripe clusters

in the arbor just behind the house where the Serbs killed the Muslim man and his wife.

It's late on a glorious Bosnian afternoon—the seamless sky as deep blue as the grapes, the warmth of the sun making you glad to be alive, even though snow crests the hills around Sarajevo.

All day we've been visiting concentration camps, investigating massacre reports, traversing a landscape as pretty and, at first glance, as affluent as the Pennsylvania hunt country. Only up close do you see that many of the handsome chalet-style houses with satellite dishes on the roofs have been bombed out. After a while you can pick out exactly where the Muslims and Croats lived; they're the houses that have been blown up from the inside.

SERBIA'S BLOOD WAR

The latest peace negotiations have left Serb president Slobodan Milošević and his program of "ethnic cleansing" triumphant.

What darkness lies in the hearts of the killers?

BY T.D. ALLMAN

For all the hate and killing that now divide them, the peoples of the former Yugoslavia—the Serbs, Slovenes, Croats, Muslims, Albanians, and Macedonians—are all friendly, family-oriented, and house-proud. A Yugoslav saves up some money and the first thing he does is build a nice house.

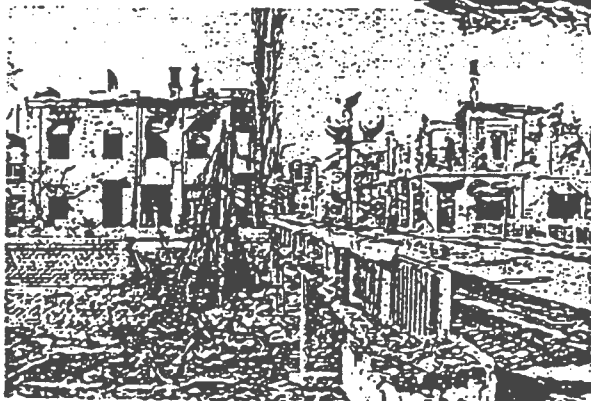
This is such a house, or, rather, it was, and that's what makes it seem a crime to spit out the grape seeds onto the little patio, still as neat as a pin except for the dust from the explosion. The shiny glass teacups and spotless ironed tea towels are still on their shelves in the kitchen, next to the downstairs bedroom, where the explosion crushed the couple to death. The TV sits in the living room, its vacant glass eye somehow intact, and the little red Lada station wagon waits in the garage, its finish still gleaming.

The people who built this house, and lived in it, are gone forever. But in these small mementos you can see the modest lives of decent hard work that came to an end five nights ago.

This town is called Prijedor. It's in northern Bosnia, a region paradigmatic of what the world has come to call "ethnic cleansing." But except for

the rubble and terror, this house could have been in Nassau County, New York.

"The Serbs came in the night," a neighbor whispers in German. "The explosion was at one A.M. They put dynamite in the sanctuary of the mosque. When the minaret collapsed, the explosion blew out the back wall of their house. The mother and father were killed



When the city of Vukovar resisted the Serbs, it became the target of their devastating wrath.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES HANCOCK

instantly. The children were sleeping upstairs with their grandmother," he adds. "and survived. They fled. No one knows where."

"I suppose he was a guest worker in Germany, like you," I say. "That's how he paid for the house."

"No, he was a salesman—computers," the neighbor answers. "A young man, well educated, not mixed up in politics. Sir," he continues, "the Serbs come every night. They take two or three people. I am going to be killed soon. Is there some way you could help my children get to Stuttgart? I worked in a bakery there for eight years. My friends there could raise them."

After inspecting the debris of the mosque, we drive over to see the Roman Catholic church the Serbs blew up. This, in comparison, was a major edifice, and harder to destroy. The church is a tangle of cement and iron girders now, but the steeple stands—or rather it leans, twisted, pockmarked, scorched by the explosion.

An elderly woman, a Croat Catholic

foreigners don't belong here. Prijedor belongs to the Serbs."

Until it decided to commit suicide, Yugoslavia was on its way to joining the club of affluent European nations. Yugoslavia had tourism, heavy industry: it was a food-surplus nation. The totems of an emerging consumer society were everywhere: new gas stations, motels, housing developments, discos, and sidewalk cafés in the villages. Most impressive were the large private houses covering the roadside hills. Before the killing started, practically everyone, it seems, was just finishing a new house, or had just bought a new car.

But beneath this surface modernity seethed fierce, centuries-old ethnic hatreds, which Communism had only suppressed. As the state collapsed and Slovenia, then Croatia, and finally Bosnia seceded from the Yugoslav federation, the Serbs exploded in a frenzy of killing and destruction. First they overran nearly a third of Croatia, committing atrocities unknown in Europe since World War II. Then, last spring, they overran two thirds of Bosnia.

Ever since, the world has looked on, horrified, but done nothing to stop the aggression, let alone reverse it. As I sit in my hotel room in Belgrade watching CNN, the BBC,

and Sky News, peacemakers Cyrus Vance and Lord David Owen dash from Geneva to Belgrade with the latest cease-fire proposals. The faces of others I've come to interview flash on the screen: Dobrica Ćosić, the novelist who is now president of what is left of Yugoslavia; Milan Panić, the American businessman from Orange County, California, who, from July to December last year, was Yugoslavia's extraordinary prime minister; and, far less frequently, Slobodan Milošević, the president of Serbia, the man many call "Slobo-Saddam" and condemn as the mastermind of ethnic cleansing—but who, more than any other, average Serbs believe speaks for them, stands up for them, while "the world" gangs up on Serbia.

On the TV screen, all they talk about is peace. Yet afterward the pictures always switch back to Bosnia, especially to Sarajevo—the snipers, the artillery, the old people freezing to death, the children with no names because their relatives are all dead and they are too

young to speak. In less than a year, Serbs have murdered more than 120,000 people in Bosnia. More than 100 formal cease-fires have been wantonly violated. According to European Community investigators, Serb soldiers in Bosnia have "systematically" raped more than 20,000 Muslim women in a premeditated campaign of sexual terror.

"Everything always goes just as Milošević wants it," says an envoy in Belgrade. "He is a master at two things: orchestrating the killing, and giving the civilized world just enough cause to avoid military intervention to actually stop these crimes."

Repeatedly, Milošević has strung the international community along, raising hopes for peace, dashing them, and raising them anew. Last autumn, the great expectation was that placing United Nations observers at Serb artillery positions might end the shelling of Sarajevo. After weeks of tortuous negotiations, the agreement was violated the very day it was scheduled to begin.

In December, hope took political form. After ignoring months of pleas from the outside world for democratic elections in Serbia, Milošević finally permitted his constituents to vote for him. Not only was he re-elected, with a margin of victory that was widened by intimidation and fraud, but he also defeated and drove from office his most important rival, Prime Minister Panić.

Then, in January, hope took diplomatic form. Mediators Vance and Owen beseeched Milošević to use his "influence" to persuade Bosnian Serbs to accept their latest peace plan—and once again Milošević proved himself the master of events.

Within days, the previously intractable Bosnian Serbs demonstrated they had been following Milošević's orders all along by accepting this peace plan. The "peace settlement" cost them little: like an earlier one in Croatia it confirmed both the ethnic cleansing and Serb aggression, granting Milošević nearly everything he wanted in Bosnia. Equally significant, the threat of foreign military action was neutralized. Now, with Panić and other domestic opponents quelled in the December elections, Milošević stood alone, more than ever the undisputed leader of "Greater Serbia."

The outside world, of course, has been too preoccupied with other matters to pay much attention to what had happened: Milošević had triumphed; death and suffering had been visited on count-

Milošević "is a master at orchestrating the killing, and giving the civilized world just enough cause to avoid military intervention."

lay worker wearing a Virgin Mary medall, searches the rubble for relics. "They blew up the church five minutes after they blew up the mosque. The fire station is right over there," she says, pointing behind the church, "but the Serb firemen would not help."

It's getting dark now, and people scurry past us, refusing to answer questions. I knock on several doors. Finally, a Serb opens his door. Since his house faces one side of the church, windows in his house were shattered. "Blowing up the church was a bad thing to do," he says. He explains why: "Serbs live around here. Serb property was damaged. Serb people were hurt."

One Serb in his 20s is more than willing to talk. In fact, he starts screaming at me as I walk back to the church. He's wearing tight black jeans, a black T-shirt, dark-brown cowboy boots; he has a gold Orthodox cross on a gold chain around his neck, and an automatic pistol tucked in his belt.

"Get out of here!" he shouts. "You

less thousands of innocents with what turned out to be impunity. "On every Bosnian's tombstone," a U.N. "peace-keeper" tells me. "it should be inscribed: 'I died because Helmut Kohl and François Mitterrand and John Major were afraid the Maastricht Treaty wouldn't pass.'" He adds bitterly, "And on the children's graves they should write, 'It was also an election year in the United States.'" "

One morning at a camp in Bosnia I notice that grown men starve differently from the way children do. We're all familiar with infantile starvation: the spindly legs, the bloated bellies, the heads too heavy for the neck to carry. But past puberty, starvation takes a different course. People come to look like sculptures. The prisoner who calls out to me, in French, "Mister, do you have a light?" looks like the effigy of a medieval martyr. You can see the skull and cheekbones—his skin is transparent. He's dying for a smoke. "It's great

As I talk to the prisoners, they whisper, mostly in German, "Tell the world. Don't let the world forget us."

when you journalists visit," he says. "The Serbs let the Red Cross give us cigarettes."

Some 1,200 men are packed into this cattle shed, located on an unprotected mountainside. They are arranged in six long lines, and each man has only the space of a folded blanket where he can sit or lie down on the floor, which is not really a floor, only gravel. The gravel slopes downward, so when it rains or snows the thin blankets are soaked. There is no heat in this shed, or in any of the others in this camp, where some 5,000 people suffer in the same conditions. As I talk to the prisoners, people whisper, mostly in German, "Tell the world. Don't let the world forget us."

Red Cross workers are distributing cigarettes. But there are no matches. I give the prisoner who speaks French my lighter and ask, "Muslim or Croat?" Everyone around him laughs. "I'm Serb!" he says. "Baptized in the Orthodox Church. But the day the Serbs rounded up the Muslims in Prijedor I

was taking a walk with four Muslim friends, all girls. When I explained I was a Serb, they beat me up." He's 24 and so glad to be able to light his cigarette that he grins broadly, and when he does you can see he's losing his teeth from the lack of vitamins.

Here, as in the intellectual salons of Belgrade, Serb authorities display the lack of shame or guilt that normally characterizes pathological behavior. To the contrary, the Serbs are proud of this camp. They believe it proves they are treating their "prisoners of war" decently. But aside from the fact that conditions here do not comply with the Geneva Convention, there's another noteworthy aspect to these "prisoners of war": none of them are soldiers. They are all still wearing the same light summer civilian clothing they had on when they were apprehended months ago. When I ask the Serb authorities about weapons captured from these "prisoners of war," they say there are none.

Another curiosity: there are no wounded here, or in the camp's small dispensary. They do have men who are suffering, but from diseases or malnutrition, not wounds. This raises the question of what the Serbs in Bosnia do with real P.O.W.'s. "They kill them all," an international relief official tells me.

The camp hospital is manned by imprisoned Croat and Muslim doctors. When I ask a doctor how he came to be here, he says, "I was in my surgery in Prijedor. They burst in, pointed a gun at me, and took me away. I don't know where my wife and children are."

The doctors are terrified—much more terrified than the prisoners in the shed—and later I learn why. In Bosnia it is Serb practice when they "cleanse" a town like Prijedor to terrorize average people, especially women and children, into fleeing after signing over their houses and other property. Men capable—even though not culpable—of armed resistance are imprisoned, like the prisoners in this camp. Then they kill the non-Serb elite: doctors, lawyers, engineers, businessmen, and elected officials, like the mayor of Prijedor, who, along with 48 other of the town's notables, was never seen alive again after being seized.

"Have there been atrocities? Incidences of torture?"

"Please," the doctor replies. "Do not ask such questions."

I try to compose a purely technical

line of inquiry: "Given the physical circumstances of this camp—the mountain exposure, lack of shelter from the cold, and limited sanitary facilities—how many people will survive the winter?"

"Forty percent of the people here will die," the doctor says.

At Banja Luka's Bosna hotel, which looks like a Ramada Inn, I sup with the Devil, and it occurs to me that I have neglected to bring a long spoon. Actually, the police chief of Prijedor, seated on my right, is amiable, though didactic. Over cocktails he delivers a long discourse on his specialty, which he describes as "ethnic warfare." By his own account he played a major role in "cleansing" Prijedor.

As the first course arrives he opines that it's "very mean" of the media to say Serbs have committed war crimes. "You Americans do not understand ethnic warfare," he says, "because you fight only clean wars, like Kuwait and Vietnam. We do not have that luxury. We Serbs are fighting to save ourselves from genocide." He explains, almost pedantically: "In ethnic warfare the enemy doesn't wear a uniform or carry a gun. Everyone is the enemy."

Our host, the police chief of Banja Luka, sits opposite me. We are his dinner guests tonight because at 3:30 this afternoon a fellow dinner guest, Roy Gutman of *New York Newsday*, was arrested while he was driving along a street in Banja Luka after visiting a Muslim source. This was considered sufficient cause for him to be pulled over, manhandled, dragged into the police station, and threatened with the usual consequences. The black humor in all this was that his arrest was going to make him late for our four o'clock interview with the Banja Luka police chief.

By the time I finally found out what had happened, and reached the police station, Roy had been transformed from prisoner into honored guest. Turkish coffee was served. Would we like some slivovitz, the Yugoslav plum brandy?

The Banja Luka police chief capped our reconciliation by inviting everyone in the room to dinner, including the Prijedor police chief. Besides Roy and me, another American was present: a Croat-American kid from Chicago named John, who was arrested with Roy. John had come along with us from Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. But following his experience with the Serb police, he's still

so scared that, even at dinner, he can't bring himself to speak.

Our host, the Banja Luka police chief, plays good cop; the Prijedor police chief is the bad cop. In an early conversational gambit, the Prijedor police chief declares that though the world is against Serbia, this won't stop the Serbs. "We will fight to the death," he vows.

There is, he explains patiently, a conspiracy against the Serbs led by the Vatican, the Muslim fundamentalists, the

swers matter-of-factly. "World War III will begin here, too."

This prospect seems to alarm none of our dinner companions. To the contrary, they see it as proof that they are right and "the world" is wrong. "You come from a decadent civilization," the Prijedor police chief elaborates. "You have forgotten who your real enemies are—"

At this point the Banja Luka police chief, the good cop, breaks in. "Mr. Gutman," he says amiably. "I think you are Jewish."

"Yes," Roy answers.

"We like Jews!" he says, beaming.

"Jews know how to deal with Muslims."

Roy resumes his questioning without comment. Is it true, he asks, that Serbs killed all the male children in the village of Verbanci? Can our Serb dinner companions enlighten us on the reports that 167 people were crushed to death trying to escape through an air-conditioning duct because they were suffocating in

the room where they were being held? And what about the ravine story: how after a bus full of Muslims was stopped, and the passengers killed, the bodies were thrown into a ravine?

There are three official responses to all such questions, punctuated by smiles and toasts to Serb-American understanding: "Muslim lies." "Croat lies." And: "We are investigating."

Still, even in the good cop's smile, there is puzzlement. Why should this Jew care about Muslim bodies thrown down a waterfall? Can't he

understand we are all fighting the same enemy—or at least should be?

"We don't think of ourselves as Christians and Jews," I interject, attempting to lighten the conversation. "We're just a happy crew of Americans wandering around Bosnia, trying to figure out what's going on. Believe me"—my airy wave includes John, the Croat from Chicago, as well as Roy—"we spend days together in the car—I realize I'm just getting myself in deeper and deeper"—and the subject of our different ethnicities never comes up. We just

think of ourselves as fellow Americans." I conclude, grinning like an idiot because I see the Serbs think I am an idiot. To them, Roy's the Jew, who should be their natural ally in the battle to the death with Islam, but who isn't. I'm the white-bread Westerner who, however patiently they explain the obvious, Will Never Understand.

But now several of the Serbs are eyeing John. He may have been born in Chicago, but nothing can change the fact that he is a Croat. They know exactly what would have been done to John today when he was arrested if he had not been with Roy and not had a U.S. passport. So does John.

While Roy quizzes the Banja Luka police chief, I converse with the bad cop. "That certainly was a professional job done on the mosque and church," I observe. "Who did it?"

"Not professional enough," he complains. "Vandals did it."

"That's funny," I say. "The mosque was blown up at one A.M. The church was blown up five minutes later. But there's a curfew in Prijedor. Only forces under your command are allowed out that late. And you can't just blow up buildings on the spur of the moment. It takes hours to organize such demolitions."

"We are investigating," he answers. Then he adds, "A Croat sniper was firing from the steeple of the church."

"You don't mean that night, at five past one in the morning."

"No," he says, smiling. "Before."

"And the mosque? That was an enemy position too?"

"Yes, you are right. The mosque was being used by enemies of the Serbs." The police chief of Prijedor smiles. He is beginning to develop hope for me.

"And all the destroyed houses we saw?"

"They all had bunkers."

"So the fact the Muslim houses had basements meant they had to be dynamited?"

"Yes," the police chief says. "You are beginning to understand."

After a few hours, the debris of the meal lies around us. "A number of the prisoners we saw are starving," I say.

"Because they are Muslims," the official who predicted World War III interjects. "We do everything for them, but sometimes we have only pork grease for cooking, so they refuse to eat." He adds, "They are taking food out of the mouths of Serbs."

"But Koranic dietary laws are waived in life-or-death situations..." I start to say, but the fatigue and the slivovitz



Milan Panić, the pharmaceutical magnate and rosy optimist, was jolted back to reality by his election loss to Milošević.

"World War I began here," a Serb official says matter-of-factly. "World War III will begin here, too."



Many blame the epic nationalistic novels of Yugoslav president Dobrica Ćosić for the Serb program of ethnic cleansing.

European Community, and the United States. Like nearly all the Serbs I meet, he believes that Serbia is a great nation, chosen to play a special role in history, and that the world is destined to pay dearly for not recognizing this fact. "We Serbs forgive, but we don't forget," he says. "We won't forget the West sided with the Muslims and Croats."

"Yes, the world will pay a big price for opposing us," another official agrees.

"What price?" I ask.

"World War I began here," he an-

prevent me from pursuing the point. I begin again. "What did you do to your mayor?" I ask the police chief of Prijedor. "He was freely elected. He was your boss, wasn't he?"

"He was elected by Muslims."

"They say you killed him."

"He escaped."

"Along with the 48 other officials and civic leaders?"

"Yes. Same night. We never saw them again."

"More slivovitz!" the good cop says.

I take another sip and ask, "Do you want your children to be killers or computer salesmen?"

At this point the police chief of Prijedor stands up, looks at me, and says, "I am leaving." There's no anger or hatred in his look, only the realization he's been wasting his time. First he had to be polite to the Jew, who deserved to be arrested for consorting with the Muslim. Now he's squandered the whole dinner trying to talk sense into the American.

The Serbs believe that if you just ex-

busy with tourists and visiting businessmen, the hotel is now nearly empty, though occasionally a local couple will check in for the night.

On the fifth-floor landing I hear an extraordinary sound. It's happened to everyone: unexpectedly hearing the sound of strangers engaging in sexual intercourse on the other side of a thin wall. But never have I heard such violence associated with the act of making love. The screams of pain and rage and the violent thudding follow me up to my room, mixed with the smell of the kitchen and the sound of the automatic-rifle fire punctuating the night.

The phone in my Belgrade Hyatt Regency Hotel room rings at 6:10 P.M. "His Excellency the President will be waiting for you in the Piano Bar at the Inter-Con at 6:30," the voice says.

Altogether there are now 11 presidents and nine different currencies in the former Yugoslavia, an area only somewhat larger than Minnesota. Three hours

ago, I met President Radovan Karadzic of the self-proclaimed Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, supposed chief of state of Prijedor and Banja Luka,

among other territories. It was supposed to be a very important press conference. But when the Belgrade press corps assembled, it became apparent that President Karadzic had once again decided to "prove" an Islamic-fundamentalist conspiracy in Bosnia. Today, he had some "captured" Arab passports. "If this goes on," he warned in a No More Mr. Nice Guy tone, "we will accept volunteers too."

"Who would fight for you?" one flabbergasted reporter inquired.

"Romanians," the president answered, "and lots of Germans."

The listeners scratched their heads. The Romanians are Orthodox, but not Slavs. And the Germans, of course, are neither. But President Karadzic quickly drew a veil of discretion over any more explanations. "I will tell you one thing," he said. "Protestants aren't Catholics. The people in England aren't Catholics, either. People in many non-Catholic countries are beginning to understand what is at stake in the battle for Bosnia."

Following the press conference, I spoke with the president, who has been

accused by the U.S. State Department, among others, of complicity in crimes against humanity and who is, by profession, a psychiatrist. It was just like the dinner in Banja Luka. President Karadzic had no sense of shame or guilt—that is, of right or wrong. "American investment will be welcome in the new Bosnia," he emphasized as we parted.

In the Piano Bar tonight, no fewer than two presidents are holding court. One is the president of Montenegro—a clean-shaven young Serb whose government, it is said, helps make ends meet by counterfeiting Marlboro cigarettes. But I'm here to meet the president with the eyes and beard of Rasputin. His name is Goran Hadzic, and he's president of the Serbian Republic of Krajina, which is the official name for the ransacked, Serb-held areas of Croatia. Waiting with the president are two thugs with shirts open to their navels so you can see their crucifixes; both have automatic pistols under their jackets. President Hadzic himself is wearing a cotton-candy-colored suit, which contrasts dramatically with his beard, eyes, and flowing hair, all of which are raven-black.

I'm meeting President Hadzic because, as usual, rumors are buzzing around Belgrade that the Serb president Slobodan Milosevic's days in power are numbered. Predictions of Milosevic's political demise have always been wrong. But what actually would happen if Milosevic were removed from power? The optimists see salvation, a way to stop the madness and the killing. But the pessimists fear Milosevic's removal could lead to a wider war, including a Serb civil war, with fighting right here in Belgrade. And it may be started by the Rasputin look-alike in front of me, who, according to numerous sources, has threatened to invade Serbia should his ally Milosevic be ousted.

"Croat lies!" he fires back, eyes flashing, when I ask if Krajina will invade should Milosevic ever be deposed. To President Hadzic's title, the introductory epithet "crazy" is usually appended. But, in this instance, he proves to have a far stronger grip on reality than most of the "experts" I've met in Belgrade. "For one thing," he points out with clairvoyant accuracy, "Milosevic will stay in power."

Then how will the war end?

As the president of Krajina surveys the future, he begins to earn back his epithet. "The war will continue another two or three years," he predicts. And

"Croat lies!" President Hadzic fires back, eyes flashing, when I ask if he will invade—perhaps igniting a civil war in Serbia.

pel or kill sufficient numbers of non-Serbs you can create a 100-percent Serb paradise. But it's as crazy to try ethnic cleansing here as it would be in Brooklyn. This is an alphabet-soup country, and this is true of everything else too. Banja Luka's electricity comes from a Muslim-held town, so this winter people in Banja Luka are dying from the cold just as they are in besieged Sarajevo. Here, as in every other place they've cleansed, the economy is dead, and even the Serbs are without hope or prospects. Though they're winning the war, the Serbs are losing the peace.

In the Banja Luka hotel too, you can see the future written. The Serb staff—overworked and inexperienced—has no incentive to keep things up. As I leave the restaurant, I pass the kitchen. Left-over food and unwashed dishes cover the dirty stainless-steel counters. The smell follows me as I toil up the eight flights to my room in the darkness. Since there's no electricity, there's no elevator, though the hotel generator provides enough current for a dim light at the top of every other landing. Once

then "the Russians will overthrow the traitor Boris Yeltsin and rescue us." Hadzic can just see the tanks rumbling south as Mother Russia resumes its role as leader of Slav Orthodoxy in its holy war against the Pope and Islam. "After the war is over," he adds, "we will restore the monarchy. Would you like another gin and tonic?"

Before departing, the president of Krajina kindly offers to introduce me to my third president in four hours, the president of Montenegro, who is still sitting on the other side of the Piano Bar.

In Belgrade, I have appointments with two more presidents and a prime minister: Yugoslav president Dobrica Ćosić, Serb president Slobodan Milošević, and Yugoslav prime minister Milan Panić, who was preparing to challenge Milošević in the December election.

How did this short, wiry, 63-year-old ex-bicycle racer and California multimillionaire become the prime minister of a country that is only a half-step above Iraq on the scale of bad relations with the U.S.? "I bicycled to freedom," he explains in a typically pithy pronouncement. After defecting from Yugoslavia in 1955 during an international bicycle race, Panić arrived in the U.S. with "two suitcases and \$20." He found his American dream in pharmaceuticals, and today his company is worth nearly half a billion dollars.

Because of his personal history, Panić no longer has a native tongue. He speaks English with a Serb accent and Serbo-Croatian with an American accent. In both languages he says out loud what others are only thinking.

"Ignorant, undemocratic, power-hungry politicians" are to blame for the war, declares Panić, referring specifically to President Milošević, whom he once advised to go to work at Disneyland and learn from Donald Duck and Goofy. "I've told Milošević to his face he must go," Panić says. "Several times."

Like many small men, Panić has an outsize ego. "I'm not sure how long you will last as prime minister," I tell him. "but you'd be a natural governor of California."

"Why not president?" he asks.

"That's constitutionally impossible," I point out. "You weren't born in the U.S."

"The U.S. Constitution has been amended 27 times," he replies with a grin. "It can be amended again for me."

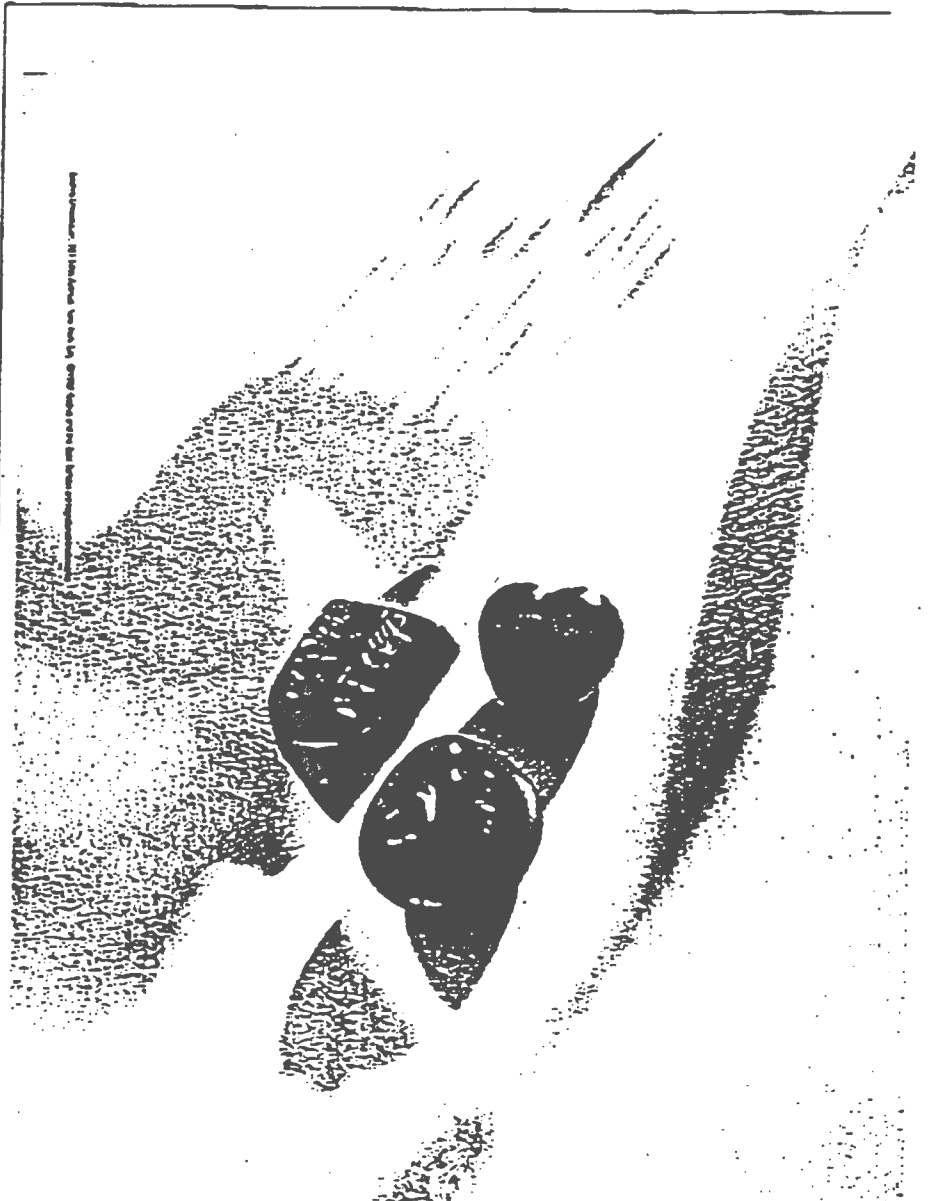
I think Panić is only half joking, partly because of the faith his own life has given him that anything, even Yugo-

slavia, can be fixed if only talented, practical people tackle it. But his rosy optimism now confronts something terrifyingly dark and intractable: Serb chauvinism.

"They just don't get it," says the prime minister, launching into a more damning critique of the Serb mentality than any that have appeared in the international press. "These guys have got to understand that you just don't accomplish anything by try-

ing to solve problems through force."

But the optimism is irrepressible, and Panić is soon talking about the limitless possibilities of the country if only it were run by live wires like him. "They can learn," he says enthusiastically, "but in order to learn you must be taught." From his press kit, he pulls out his favorite teaching aid, the "Bill of Responsibilities," published by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. He ticks off the obliga-



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tions of responsibility until he comes to the one that resonates with what I had seen in Bosnia: "To respect the property of others, both private and public."

"But all this is meaningless to such people," I object.

"It must be made meaningful," he insists.

There is nothing hope and hard work can't achieve, according to Milan Panić, as the articles in his press kit demonstrate. THIS IS NOT A WAR OF HATE, argues one headline. NO IDEA IS WORTH KILLING FOR, proclaims another. PANIC PROMISES TO CLOSE SERBIAN CAMPS IN BOSNIA, reports a third. And then the most forthright and wishful thought, reflecting his own incredible journey: YUGOSLAVS WILL LIVE LIKE AMERICANS.

A week after meeting Panić I visit Yugoslav president Čosić, a courtly 72-year-old who is Serbia's most revered living novelist. The president receives me in the same vast salon where Tito received the world's statesmen, and be-

ture on the Western European model or retreating into the mythical heroics of the past. They chose the past, in large part because of Čosić."

Like most presidents in what was Yugoslavia, Čosić is on his way somewhere, in this case Geneva, where, as always, some breakthrough to peace seems imminent. "Next time," says the president, smiling and shaking my hand, "we'll discuss books, we'll sip wine, we'll get to the bottom of things."

"The president fully understands the dimensions of the catastrophe," someone close to Čosić assures me later. "He understands how his own work has been used to justify criminal excesses of Serb nationalism. Now he is determined, if he can, to write a happy ending. Believe me, if he could remove Milošević and stop the war, he would."

The surreal irony of the situation was that Milošević had created the men who were trying to depose him. Nearly a year ago, when Serb atrocities first outraged the world, Milošević decided to apply some cosmetics to the face of his regime. He arranged to have the grandfatherly Čosić made president of what remained of the Yugoslav federation. In turn Čosić, with Milošević's approval, appointed Panić, the amiable Serb-American multimillionaire.

But though they turned against him, Čosić and Panić have inadvertently served Milošević's grand design very well. The Serbs have spoken with so many contradictory and confusing voices that outsiders could choose to hear whatever they wanted. "Milošević is a genius when it comes to confusing things," a Belgrade realist pointed out. "That's why he's winning." And so, while still controlling everything, Milošević camouflaged himself in a babble of voices.

Later, I remembered what one of Panić's American aides had told me: "I was covered in blood." When he was named prime minister, Panić flew into Sarajevo, dreaming he could make peace with such dramatic gestures. But neither his courage nor his idealism impressed the snipers. One shot hit his aide's car, and the U.S. journalist sitting next to him bled to death.

And in the end, Milan Panić would leave office as he entered it—with everything just as Slobodan Milošević wanted it: covered in blood.

I am left with one president to go, by far the most important—Slobodan Milošević. On the surface Milošević, like Serbia itself, seems modern: he speaks English and dresses like the international banker he once was, representing a Yugoslav state bank in New York. But beneath the pinstripes beat the great, dark themes of Serb nationalism: religion, ideology, bitterness, and death. His father was an Orthodox priest, his mother a devout Communist. Both committed suicide.

To explain the legacy of Serb bitterness Milošević inherited and exploited, most Serbs go all the way back to 1389, when they lost a battle in the southern region of Kosovo to the Turks, who maintained control of the area until 1912. Most national myths are built on victories, but for half a millennium the Battle of Kosovo has been the defining moment of the Serb people, who see themselves, often with reason, as outnumbered victims of barbaric aggression, betrayed by the world.

This chronic Serb sense of grievance produced its most tragic result in 1914, when Gavrilo Princip—Serb nationalist terrorist and spiritual grandfather of today's Serb terrorists—assassinated Austria's Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. At the cost of millions dead in World War I, the hated Austrian and Ottoman empires were destroyed.

But, as Serbs saw it, their dream of a unified Greater Serbia had been betrayed once again. The entry of the U.S. into the fighting, followed by President Wilson's Fourteen Points, had transformed the conflict into "the war to end all wars." Wilson's solution for ending all wars was simple—and, as the future would prove, simpleminded as well. Since wars in Europe were fought over national boundaries, Wilson concluded that the way to prevent future wars was to redraw the map of Europe so that each national group would live, happy and contented, in a nice little nation-state of its own. But when it came to Serbia and its adjacent lands, the demographers threw up their hands. It was no more possible to draw neat national boundaries in the region in 1918 than it would be at the U.N. today.

So a new multinational empire was cobbled together, called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. It included territories that had previously been parts of Austria, Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, Serbia, and Montenegro, and though its peoples were mostly Slavs who largely spoke the same language,

"Please study my books," President Čosić replies. "You'll not find one passage in which I condone ethnic cleansing."

gins the questioning: how sweet do I like my coffee?

The president makes it clear he would prefer to discuss viticulture and literature to warfare; writing novels is his vocation, cultivating grapes his avocation.

"Mr. President," I say, "people tell me your novels are a major source of this catastrophe."

"Please study my books," he replies, his eyes twinkling. "You'll not find one passage in which I condone ethnic cleansing."

Čosić has been described variously as the Solzhenitsyn or the Tolstoy of Serbia. His novels, vast romantic depictions of Mother Serbia's thousand-year struggle for freedom, are certainly not programs for the genocide of non-Serbs. "But," one person who has studied them told me, "they were decisive in creating the intellectual and emotional climate of Serb nationalism in which such outrages came to seem rational. As discontent grew with Tito and Communism, Serbs had a choice between a fu-

what really united them was hate.

In 1934, just 20 years after the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, a Croat terrorist killed King Alexander Karageorgević of Yugoslavia during a state visit to France. This crime was as fateful for Yugoslavia as Príncipe's original crime had been for the world. It destroyed at a stroke any possibility of Yugoslav cohesion in the era of Hitler and Mussolini. Five years later, when World War II began, the "Yugoslavs" turned on one another with a viciousness that mirrored the collapse of European civilization. From 1941 to 1945, 1.7 million Yugoslavs, more than 10 percent of the total population, were killed—mostly by other Yugoslavs. The worst atrocities were committed by Croat Fascists, the Ustaši, deepening the Serb sense of betrayal.

Yet after the war, these disputatious peoples, more divided than ever because of the recent atrocities, were forced to live together again, under the control of Josip Broz, the peasant son of a Croat father and Slovene mother. Like many a

At exactly five o'clock, I dial the six digits of Milošević's bunker. "Yes," answers a voice.

Balkan king, he began as a warlord and, even before assuming power, took a reign name: Tito. For 35 years the Communist dictator, who dressed like a king in a white field marshal's uniform, ruled his strange, hybrid country with an iron hand and a velvet touch. But in the vacuum left by Tito's death, in 1980, history was preparing to repeat itself.

The Croats, Slovenes, and others were tired of repression, tired of Communism—most of all tired of living under what they regarded as Serb domination. But as Serbs saw it, they were the victims. Even today Serbs constantly point out that "Josip Broz" was no Serb—only the latest in a string of foreign oppressors. And the Serb sense of bitterness and betrayal resulted in a repudiation of Tito that had a typical Balkan twist to it: many Serbs assured me Tito was not a man. "He was a woman," they still say—a castration of the dominant Yugoslav leader of the 20th century that sums up the Serbs' own sense of having been emasculated by history.

In Tito's Yugoslavia, Milošević was a climbing apparatchik. In 1987, Serb nationalists started holding demonstrations

at the hallowed Kosovo battle site, protesting the political power exercised by the region's Muslim Albanian majority. Things got out of hand when the government television channel, which Milošević controlled, showed Albanian police beating Serb demonstrators. Instead of calming the situation, Milošević turned the crisis into tragedy. He denounced local authorities and roused the Serbs to a fever pitch. "No one will beat you again," he vowed—a promise he betrayed soon afterward when his tanks crushed democracy demonstrators on the streets of Belgrade.

The faceless apparatchik was now a national hero. By 1989 he had imposed a police state on Serbia. As Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia broke away, Milošević dealt with them as brutally as he had dealt with the Albanians in Kosovo. "If we must fight, then my God we will fight," he declared in a famous speech. "Because if we don't know how to work well or to do business, at least we know how to fight well."

My interview with Milošević is set for a Tuesday, three P.M. sharp. Diplomatic and journalistic friends are amazed. "He never lets himself get caught in a situation where he can be asked questions he can't answer," one tells me. "He avoids responsibility for his actions.

That's how he stays in power. I bet he's just diddling you, just like he diddles Owen and Vance, and Panić and Čosić."

"If Milošević doesn't want to see me," I ask, "why wouldn't he just say no?"

"Milošević is a conspirator," one diplomat tells me. "He survives by confusing people. That's how he distracts people from what he's really doing."

In the end, of course, the paranoids are right. The meeting is canceled—though I am assured it has only been postponed. This goes on for a week.

"The game is not completely played out yet," an ambassador in Belgrade tells me a couple of days later. On one of his crested paper napkins he writes down six numerals. "The number in Milošević's bunker," he explains. When he is in Belgrade, Milošević reputedly spends much of his time in a windowless, bombproof command center in the basement of the presidential palace. "Call around five tomorrow afternoon," advises the ambassador. "He'll be there."

The next day, at exactly five o'clock, I dial the six digits. "Yes," answers a voice.

"President Milošević." I say quickly. "I'm calling about our appointment. The situation is so tragic. Please take this opportunity to talk to the American—"

"No!" interjects the voice, and there is a click.

I dial again. The phone rings 20, 30 times with no answer. I imagine Milošević sitting in his underground bunker, listening to the phone ring over and over again, both the master and the prisoner of the situation he has created.

In the ensuing weeks, Milošević diddles everybody. He promises to allow U.N. surveillance teams into Sarajevo, but the shelling of the city never stops. In the meantime, the Serbs begin another major offensive in Bosnia, moving forward, inexorably and brutally, to fulfill Milošević's dark dream.

Vukovar is the most peaceful city in Milošević's Greater Serbia, and since it is Sunday we visit a church. The church is also very peaceful because it is a ruin, like everything in Vukovar—not almost everything, not practically everything, *everything*. The Yugoslav army systematically destroyed Vukovar—street by street, house by house. The peacefulness of Vukovar is the peacefulness of total devastation, total death. Surveying the ruins, I think of Hue following the Tet offensive, or of Beirut. But they never were as dead as this. In the bright afternoon sunlight, Vukovar, demolished in the summer of 1991, is like one of those ghost cities of India, where 1,000 or 2,000 years ago a brilliant civilization flourished, then was extinguished.

Absurdly, money is scattered all over the church ruins like wastepaper, along with catechisms. No one picks up the money, just as no one prays here, because there are no people here anymore: I pick up a First Communion card with a little girl's photo on it and some old Yugoslav dinars to keep as souvenirs.

Vukovar, at least in terms of ruined buildings, is the biggest city in the Serbian Republic of Krajina, the president of which I'd met in the Piano Bar in Belgrade. Krajina consists of the parts of Croatia the Serbs grabbed last year when Croatia declared its independence. Everywhere the pattern was the same—the pattern I first observed in Prijedor. Serb terrorists overthrew the local government and killed the local notables. In terror, non-Serbs, along with a lot of Serbs, fled, and Greater Serbia gained another province.

But in Vukovar, as in Sarajevo, people resisted. So Vukovar was destroyed, the

target of the same Serb wrath that has been directed at Sarajevo for so many months.

When I ask Serb friends about Vukovar, they answer as they always do: It was the Croats' fault, just as it was the Muslims' fault in Bosnia, and the Albanians' fault in Kosovo. The Croats shouldn't have resisted. Anyway, Vukovar really was a Serb city, and this also gave them the right to destroy it.

In fact, according to official statistics, 84,024 people lived in Vukovar and its environs before the killing started. Of these, 43.7 percent were Croat, 37.4 percent Serb, and 18.9 percent "other," which actually means "both"—since most of the others would have been either the children of mixed marriages or partners in them. Now not more than a few hundred people are still alive in Vukovar. "I need some footage of life among the ruins," says Tom Aspell, an NBC correspondent, so we go searching. The only signs of life are occasional clumps of men—some armed, some not—sitting out in the sunshine, in

Sometimes when one of them went for water, she didn't make it back, and the others stayed in the cellar, dying of thirst.

front of bombed-out buildings, drinking.

Then we see an elderly couple working in their garden. May we visit them?

She rushes to make coffee, while he shows us the garden—tomatoes, pumpkins, plums. After serving the coffee, the old woman sits down in front of Tom's camera and is asked to describe what happened here. Immediately, she starts crying. She tells us that she and her neighbors spent nine weeks huddling in her basement without fuel, water, or sanitation. They survived on rotting potatoes. The nearest water was a hundred yards away. Sometimes, when one of them went for water, she didn't make it back, and the others stayed in the cellar, dying of thirst, too frightened to go searching for water or the body.

This couple, whose house and life were destroyed by Serb artillery, happen to be Serbs themselves. And like most Serbs the old man loves America because he believes America is the natural friend of the Serbs. "America must establish a program to reconstruct Vuko-

var," he tells me. His own program is quite specific: "Please have the Americans send me a boat," he says. He explains: "My boat was destroyed in the shelling. When the Americans replace my boat I can catch fish in the Danube."

"Was this an entirely Serb neighborhood?" I ask.

"No," his wife replies. "Slovenes next door. A Croat-Serb couple over there, Muslims, Hungarians, but mostly mixed marriages." She tries to remember what kind of a neighborhood it had been. "It was a Yugoslav neighborhood," she says.

"Now I need to do a stand-up, desolation as the backdrop." Tom decides. He picks a crossroads of desolation, what once was a busy intersection downtown. Nearby stands the only undamaged building in Vukovar. It's intact because it was built after the fighting stopped. It's called the Donald Duck Café.

The Serb driver and I go in while Tom does his stand-up. Actually, the driver isn't really a driver. He's a physicist, but, as he explains, "there's not much work for scientists in ex-Yugoslavia.

"Vukovar should not be rebuilt," the driver-physicist announces. "It should be left as it is, as a monument to human folly." Being a good Serb, he has not said "to Serb folly." He goes on to

say, "I would fight and die for Serbia.

"But what Serbia?" he continues. "Not the Serbia that destroyed Vukovar." He then describes the mythical Serbia of great artists, poets, and scientists, that magnificent bulwark of civilization in the Balkans glorified in the novels of Dobrica Ćosić—the hallucination of which, in fact, was the reason for the death of Vukovar and all the other deaths. Like most Serbs I meet, he just doesn't get it. In Europe at the end of the 20th century, to believe it is right to kill for any nation is not the source of the madness. It is the madness itself.

The Donald Duck Café is like the bar scene in *Star Wars*. One guy here is five-five, 350 pounds, and has six fingers on each hand. From the ruins, mutants have arisen. The Donald Duck Café is where they do their deals: currency, cigarettes, VCRs, guns, ammo, anything you want.

"Which is the killer?" I ask the driver-physicist.

"They're all killers," he replies, referring to our fellow patrons.

"No, I'm not talking about snipers and artillery. I mean, which one actually kills people with his own hands?"

"That one," he says, making his choice with the slightest nod of the head. "He looks normal."

And the colored girls go—"

"Voulez-vous coucher avec moi, ce soir—"

"Take me to the pilot, take me to the pilot of your soul—"

According to the music, we are lost between the moon and New York City. But we're actually in a disco in Priština, capital of Kosovo—a region also known as "the tinderbox of the Balkans" and "the war waiting to happen." In this godforsaken place, halfway between Bulgaria and Albania, the 70s, it seems, never ended, at least in this disco. Everyone's wearing blue jeans, some with bell bottoms.

Priština isn't like Vukovar. The buildings are still standing; there's been no war here yet. Nationalism has created a cleaner horror here—the Serb version of apartheid. Albanians aren't allowed in this disco, or into the modern hotel where we are staying.

Three years ago, under President Milošević's orders, the Serbs did here what they later did in most places where they've seized power. Non-Serbs were summarily fired from their jobs, which were then given to Serbs. The Albanians' political and economic rights were extinguished. In essence this was the first of all the Milošević-sponsored coups d'état through which the Serbs would try to "cleanse" the parts of Croatia and Bosnia they wanted for themselves.

But how to "cleanse" an area where Serbs are outnumbered nine to one? There were simply too many non-Serbs to do what was done in Prijedor, so the Serbs opted for making life miserable for the Albanians: their jobs were taken away; classes at the university were taught in Serbo-Croatian only; the official use of the Albanian language was prohibited.

Meanwhile, in this disco, the Serbs party. And they smile at you. They are as delighted to see you as the police chief of Banja Luka was, because they believe that, once you see Kosovo, you will see things as they see them.

Various Serbs patiently explain it to me—why Albanians do not have the same rights Serbs do. I can never fully grasp the argument. But in Belgrade, Professor Mihailo Marković, a Serb intellectual who has spent much time in the United States, comes closest.

When Yugoslavia was established following World War I, he reminds me, it was called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. "They were the constituent peoples of Yugoslavia," he elaborates. "Therefore they have the right to dissolve the state and to redefine its internal boundaries," which is certainly one way of describing what happened in places like Vukovar. "However, the Albanians are not a constituent people. Hence, they possess no such right."

"But so few Serbs live in Kosovo," I reply, "and it's only been a part of Serbia since 1912. Why shouldn't the Albanians have the same—?"

Behind the professor's elegant legalisms glints the madness of history. "Kosovo is Serb," he says. "It always has been Serb. It always will be."

It's 6:30 A.M. I'm waiting outside the hotel in Priština with two heavy suitcases. I've lugged them down the street a ways. This is because the Albanian president of Kosovo, Ibrahim Ru-

Behind the professor's legalisms glints the madness of history. "Kosovo is Serb. It always has been Serb. It always will be."

gova, whom I interviewed yesterday, was kind enough to offer me a lift to Skopje, the capital of Macedonia—least known and happiest of Yugoslavia's breakaway republics. But Albanians, even presidents, aren't allowed inside the Priština hotel. What happens if an Albanian does enter one of these Serb preserves? "The first time, they beat you up," one Albanian told me. "The second time, they kill you."

So I wait as inconspicuously as possible down the street from the hotel. When the Albanian car appears and slows down, I jump in.

At the border, each car stops, then is waved on. Stop, wave—except with the president's car, which gets a long stop before the wave comes.

Of course, like most of the presidents I've interviewed in Yugoslavia, he's not a real president. No one recognizes the Albanian Republic of Kosovo except Albania. But after the Serbs disenfranchised the Albanians, the Albanians went ahead and held their own elec-

tion, and chose him as chief of state.

"What's your background?" I ask.

"I'm a literary theoretician," he replies in perfect French. "A Constructivist. I wrote my thesis in Paris." He adds, "I never thought I'd be a president, but after the Serbs closed down the university where I was a professor, I emerged as a kind of spokesman. One thing led to another and so here I am today. Did you visit our PEN center?"

Under President Rugova's leadership the Albanians, in contrast to the Croats and Bosnians, have opted for non-violent resistance. Besides their PEN center, they've got a branch of Amnesty International, and close ties with human-rights groups around the world.

All this has created problems for the Serbs. If the Albanians were shooting at them, that would provide a pretext for "cleansing." But the Albanians go in for international solidarity, not guerrilla warfare. Today the president is on his way to visit England, as the guest of some human-rights-concerned M.P.'s.

I'm bemused by this French-intellectual, chain-smoking, Islamic-secularist Albanian president. "A Constructivist president in a deconstructivist country," I remark.

"You could put it that way," he answers.

Knowing how French-educated intellectuals think, I say,

"Among American writers, you prefer Hemingway to Fitzgerald, and Faulkner to Hemingway?"

"Most of all," the president answers. "I love Edgar Allan Poe."

At the Serb Ministry of Information in Belgrade they give you brown paper shopping bags, complete with the ministry logo on them. One expensively produced brochure contains page after page of old photographs of severed Serb heads. *Never Again* is its title, referring to Croat atrocities during World War II. But, of course, it is happening again, and one reason is that in these official documents there's the same reveling in brutalization that's followed me everywhere in the territories Serbs control.

I first noticed this in an official communiqué given to me in Banja Luka, entitled "Lying Violent Hands on the Serbian Woman":

Under such a hot, Balkanic sky every single demonstrative shape of life, every single

demonstrative shape of death have been unmeasurably bloodier, more vehement and rougher drawn than gloved Europe could ever imagine. Whatever the criterion of ferociousness is more venomous the roads of human and death are crueler, by all means. Wherever human bodies are getting buried into tombs, bottom of pit cannot be reached. Anyway, both the dagger and the pit have become here an institution of hatred.

In Belgrade too, the propaganda is the literary equivalent of Prijedor—explosions of rage, paranoia, and madness. Ostensibly these raging diatribes I carry back to my hotel in the Ministry of Information shopping bag are meant to show the world how evil all the innumerable enemies of the Serbs are. But they really illustrate how successfully the Serbs have poisoned their own minds.

The ministry also publishes a periodical, scholarly in format. It shows that self-brutalization takes an intellectual form as well. The publication is supposedly a compendium of distinguished commentary on the Yugoslav crisis. But the articles bear titles such as "The Evil Deeds of a Slav Pope," "Satanization of Serbia," and "European Hoodlum Democracy Will Not Break the Serbs."

Along with the satanization of everyone else, and the Serb bravado, there is the whining self-pity that runs through all extreme Serb nationalist discourse. "How Lies Travel Around the World," laments one article. "The Germans Do Not Want Our Mathematicians," complains another.

The ladies at the ministries of information treated me very kindly while I was in Belgrade—I say "ministries" because, just as Belgrade has two presidents, it has two ministries of information, one Serb, one federal. The ministry ladies work very hard, they dress very demurely, they are very polite, and they all seem well into middle age. The best word to describe them is "maternal." They answered faxes; they found facts and statistics. They got important interviews for me. They were as kind as they could be.

I wanted to show two of these ladies my gratitude: after some reflection I invited them to high tea at the Hyatt. There's a lovely salon at the far end of the atrium which looks as if it might be in Back Bay Boston. Exquisite pastries are displayed on an antique mahogany table. Waitresses wearing frilly white aprons pour tea from a silver service into porcelain cups.

My invitation aroused discreet excitement. Finally the great day arrived. As we ordered our tea and selected our pastries, it seemed to me these two ladies

had had their hair done for the occasion.

We had an unspoken pact: we would discuss only light, happy things over tea. I diverted them for a time by discussing how difficult it was for foreigners to pronounce Serb names. "Your system of writing is too logical," I said. "It helplessly confuses people who speak languages like English, where the way words are spelled has no necessary connection with the way they are spoken. Take President Čosić," I went on. "I can only get his name right if I first remind myself it sounds something like 'sausage.'"

The two ladies tittered appreciatively at this witticism, and I continued: "And President Karadžić. I can never get that right. Karadžić? Karadžić! Karadžić." I said, trying out several pronunciations.

"Karadžić! President Karadžić!" the young man at the next table called out to us. He rose and rushed over to us. "You know President Karadžić?" he asked in Serbian, the ladies translating.

"First I tear out their fingernails," said the killer. "Then I cut off their thumbs; if that doesn't work I slit their throats."

"I have met him," I replied. "Do you know him?"

"President Karadžić is my friend," he said, beaming.

"Please sit down," I said.

"What do you do?" he asked.

"I'm a writer. What do you do?"

"I am a killer," he said.

"Oh, whom do you kill?"

"I used to kill people in Sarajevo," he answered. "Now I kill people in Belgrade."

The young man began pulling out all sorts of documents, which I handed to the ladies to translate. "I didn't just kill people in Sarajevo," he said. "Two years ago I killed many people in Krajina, children and women. Then I killed people in Vukovar."

"But the war hadn't started two years ago in Krajina."

"We had started," he said.

"And what brings you to the Hyatt?" I asked.

"I like it here!" he said. "It's cozy. The service is good. And the ice cream! The ice cream here is wonderful."

"Yes," I said. "I understand that. But what I really meant to ask, if you will excuse me, is how can you afford to eat here? Tea and cakes here cost more than most Serbs now earn in a week."

"Oh, I have no problem with money," he answered. "I have plenty of money."

"Where do you get the money?"

"President Karadžić gives it to me."

"President Karadžić personally?"

"His people give it to me. Also General Ratko Mladić," he added, referring to the Serb officer commanding the Bosnian Serb army. "Fifty thousand deutsche marks at a time."

"Why do they give you the money?"

"I buy things for them, and then, when I have bought the things, they give me another 50,000 deutsche marks. You can buy anything on the Belgrade black market," he said with a grin, as though it were an ice-cream shop. "But sometimes you buy things and, even though you have paid for them, people don't deliver."

"What do you do then?"

"First I tear out their fingernails, then I cut off their thumbs; if that doesn't work I slit their throats. You're staying here in the Hyatt?" he concluded. "What's your room number?"

The two ladies looked at me, curious as to how I would respond.

"As a matter of fact I'm not staying at the Hyatt," I lied affably, trying to smile naturally. "I'm staying at the Moskva, downtown."

"What room number?"

"Three-oh-eight," I replied, praying there was a Room 308 at the Moskva Hotel. "As a matter of fact I have to get back, and I promised these two charming ladies a lift downtown."

"Do you have to leave so soon? I enjoy talking with you. I could buy you some ice cream," he pleaded. "Oh well. I'll look for you at the Moskva. I don't have enough friends in Belgrade."

Very slowly the three of us walked the enormous length of the Hyatt atrium, careful not to appear to be hurrying. Only when we got outside, beyond the enormous glass doors, did our three heads swivel backward involuntarily, in unison.

No, he had not followed us.

According to the documents he'd shown us, they told me, his story checked out. Buried among the papers was one advising psychiatric counseling.

"What if he finds you?" one of the ladies asked.

"How can he find me? He thinks I'm at the Moskva."

"You gave him your card." It was true. As a kind of friendship gift, he'd given me an Arkan button—Arkan being the nickname for Željko Raznjatović, one of the most notorious, and most popular, terrorists in Serbia and recently elected to the Serb parliament. In return, I'd given him my card.

"But it only has my New York address on it." Yet at that moment we all felt the force of it: how the insane can make connections, discover secrets, seek you out.

"Well, in that case, I'm sure it will be all right," she said quickly, grasping my hand in thanks. "The tea was wonderful."

The other lady added, "Had I read about this in your article—and I am sure you will put it in your article—I would not have believed it, even though I know you personally. Except—"

"Except," she went on, "there are boys like him all over Belgrade these days. Only the other morning, while I was waiting in line for the bus, a young man was boasting to everyone about the people he'd tortured in Bosnia."

"I don't understand," she added as we said good-bye for the last time, "what is being done to the Serbs."

After double-bolting the door of my room, I turned on the TV: Sarajevo, as usual; artillery shells falling. I realized I had no idea what artillery shells cost. Could you buy one, several, or many of them for 50,000 deutsche marks?

That night, when the knock came on the door, I didn't know what to do. Ignore it? Pretend no one was here? But the TV was on.

The knock came again, persistent. I walked to the door and, as silently as I could, moved the little metal cover out of the way so I could look through the little glass eye in the door. It was the night maid, come to turn down the bed.

That moment, walking to the door, was the only moment in Yugoslavia when I felt real terror. But even then what appalled me most wasn't the boy who had given me the Arkan button but those last words the nice lady from the ministry said to me: "what is being done to the Serbs."

For as long as I can foresee, all journeys among the Serbs will begin and end as mine began and ended, in encounters with madness. The terror will always be no farther away than the smiling face at the next table—until the Serbs find some way to confront not what "the world" has done to them but what they have done to themselves. □

CROATIAN BORDERS AND THE MINORITY RIGHTS QUESTION:
EXPOSING SERBIAN GOALS IN CROATIA

While the attention of the international community is focussed on the Serbian war of aggression and expansionism in the independent state of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the conditions of Serbian occupation of approximately 25% of Croatian territory continue unchanged. In order to persuade the world to accept or, at the least, to condone the wholesale occupation and devastation of wide swaths of Croatia, Serbia must successfully argue the two points it continually utilizes to justify this aggression:

1. One, that the present day Croatian borders are merely "administrative" and arbitrary, lacking historical foundation;
2. Two, that the aggression is a response to the possible future violation of the rights of Serbian citizens residing inside Croatia.

Closer examination of these claims reveals them to lack factual basis. Croatia's borders are among the oldest in Europe and were for the most part defined even before Serbia began to evolve from the Belgrade Pasha District (an administrative unit of the Ottoman Empire) into an independent principality in the early nineteenth century. Regarding the border issue, a short history of Serbian migration is instructive. The ethnic minorities within the historical Croatian motherland appeared first as a result of the Turkish invasions of the 15th century. As Croats fled from some of these areas under attack, immigrants, mostly Vlachs and Serbs, took their place, eventually forming an ethnic group under the long-term patronage of the Serbian Orthodox Church. This economically valuable lowland area in northern Croatia was especially attractive to immigrants, large numbers of which, including, in addition to Serbs, Germans, Hungarians, Czechs and

Slovaks, settled in. Serbian colonization intensified in the period after the First World War and particularly after the Second World War, in the Croatian Srijem, Baranja, Knin area ("Krajina"), and Slavonia (as a consequence of the forced expulsion of the Germans).

There were three types of Serbian migrations during this period. The first was without permission of the Turks, the second with their permission, but without direct Turkish involvement, and the third was a resettlement of population by the Turkish authorities but without consent of the immigrants. The ethnic composition of entire regions of Croatia thus changed, with the Serbs taking the most active part in these events, events which we now see have great influence on the political stability of Croatia. However, during this long history, the borders of Croatia never changed to the disadvantage of Serbia. (See Attachments A-C)

It is important to note at the outset that the regions now occupied by Serbia have been a part of Croatian territory since the creation of the first Croatian state in the ninth century. (See Attachment D) There have been periodic adjustments of borders during different phases of historical development, but only to Croatia's disadvantage. (See Attachment E) In other words, no part of present day Croatia has ever been historically Serbian territory, but large parts of Croatian territory continue today under forced Serbian occupation.

The second argument used by apologists for the Serb-occupation of Croatian territories is that it is necessary in order to "protect" the rights of "endangered" Serbs under the Croatian government. Let us examine first the demographics, in order to test the soundness of this argument. According to the 1991 census, the Serbian national group comprised 581,000, of an overall population in Croatia of 4,784,000. National minorities altogether number about 780,000, or 15.9% of the total population. Sixty percent of the inhabitants of Croatia live in urban areas and 20% in Zagreb.

The areas Serbia desires to incorporate into "Greater Serbia" amount to 28% of the Croatian Republic's territory, and represent 882,000 inhabitants, of which only 318,000 are

Serbs. In other words, only 55% of the Serbs in Croatia live in this territory, but even in this fragmented area, they are still a minority and not a majority population. (See Attachment F) And if, in fact, Serbian rights were and are being systematically violated (and we shall show later that this, too, is a fiction) why has there been no Serbian interest in intervening on behalf of the remainder of Serbs, approximately 45% of the Serbian population in Croatia, who live in other areas? Are the rights of Serbs in Zagreb, Split, Rijeka, and other large Croatian cities of no consequence? Herein lies the major and irreconcilable inconsistency in the Serbian argument. Because it is unrealistic to attempt to occupy all of Croatia, Serbia has occupied only those areas which can be more easily annexed to Serb-held parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina and, ultimately, to Serbia proper, and which are important geographically or in terms of natural resources, under the guise that "Serbian rights must be protected". (See Attachment G)

Even Western analysts agree that the battles being fought are based more on economic and strategic considerations than on the need to protect Serbian rights. Control and annexation of Croatian territories would provide Serbia with:

- a) access to the Croatian bank of the Danube and, in effect, consolidate Serbia's control over the waterway transport;
- b) access to a warm-water port on the Adriatic;
- c) control of major petroleum and industrial centers; and
- d) control over key transportation crossroads in lucrative tourist areas of Croatia.

Additionally Serbia wishes to gain control of the oil pipeline running through part of Croatia, as well as the fertile plains of Slavonia, which are known as the "breadbasket" of Croatia.

Disputing what by now is conceded by virtually the entire international community, Serbs deny any grand scheme to appropriate territory. Nonetheless, there is extensive evidence to the contrary, one such document having been co-sponsored in 1986 by the

current "Yugoslav" President, Dobrica Cosic. The memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences encourages Serbs to expand their borders to create a "Greater Serbia". Maps produced by Serbia today show huge areas of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina as part of "Serbia". (See Attachment H)

As for the argument that Serbian rights are being violated in Croatia and that Serb forces are merely "protecting Serbian citizens", the documentation available on this claim indicates that gross violations have indeed occurred in Croatia, but that the overwhelming majority of abuses have been committed by Serbs.

As early as January 1992, the Yugoslav National Army, mostly Serbian, and allied with Serbian irregular forces, was accused by the EC commission of waging "systematic campaigns of terror, killings, looting and forced de-population in the war zones of Croatia." The observers in their report found "barbaric violations of the Geneva Conventions on War Crimes", including "widespread mutilations of Croatian corpses...". (Attachment I) Observers stated further that Croatian authorities gave them full access to battle zones and prisoner of war camps and that Serbian charges that Croats had engaged in rapes of Serbian women, burning of houses, and looting "have seemed to be untrue." On the other hand, they wrote of Serbian-sponsored atrocities in chilling detail. Videotapes showed bodies of Croats whose noses, eyes and ears have been gouged out and whose throats have been slashed. (Attachment J) Mutilated corpses were often placed next to slaughtered pigs to equate Croats with pigs. As the Serbian war of aggression continued, further violations came to light. Massacres and "ethnic cleansing" throughout Serbian-occupied areas of Croatia were witnessed and, in many cases, documented and exposed. For example, eight thousand Croats were forced to flee Ilok, Sunj and Drnis, all within occupied territory, just in the month of September of 1992. Further expulsions followed, and continue today, even in United Nations protected areas. Reports from February 9, 1993, indicate that presently, Serb paramilitary units in Knin have expelled, killed, or are holding hostage several thousand Croatian residents of this occupied area.

The United Nations Protection Forces have stated that, due to Serbian military activities and prohibitions, they are unable to assist the Croatian victims of continued Serbian "ethnic cleansing".

Mass grave sites have also been uncovered as foreign observers and United Nations personnel gained access to Croatian areas which had been abandoned or burnt down by retreating Serbian units. According to a January 1993 report by the Croatian Ministry of Health, eleven such mass grave sites have been discovered in United Nations Sector E, territories which are or had been occupied by Serbian troops. These sites are located in Ovcara, Vukovar, Lovas, Tovarnik, Jakovovac, Petrovci, Ernestinovo, Tordinci, Dalj, Berak, and Pitez Bogdanovci. In all, over 3,874 victims have been verified. There are still, however, wide areas to which Serbian troops have denied access and over 13,788 persons (416 of them children) are missing and presumed dead.

In many areas from which Croats were forced to flee or in which they were killed, Serbs have been resettled. In Baranja alone, over 20,000 Serbs have taken possession of Croatian homes and property. According to the Washington Post, "resettlement of occupied land is emerging as a fundamental tactic of the Serbian war effort against Croatia." Local Serbs are then appointed leaders of new self-styled governments in occupied territories. A conservative estimate of the number of Croatian refugees from Serb-occupied territories is given as 253,705. Not one has as yet been able to return home.

After the collapse of fourteen cease fire agreements, the intervention of the United States and the implementation of the Vance Plan took place. Due to an arms embargo imposed upon all of "Yugoslavia", Croatia was and still is unable to defend herself and, because Serbian units had taken possession of the Yugoslav National Army arsenal, Croatia welcomed the assistance of the United Nations, whose mandate it was to:

- a) supervise the withdrawal of Yugoslav military from the republic;
- b) disarm Serbian Irregulars and paramilitary units;

- c) return normal civilian controls in the protected areas and;
- d) (most critical to Croatia) return displaced persons to their homes.

According to recent statements by United Nations officials, they have "failed miserably" to execute this mandate. In a report of November 1992, the U.S. Helsinki Commission Delegation wrote that "none of the displaced persons . . . have been able to return, and that the "Serbian militants who have yet to be disarmed continue. . . to force non-Serbs to leave while they entrench themselves in these regions." Time and again, Serbian troops have refused to honor agreements they had signed regarding retreat and disarmament. And because the United Nations has been unable to protect non-Serbs, either in Croatia or in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the delegation stated that "criticisms of Croatia's behavior in Bosnia-Herzegovina could not be credibly pressed given international acquiescence to aggression by Serbian militants."

A January 1993 United States State Department monitoring report of the human rights situation in Croatia reiterates the same points: Serbian "police", "special police" and "border police" are directly involved in a continuing pattern of major human rights abuses against non-Serbian populations and against other Serbs". And further, in Serb-occupied areas of Croatia, "murders occurred regularly and there was no documented attempt to punish the perpetrators". There was "no legal system" existing in the occupied areas. On the other hand, the Croatian government "tried and convicted some persons of similar violations committed by Croatian forces" and has "stated that all crimes against citizens will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

Even in spite of the United Nations presence, Serbian occupying forces have succeeded in exercising control over major hydroelectric installations and transportation routes, such as the Maslenica Bridge and the Peruca dam.

The Maslenica bridge, which is the sole transport link existing between northern and southern Croatia, with a population swollen to over 900,000 with the refugees, was bombed and totally destroyed by Serbian forces in 1991. Under a United Nations agreement, it was to have been rebuilt, but the occupiers still in this area have resisted. Croatia, lacking any other alternative, was forced to transport all supplies by ferry boat, which was an untenable and even dangerous procedure. Finally, Croatian authorities acted to regain control of this area and have begun rebuilding this important bridge.

The Peruca dam, which has an extremely important role to play, provides power to a major industrial and tourist region, as well as supplying water and irrigation supplies to agricultural areas near the town of Sinj. This dam was extensively and dangerously mined with explosives by Serbian occupying forces, thereby creating a weapon against Croatia in the event that Serbians were driven out. From September 1991 to September 1992, access to the dam was denied to the Croatian government and to outside monitors.

Just two weeks ago, due to the inability of the United Nations to force access, Croatian authorities moved also to regain control of this important dam. Just as they had feared, Serbian forces detonated several of these mines before retreating, an act which, had the dam burst, would have endangered the lives of over 3,000 civilians living below the dam. Although severe damage has been sustained by the dam, Croatian and international experts are now able to monitor the situation closely and to ensure that a major catastrophe, both material and human, is averted. There is, however, no guarantee that their efforts will be successful.

It is a fact that only approximately 318,000 Serbs live in occupied territories of Croatia. This small number (smaller even because not all Serbs are participating in this aggression) has succeeded not in "protecting" Serbians and "defending" Serbian human rights, but has accomplished the following:

- caused over thirty billion dollars damage to Croatia;
- engaged in mass murder, mass rape, and torture against civilians;

—driven hundreds of thousands from their homes and villages in "ethnic cleansing" operations;

—bombed and devastated entire areas - churches, hospitals, schools, libraries, residences;

—appropriated property of Croats and ceded it to Serbian families;

—damaged and rendered dangerous major installations and transport links, thereby endangering the lives and welfare of hundreds of thousands of civilians.

—breached and continue to breach all agreements on disarmament, retreat and cooperation signed with the United Nations protection forces.

It is for these reasons that the Croatian authorities have engaged in actions to reclaim occupied territories. The Serbian arguments served to the international media and policymakers, intended to mislead and distract the world from Serbian aggression, lack any foundation whatsoever.

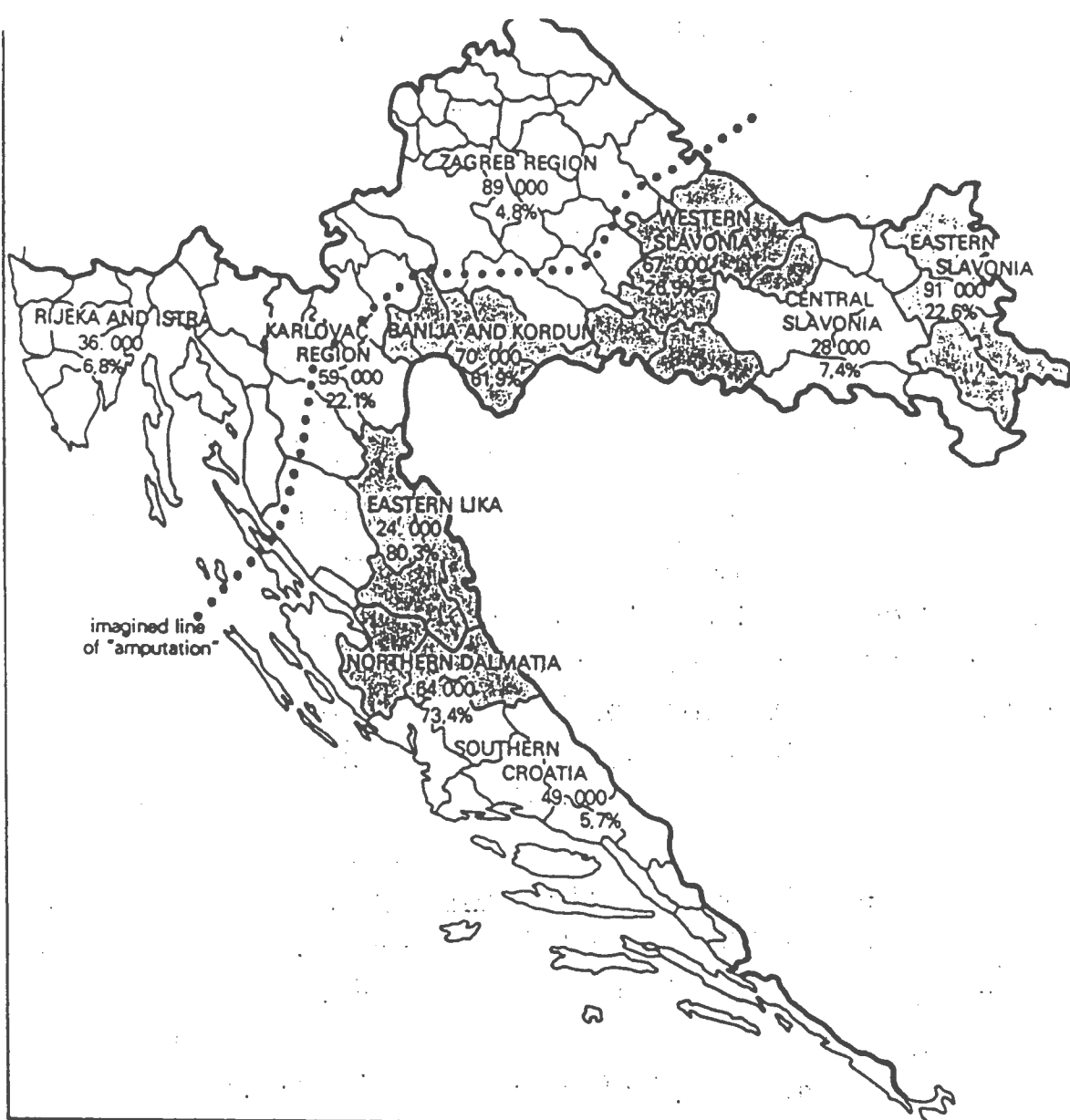
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D



 *Croatian*
 *Areas under Serbian control*



NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGE OF SERBS ACCORDING TO TERRITORIAL UNITS IN CROATIA

GREATER SERBIAN CLAIMS TO CROATIAN TERRITORY
THE SO - CALLED "GREATER SERBIA"



European Commission Monitoring Mission Report

26 November, 1991.

1. European Ministers' decision of 8 November, 1991 to apply sanctions against all parties in the conflict in Yugoslavia in the light of continued hostilities and failure to honour commitments had an almost immediate effect on the Croats. They saw that they had to clean up their act, jettison ambiguities, or risk being stuck in the same bag as their Serbian adversary and its YNA backers.
2. Meanwhile information amassed on YNA preparations for a big offensive with the apparent aim of securing a forward line Virovitica-Karlovac-Karlobag. Vukovar was set to fall, Osijek was next. Croat forces were outnumbered, out-gunned and, despite determination, incapable of resisting the onslaught. Thus Europe's political pressure and the YNA build-up separately induced Croatia's top military command to abandon its persistence in blockading YNA barracks while the country's political leadership happily signed repeated cease-fire and evacuation agreements.
3. Now we are in a situation where the YNA offensive is continuing in full swing. The YNA justifies its action by the argument that its normal peacetime garrisons remain blockaded at a time when a process of blockade-lifting is under-way. This puts pressure on the other side to argue that continued hostilities made complete blockade-lifting and evacuation impossible. The cease-fire agreed upon for November 16 was broken - the 13th thus to be broken - and the cities of Vukovar and Slunj fell the next day. At this moment the process of evacuation continues while the 14th cease-fire has yet to take hold and the pounding of Osijek goes on.
4. Meanwhile in YNA tactics: a consistent pattern has emerged which monitors' observations have amply documented:
 - the YNA pours heavy artillery fire, from a distance, onto a target, terrorising it into capitulation;
 - the YNA-backed and armed undisciplined irregulars then move in on foot to occupy the place;
 - the YNA then moves in to re-assume overall control.

In differing time-scales and intensities this has been the case in Vukovar and Slunj, is imminently the case in Osijek and possibly in Zadar, incompletely the case in Dubrovnik, and potentially on the agenda for Sisak and Karlovac.

This is not limited to big towns. Throughout broad areas of territory in innumerable smaller villages Croatian inhabitants are killed or forced to leave after which their villages are bulldozed out of existence. No attempt is made to occupy or otherwise exploit captured places, they are simply and wantonly destroyed.

In these tactics the YNA has not hesitated to shoot either indiscriminately at purely civilian targets with random fire, or, in certain cases to deliberately select civilian targets of important symbolic value including schools, museums, churches, Radio and Television stations and - particularly - hospitals.

Selective bombing raids from aircraft are also used usually against civilian targets. YNA arguments that Croat defenders deliberately use such places as firing or command points are either inaccurate or specious. The YNA action clearly breaches the international norm of proportionality in arms employed by the two sides to the conflict. We are dealing here with forces (the Croats) deploying largely small arms against a hugely equipped major army, navy and airforce. The intensity of the attacks, either random or specifically targeted, against civilians, has been growing. The concentration of fire on such purely civilian targets has grown in proportion of late.

5. Both sides have recourse to less formal para-military elements - the Croats with their HOS reservists and some mercenaries, the YNA/Serbs with their various forms of Cetniks, Krajina militia etc. The methods of these people are brutal and arbitrary. There is no doubt whatsoever from evidence gathered that the latter are most numerous, have the freest hand under the auspices or protection of the YNA and with freely supplied YNA hardware, also these people without a doubt are responsible for the most brutal behaviour to combatants and non-combatants alike. Evidence abounds that restraint against such measures is fast diminishing. The YNA is not willing to or capable of enforcing discipline.
6. In such circumstances sheer disregard for human life and dignity shows every sign of snowballing - Vukovar and Skrabnje are but salient examples. The restraint stemming from regard for wider European norms of behaviour that was still apparent a bare two months ago is receding fast. European political and diplomatic authority, seeking to persuade rather threaten, has lost the prophylactic power it once may seem to have had. Dubrovnik was ample proof of that: Vukovar will not suffice. The Croatian Government, not wishing tacitly to admit abandonment of Croatian soil refuses to permit the evacuation of civilians from battle areas or local authorities to negotiate their way out of impending destruction. The civilian population is terrorised from two sides - by irregulars by persistent artillery, naval and air bombardment, and by unsympathetic governments.

In the last analysis the YNA is a cowardly army, fighting for no recognisable principle, but largely, instinctively for its own status and survival. It no longer has the authority to lead its men into real sacrifice - hence the pattern of behaviour, outlined above, that it has adopted. There is good reason to believe that there is substance to the persistent reports of its difficulty in calling up reservists, of discontent among middle ranks with senior leadership. There is thus equally good reason to believe that selective show and use of force - to intimidate and hit the YNA in places where it hurts - can cow its bluster and bluff. The warship that fires on a defenceless city from a safe distance out to sea must be put in a situation whereby it knows that it can do so at the cost of being promptly sent to the bottom. The battery that shells a hospital must know that within 20 minutes of so doing, it risks being obliterated. The YNA airforce must learn the choice of inaction, destroyed on the ground or hopelessly out-gunned in the air.

7. In the present situation of brutal and premeditated large-scale aggressive violence the work of the monitoring mission is practically obsolete or at best marginal, while the agreements concerning monitors' safety are being ignored. The YNA has bombed teams from the air, by artillery and by naval gunnery. It disregards cease-fire agreements, timetables for withdrawal, inspection rights for monitors etc. Ministers now face one of four choices:
- Maintain the mission as it is, while its ineffectiveness increases and its credibility and the safety of the members decrease.
 - Withdraw the mission with all the ignominy implied for themselves.
 - Indicate readiness to supply such effective sea and air deterrent capacity as will make continued YNA aggression pointless if not suicidal thus allowing the peace process to resume and the monitor mission to resume an effective role therein.
 - Generate a new initiative from the UN, the CSCE, the WEU, or any combination of those.

The monitoring mission is itself becoming a fixed part of the political framework. Its action is limited to attempted moderation of events without being able to determine their course. In particular the mission can do nothing to prevent the relentless advance of new borders and imposed change of authority within them. In thus accepting this passivity the EC monitoring mission is becoming an accomplice to events and increasingly risks being seen as such by public opinion.

This view has been thought over at length and reflects the considered view of all heads of delegation, with the exception of Greece, on the spot in Zagreb who await Ministerial action to break the deadlock and enable them to resume a useful role credible to the majority of people of this country and the monitors themselves.

Army Is Resettling Serbs

Displaced farmers are being given homes Croats abandoned

By Blaine Harden
Washington Post

Popovac, Yugoslavia

Dusan Tulem, a Serb chased by war from his home in Croatia, has a new house. He and his family got it free, courtesy of the Serb-dominated Yugoslav army.

The pots and pans in the kitchen, the clothes in the closet and the cow in the back yard belong to a Croat.

Until August, when Serb guerrillas and their powerful army allies chased about 50,000 inhabitants from this northeast corner of Croatia, Tulem's new house had been the home of a Croat farmer and his family.

Although the house cost Tulem nothing and he and his family have nowhere else to live, he detests sleeping in a stranger's bed.

"I am miserable. It is not good. It is bad luck to live in another man's house," said Tulem, 42, a factory worker with big red hands and a deeply lined face.

'Liberated' Area

The republic of Serbia — Croatia's rival in the 5-month-old Yugoslav civil war — plans to resettle up to 20,000 Serbs dislocated by the war here in "liberated" Baranja, a fertile region of farms and vineyards between the Danube and the Drava rivers.

Resettlement of occupied land is emerging as a fundamental tactic of the Serbian war effort against Croatia, whose secession from the six-republic Yugoslav federation in June rattled its large Serb minority and started the war. Serbia, which has openly backed Serb insurgents in Croatia, says it has no intention of letting the tens of thousands of displaced Croats and ethnic Hungarians return to their homes and force out Serbs such as Dusan Tulem.

Test Case

According to its Serbian organizers, the Baranja resettlement plan is a test case for a proposed shuffle within the crumbling Yugoslav federation of hundreds of thousands of Serbs and Croats. If carried out,



the plan could result in the largest mass movements of European populations since the aftermath of World War II.

"This is an experiment to determine if the exchange of people and goods would be possible between Croatia and the Serbian regions," Mile Jankovic, who heads the Serbian resettlement program, said last week in Belgrade, the Serbian capital.

People are to be moved to conform to the Serbian notion of where a new border between the rival republics should be drawn. Serbia's proposal would slice off between one-third and one-half of Croatia's territory.

'Common Life Impossible'

"Future common life is impossible, and it is best for the Croats and for the Serbs to part in a peaceful manner and fix frontiers between them wherever possible, first of all by the ethnic principle," Jovan Ilc, a University of Belgrade geographer, wrote in a recent, widely circulated article in a Serbian government publication.

Western diplomats say thousands of people, most of them Croats, have been killed in the fighting since June. The Croatian government says that more than a third of its infrastructure has been destroyed.

Television and radio in Belgrade are promising prospective

Serbian settlers that they can move into 17 abandoned villages in Baranja, where there are at least 4,000 "comfortable houses and flats" whose contents have been sealed to prevent looting. There are also at least 100 empty stores to be taken over, the broadcasts say, and farm settlers will be provided with tractors and can take over whatever livestock they find.

Serb Rebels' Hard Line

As in other regions of Croatia that have been forcibly occupied by Serbian-backed guerrillas or army forces, officials in Belgrade have named local Serbs as leaders of Baranja's new regional government.

These Serbs reject any foreign involvement — by the European Community or the United Nations — in sorting out the ownership of abandoned homes and farms in Baranja, and they refuse to participate in negotiations with the Croatian government over lost land or personal property.

In an interview in Baranja, Djordje Latas, a vice president of the de facto Baranja government, said Croats and ethnic Hungarians were not forced to abandon their homes by Serb forces. They fled, he said, as part of a "fascist" Croatian scheme to win international sympathy and to recruit displaced fighting-age men for the civil war.

Croat Perspective

The few Croats who have stayed on in Baranja say it is absurd for Latas to claim that local farmers abandoned their crops, livestock and homes for propaganda purposes.

"The Croatian government never asked anyone to leave. There was shooting here, and people panicked. They were afraid, and they ran away," said Slavko Podoreski, a 68-year-old Croat farmer who remained at his home in the village of Popovac when the Serbs came to Baranja on August 19.

Podoreski watched last week as more than 300 Serbs took up residence in some of the 160 homes abandoned by 720 Croats.

DRAFT

February 22, 1993

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President,

We, the undersigned, are gravely concerned about the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. We appreciate the first steps your Administration has taken to become involved in negotiations to resolve the crisis, and we support your efforts to improve upon the Vance-Owen plan.

We believe, however, that diplomatic measures alone will not be enough to bring peace to the Balkans, as evidenced by the failure of the Vance plan in Croatia, signed over one year ago. The United Nations' failure to enforce the Vance plan has in effect conceded one third of Croatia's territory to less than two percent of its population. The Vance plan was to disarm the Serbs; it has not done so. Under the eyes of the United Nations, Serbian aggression has been rewarded.

Throughout this war, the Serbians have signed many agreements and have, to date, abided by none. We fear that the failure of the Vance plan in Croatia, coupled with an unenforced Vance-Owen plan in Bosnia, will ultimately leave the United States with only two options: to let Serbian aggression stand -- which is morally and politically unacceptable -- or to mount a full scale military intervention in the Balkans.

The slaughter and starvation of thousands of civilians in Bosnia and Croatia may pave the way to an expanded and protracted conflict. If unchecked, Serbia will next turn toward Kosovo and Macedonia to carve out its vision of Greater Serbia. Such a move could draw neighboring nations into the conflict, including Albania, Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey.

To prevent wider-scale war in the Balkans and to affirm the territorial integrity of nation-states, we urge you, Mr. President, to support the following actions:

1. The United States should supervise the return of occupied territories to the proper legal authority of the Republic of Croatia, and guarantee that all parties adhere to the terms of the Vance-Owen plan in Bosnia.

2. Serbia should be warned that failure to disarm in Bosnia and Croatia will result in strategic air strikes against munitions factories, military installations, oil refineries, roadways linking Serbia to Bosnia, and possibly Serbia's capital, Belgrade.

3. If the Serbians do not adhere to the terms of the Vance-Owen agreement, the arms embargo must be lifted to allow Muslims and Croats to defend themselves against Serbian aggression.

4. The no-fly zone must be immediately enforced.

5. An international war crimes tribunal must be convened to bring to justice those guilty of genocide and other crimes against humanity, including the widely reported summary execution of civilians, instances of premeditated mass rape, the ethnic cleansing of Muslim and Croatian civilian populations, and the wanton destruction of Croatian and Bosnian churches, mosques, museums, libraries and other repositories of national culture.

Mr. President, this Serbian war began overtly in June of 1991, to the detriment of millions. The bully on the block will only understand its own language -- force. We must, as the United States, negotiate from a position of strength. This is the new course; this is the change in direction that is mandated. Through the above actions, we believe you can achieve a just and lasting peace.

We will support you to this end.

Sincerely,



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Mate Granic, M.D., Ph.D., Vice Prime Minister
41000 Zagreb, Kladovcva trg 7, phone: 443-646, fax: 450-284

**STATEMENT AT THE HUMANITARIAN ISSUES WORKING GROUP
OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA
Geneva, 4 December, 1992**

Madam Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At this very moment the Republic of Croatia is providing care for 265,000 displaced persons from Croatia (mostly from "pink zones" and United Nations protected areas), for about 38,000 refugees from Serbia (mainly Croats from Vojvodina and Kosovo) and for more than 450,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina (370,000 registered and 70-80,000 non-registered). The Republic of Croatia has given shelter to totally more than 750,000 displaced persons and refugees. In addition to this, about 60,000 refugees from Croatia are still abroad, mainly in Hungary, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia.

As it has been repeatedly stated, the Republic of Croatia fully respecting of international humanitarian law, has far beyond its capacities given shelter to such a large number of displaced persons and refugees.

Due to seriously depleted accommodation reserves, economic problems, social tensions and inability to accept new coming refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Government of Croatia has for a considerable time appealed to neighbouring countries to provide support to refugees seeking asylum. Unfortunately, these appeals have not been met with any significant willingness for burdensharing from neighbouring countries.

The Republic of Croatia has received a considerable amount of humanitarian assistance in food, medicine, hygienic supplies, clothing and others. Herewith I would like to express our deepest gratitude to all humanitarian organizations, above all UNHCR, ICRC, UNICEF, WHO, IOM, IFRC, and the German Office for Humanitarian Aid, who supported us with humanitarian supplies for displaced persons and refugees accommodated in Croatia. I would also like to use this opportunity to express how deeply thankful we are to the European Community Office in Zagreb, which in the course of the last two months has provided us generously with precious and a most significant amount of humanitarian assistance.

But, the costs of taking care of such a large number of displaced persons and refugees which the Republic of Croatia has to pay directly amount to approximately 100 million US dollar per month.

To illustrate, direct total costs of the Republic of Croatia for accomodation of displaced persons and refugees in October this year amount to 83,287 US dollars - calculated according to the total number of displaced persons and refugees given shelter in the Republic of Croatia as recorded on 15 October 1992 (Tables 1 and 2 enclosed). In addition, estimations have been made according to which the monthly humanitarian assistance amounts to 30-50% of the afore mentioned direct costs for accomodation of displaced persons and refugees in Croatia. Regarding the costs of health care provided for displaced persons and refugees until now, I may report a budget deficit of 62.5 million US dollars recorded so far.

Despite many appeals which the Republic of Croatia has been repeatedly addressing to the International community to help, no direct cash support for sharing the costs of accomodation of displaced persons and refugees in Croatia has until now been received.

Presently, we are facing a very complex economic and social situation in the Republic of Croatia. The inflation rate during the last month is estimated to be above 34%. At this moment the Republic of Croatia has 800.000 retired and 275.000 unemployed people as well as 191.000 welfare beneficiaries.

Increasing social tensions easily discernible in the relationship between the local Croatian population and refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina have been developing lately. Thanks to pure luck and our very hard efforts, possible incidents have been avoided.

The majority of the refugees are accomodated in private families to whom by now no financial support has been given to cover the additional living costs they have, which brings us into the question how long they will be able to give shelter to the refugees, whom they benevolently accepted. Families are practically not obliged to cover their utility service costs, which then brings an additional heavy strain on the Government's budget. In this context I would like to stress how very much we appreciate the initiative of UNHCR, now going on, to allocate one time financial support to each of the families accomodating refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina. We sincerely hope that through this action the above families will be urgently given financial aid, which, we dare hope will turn into a monthly allowance.

An additional reason for the increasing social tensions in my country is the impossibility of displaced persons to return to their homes in the "pink zones" and the United Nations protected areas. At this very moment the Government of Croatia is concerned at the highest priority level with the return of displaced persons and refugees to their homes. This primarily relates to the return of displaced persons and refugees from Croatia, 90% of whom are from "pink zones" and United Nations protected areas. What we are facing now is the problem of insufficient speed and efficiency in carrying out the Cyrus Vance plan as well as its total rejection by the illegal Knin authorities and the Serbian special police forces. To solve this problem, daily efforts are being made at the international level, but with no effects so far. Having the same objective in mind, we consider the establishment of a quadripartitive system highly important and necessary in order that the returning process be accelerated.

However, this commission may be restrictive in its function, unless supported by UNPROFOR.

Considering that the current economic and social situation in Croatia is highly complex in the way that it is constantly deteriorating and thus bringing us to the very end of social and economic durability, the Government of the Republic of Croatia has been forced to adopt new measures for solving the ongoing refugee crisis in the Republic of Croatia, which include improved control of the border between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, however without violating basic international humanitarian law. Despite this, this border is daily crossed by about 300 to 400 refugees. Soon after the occupation of Bosanski Brod, about 10,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina crossed the Croatian border. In addition, several thousand of ex-detainees from Serbian detention camps in Bosnia and Herzegovina have arrived to a temporary transit centre in Croatia from which they have been transferred to other neighbouring European countries. It is known that it took much more time than expected to find other countries willing to provide logistic and humanitarian support for these ex-detainees, which actually slowed down directly the release process of ex-detainees from concentration camps in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is interesting that since the time of a more rigorous control of the Croatian borders, Croatia has given shelter to additional 110,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Finally, the total of 90% of all refugees taken care by countries throughout whole Western Europe, have been given the permit of the Croatian authorities for passing across the territory of the Republic of the Republic of Croatia.

Madam Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

To conclude, I would like to stress the following:

1. Despite our repeated requests, no decision has ever been reached concerning financial cash support to the Republic of Croatia as well as other forms of adequate burden-sharing of problems related to the refugee crises going on in Croatia.
2. Due to poor efficiency and "status quo" in the UNPROFOR peacekeeping operation, almost no progress has been recorded in the return of displaced persons to their homes in the "pink zones" and UN protected areas.
3. Considering the above, the Republic of Croatia appears to be alone among European countries to maintain a generous border policy with respect to refugees seeking asylum. Besides, the burdensharing of this complex and difficult refugee crisis was never fairly discussed: Croatia has been taking the whole burden alone without fair chance of sharing it with other European countries.
4. Measures taken at the international political level with a view to stop the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina have proved ineffective. Therefore, I would dare to say that a conclusion of this meeting should be to give an impetus to the international community for taking more effective additional measures aiming to...

same objective. In case the Serbian aggression on the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is not stopped, according to the worst possible estimations an additional 100-200,000 refugees from this country may be expected, which would imply a grand total of about 500,000 refugees from that Republic in Croatia.

5. The attention of the international community has been repeatedly drawn to the possible very difficult consequences, being the result of insufficient and not fast enough intervention in trying to solve the most complex refugee crisis in Europe between the end of the Second World War and today. Precisely, due to the increasing aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is a big danger that an increasing number of new refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, in addition to refugees already accommodated in the Republic of Croatia despite its poor social and economic conditions, could spread throughout the whole Europe.

Thank You, Madam Chairman.

Table 1.

Number of displaced persons and refugees according to accommodation type - status on 15 October 1992

TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION	DISPLACED PERSONS	REFUGEES	TOTAL
accommodation in hotels	120.889	78.034	198.923
ac. in refugee centres	4.038	152.676	156.736
private accommodation	150.909	203.627	354.736
TOTAL:	275.836	434.537	710.373

Table 2.

Total direct costs of taking care for displaced persons and refugees in the Republic of Croatia - according to the number of persons registered on 15 October 1992

COSTS	DISPLACED PERSONS	REFUGEES	TOTAL
accommodation in hotels	28.650.693,00	18.494.058,00	47.144.751,00
ac. in refugee centres	466.389,00	17.634.078,00	18.100.562,43
private accommodation	2.002.562,43	0,00	2.002.562,00
financial support	1.831.551,04	0,00	1.831.551,04
other costs	5.516.720,00	8.690.740,00	14.207.460,00
TOTAL:	38.467.915,47	44.818.876,00	83.286.791,47

- * average cost of accommodation in hotel = 7,90 \$ per person per day
- average cost of accommodation in refugee centres = 3,85 \$ per person per day
- average cost of private accommodation (only for displaced persons) = 13,27 \$ per person per month
- monthly financial support (only for displaced persons) = 6,64 \$ per person per month
- average other costs (health care, education...) = 20,00 \$ per person per month

Although the majority of children are victimized in the war areas, children are also wounded behind the front in almost all parts of Croatia. This is the result of mass destruction of civilian objects by heavy far distance artillery, bombing and shelling from the air by which many civilians get hurt. The largest number of children were killed and wounded in East Slavonia (46%), Croatian Coast and Dalmatia (20%).

The way in which the children were hurt and the causes of their wounds show that 90% of them were killed and 80% wounded by direct use of weapons and artillery tools.

In the majority of cases (almost 80%) children were hurt during artillery attacks, bombing or air shelling in place of dwelling, but also in places of displacement.

Injuries were caused by shells from heavy artillery pieces, mortars, tanks, cannons and other artillery, multiple rocket launchers as well as by bombing and air shelling of cassette bombs and so called "krmaca", bombs weighing about 250 kilos.

Results are explosive injuries characterized by serious tissue damages and multiple severe wounds. Firing injuries in children are not frequent (shell shrapnels being an exception), because children are not in the front lines. Recently, many self-injuries and cases in which children are getting hurt by firearms, which in war conditions are quite handy, are recorded.

Accidental injuring and self-injuring by activating explosive instruments (usually in the vicinity of barracks of the ex-Yugoslav army) of all types such as antitank mines, step mines, detonators, hand-grenade, residual unexploded tromblone mines etc. may also be the cause of injuries of children in this war. This type of wounding implies the highest risk. Actually, children may get injured long by the time this war is finished, because explosive tools, used in high doses during the war, remain unexploded and as such may represent a long-lasting risk to all children.

In addition to large number of killed and wounded children during the war against Croatia, continuous disability is the bodily damage registered as the result of injury in many wounded children.

Tens of children with continuous invalidity have already been registered. From the total number of 37 children (what is considered to be an incomplete data, because all information is still not available) with continuous invalidity extremity amputations were recorded in 11, CNS lesions in 7, neurologic lesions in 4, ophthalmologic lesions in 3, and large tissue damages in 8 children, etc.

Orphans (without one or both parents), whose parents were either killed in war defending Croatia's integrity or were victimized as civilians in the war aggression against Croatia, are also victims of this war. According to the data collected so far, 3.353 children lost one of their parents, while 49 of them are now parentless. It is evidenced that the total of 8 children lost their mothers during the war attack in which these children were injured.

Children registered either as displaced or refugees are also victims of the war against Croatia. Displacement and life in refuge will surely leave permanent marks of

**SCHOOLS, SOCIAL AND HEALTH INSTITUTIONS FOR CHILDREN
DESTROYED AND DAMAGED DURING THE WAR AGGRESSION AGAINST
CROATIA**

1. SCHOOLS

Destroyed and damaged:

- 98 kindergardens
- 291 elementary schools
- 63 high schools and colleges

These institutions were attended by 11,573 preschool children (12% of all children going to kindergardens), 90,500 children aged between 7 and 14 years (18% of all elementary school children), and 57,386 youth aged between 15 and 18 years (27% of high school and college children).

2. SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Destroyed and damaged:

- 8 dormitories (Dubrovnik, Karlovac, Lipik, Petrinja, Osijek, Sisak, S.Brod, Vinkovci)
- 3 youth institutions (Karlovac, Osijek, Zadar)
- 5 rehabilitation institutions for handicapped children (Daruvar, Karlovac, Šibenik, Vrlika, Zadar).

3. HEALTH INSTITUTIONS

Destroyed:

- 15 hospitals, i.e. health institutions (Dvor, Glina, Gospić, Kostajnica, Lipik, Nova Gradiška, Novska, Osijek, Otočac, Pakrac, Petrinja, Slunj, Topusko, Vukovar)
- 14 health institutions (Bjelovar, Daruvar, Dubrovnik, Karlovac, Ogulin, Podravska Slatina, Sisak, S.Brod, Požega, Šibenik, Valpovo, Varaždin, Zadar, Županja)

(according to the data of the authorized ministries of the Republic of Croatia)

psychologic origin to these children.

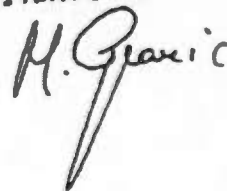
According to our estimates children and youth make more than one half of the age group of displaced persons and refugees (about 56%). Thus, the number of children in displacement and refuge amounts to the grand total of some hundred of thousands.

By the second half of February the number of displaced persons and refugees in the war afflicted areas of Croatia amounted to 725,000, which makes 15% of the whole population of the Republic of Croatia. More than 370,000 displaced persons were registered in Croatia. From them about 70,000 were preschool children, about 80,000 children aged between 7 and 14 years and about 35,000 children between 15 and 18 years of age, making the grand total of 185,000 children and youth brutally displaced from their homes and from their peaceful childhood.

By the end of November 1992 the number of displaced persons and refugees from war afflicted areas in Croatia is still higher than 440,000. After the war aggression started in Bosnia and Herzegovina the number of refugees accomodated in Croatia amounted to about 500,000, while another large influx of refugees from that country is expected. According to the data recorded on 26 November 1992 the number of displaced persons and refugees registered in Croatia reached 620,000 of which 264,194 are displaced persons from Croatia and 322,158 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to unregistered refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is estimated that at time Croatia has given refuge to 725,000 displaced persons and refugees. Going far beyond its capacities and making all possible efforts, accomodation and food is being provided for everyone by the Republic of Croatia. From the total number of displaced persons and refugees accomodated in Croatia not less than 300,000 are children and youth.

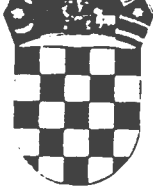
More knowledge about different types of disturbances, being the result of wounds and injuries to which children were exposed during the war, and which may lead either to short- or longterm disorders in physical or psychical development of these children, will be collected during the postwar period which is ahead.

Mate Granić, Ph.D.
Vice Prime Minister



ORIGIN OF DATA:

1. Institute for Mother and Child Care, Deaprtment of Health Statistics and Epidemiology
2. Medical Corps Headquarters of the Republic of Croatia
3. Reports of different Croatian health institutions
4. Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees of the Government of the Republic of Croatia
5. Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare of the Republic of Croatia



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Office of the Republic of Croatia
Washington, D.C.

SEP 10 1991

Congressional Communique
September 9, 1991

European Community, U.S. State Department, Condemn Serbian Terrorism in Croatia

In the last two weeks, as fighting has intensified in Croatia, the European Community and the U.S. State Department have been outspoken in their condemnation of Serbian insurgent terrorists operating within Croatian borders, backed by the federal army under control of Serbian officers. Attached for your background information are copies of both the EC and the State Department statements.

With more than 300 civilians killed, of whom 90 percent were Croatian citizens, and vicious armed attacks on Croatian cities and villages particularly in the north-eastern part of the republic, the international community can no longer sit on the sidelines.

As the EC declaration of August 27, 1991, said:

"It is a deeply misguided policy on the part of Serbian irregulars to try to solve the problems...through military means...(I)t can no longer be denied that elements of the Yugoslav People's Army are lending their active support to the Serbian side. The Community and its member States call on the Federal Presidency to put an immediate end to this illegal use of force under its command."

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said August 29:

"Although many parties have contributed to Yugoslavia's instability, the leadership of the Serbian republic and the Yugoslav military bear a particular and growing responsibility for the country's tragic descent toward civil war."

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DECLARATION ON YUGOSLAVIA

(EPC Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting,
Brussels, 27 August 1991)

The European Community and its member States are dismayed at the increasing violence in Croatia. They remind those responsible for the violence of their determination never to recognise changes of frontiers which have not been brought about by peaceful means and by agreement. It is a deeply misguided policy on the part of the Serbian irregulars to try to solve the problems they expect to encounter in a new constitutional order through military means. It is even more disconcerting that it can no longer be denied that elements of the Yugoslav People's Army are lending their active support to the Serbian side. The Community and its member states call on the Federal Presidency to put an immediate end to this illegal use of the forces under its command.

The Community and its member States will never accept a policy of *fait accompli*. They are determined not to recognise changes of borders by force and will encourage others not to do so either.

Territorial conquests, not recognised by the international Community, will never produce the kind of legitimate protection sought by all in the new Yugoslavia. Such protection can be brought about only by negotiations based on the principle of the fullest protection of the rights of all, wherever they may live in Yugoslavia.

The European Community and its member States call on Serbia to lift its objection to the extension of the activities of their Monitor Mission in Croatia. Recent events have shown that without a comprehensive and effective cease-fire and impartial foreign monitors the situation in Yugoslavia cannot be sufficiently stabilised to allow for productive negotiations to be held.

In view of the deteriorating situation in Yugoslavia the European Community and its member States have asked the Presidency to request the Chairman of the CSCE Committee of Senior Officials to advance the additional meeting of that committee, agreed on during its second emergency meeting on 9 August 1991, to early September.

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The Community and its member States cannot stand idly by as the bloodshed in Croatia increases day by day. An agreement on the monitoring of the cease-fire and its maintenance should allow the Community and its member States to convene a peace conference and establish an arbitration procedure.

This peace conference will bring together:

- on the part of Yugoslavia, the Federal Presidency, the Federal Government and the Presidents of the Republics.
- The President of the Council, representatives of the member States and the Commission.

The arbitration procedure in the framework of this peace conference will be established as follows. The relevant authorities will submit their differences to an Arbitration Commission of five members chosen from the Presidents of Constitutional Courts existing in the Community countries. The composition of the Arbitration Commission will be:

- two members appointed unanimously by the Federal Presidency.
- three members appointed by the Community and its member States.

In the absence of agreement on the members to be appointed by the Federal Presidency, they will be designated by the three members appointed by the Community.

This Arbitration Commission will give its decision within two months.

In the absence, by 1 September 1991, of an agreement on the monitoring of the cease-fire and its maintenance and on the peace conference, the Community and its member States will consider additional measures, including international action. To this effect they will convene a meeting to which they will invite the Presidents and the Representatives on the federal Presidency of the Republics which support these two steps. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of the Federal Government will also be invited to this meeting.

The Presidency has sent a special envoy to Yugoslavia to clarify the Twelve's position in this regard. The member States which are members of the Security Council will bring this declaration to the attention of that body.