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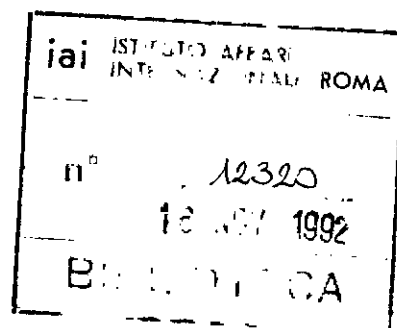
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WHAT FUTURE FOR POST-YUGOSLAVIA?  
Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik  
RFE/RL Research Institute  
Ebenhausen, 6-7/XI/1992

- a. Tentative agenda
- b. List of invitees
  - 1. "Issues in Croatian politics"/ Patrick Moore
  - 2. "The Republic of Macedonia and the odds of survival"/ Duncan M. Perry
  - 3. "Tirana afraid of war over Kosovo"/ Louis Zanga
  - 4. "Serbia at the edge of the abyss"/ Paul Shoup
  - 5. "Successor states to the USSR"/ Keith Bush, Anna Swidlicka
  - 6. "The first month of the Bosnian peace process"/ Patrik Moore
  - 7. "Chronology of important events concerning the former Yugoslavia"



Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik

RFE/RL Research Institute

3 November 1992

## **Tentative Agenda**

### **Conference on "What Future for Post-Yugoslavia?"**

**6/7 November 1992**

#### November 6

9:00--11:30 Session I

Political Aims and Interests of Major Western Actors

Chair: Peter Stratmann, Initial Presentation: Heinz Kramer

12:00 Lunch

14:00-17:00 Session II

Kosovo - the Next Battlefield?" What Can be Done?

Chair: Ross Johnson, Initial Presentation: Patrick Moore

19:00 Reception and Dinner

#### November 7

9:00-11:45 Session III

Elements of Post-War Reconstruction in Former Yugoslavia

Chair: Dennison Rusinow, Initial Presentation: Christoph Royen

12:00 Lunch

14:00-16:00 Session IV

Implications for European Security Structures

Chair: Uwe Nerlich, Panelists: TBA

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**Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik**

**Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute**

**List of Invitees**

3 Nov. 92

**Conference on  
"What Future for Post-Yugoslavia"  
November 6/7, 1992**

**Milan Andrejevich**  
RFE/RL Research Institute  
Munich

**Heinz-Jürgen Axt**  
Berlin

**Elez Biberaj**  
Voice of America  
Washington

**James F. Brown**  
RFE/RL Research Institute  
Munich

**Marie-Jeanine Calic**  
Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik  
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**William Griffith**  
Professor  
Munich

**A. Ross Johnson**  
Director  
RFE/RL Research Institute  
Munich

**George Katsirdakis**  
NATO HQ  
Brussels

**Alev Kilic**  
Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Balgat/Ankara

**Heinz Kramer**  
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**Viktor Meier**  
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung  
Vienna

**Pat Moore**  
RFE/RL Research Institute  
Munich

**Uwe Nerlich**  
Mitglied der Institutsleitung  
Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik  
Ebenhausen

**Marc Perrin de Brichambaut**  
CSCE Delegation of France  
Vienna

**Duncan Perry**  
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**Bernard von Plate**  
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**Christoph Royen**  
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**Dennison Rusinow**  
University of Pittsburgh  
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**Stefano Silvestri**  
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Rome

**Jim Steinberg**  
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Santa Monica, CA

**Ahmet Uzumcu**  
Administrator of Central and East European Affairs  
NATO Secretariat General/Political Affairs  
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**Louis Zanga**  
RFE/RL Research Institute  
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## ISSUES IN CROATIAN POLITICS

Patrick Moore

The central question in the August presidential and parliamentary elections was whether President Franjo Tudjman and his ruling Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ) were sufficiently committed to democracy. Tudjman and his party returned to office in triumph after a campaign that stressed the need to keep proven leadership in troubled times. Many observers nonetheless continued to regard creeping authoritarianism from the president and his party as a threat to the development of democracy in Croatia, and hence to that country's eventual organic integration into Europe.

**Parties and Personalities.** Before the elections, there had been widespread criticism of Tudjman for his allegedly poor judgment in selecting advisors and top officials, many of whom were frequently rotated or who stayed in the ruling elite for only a short time. Tudjman was also regarded as being too fond of the power and the formal trappings of office, and many considered him insensitive on the basis of some of his public remarks judged to be anti-Semitic or anti-Serbian. Above all, as a former communist and military man, he was widely regarded as being unaccustomed to democratic political culture, and critics pointed to a large number of former communists in the HDZ leadership as further evidence to the effect that Tudjman and his party did not constitute a sufficient break with Croatia's postwar regimes.

It was perhaps Tudjman's good electoral fortune that none of the main alternatives in August had democratic credentials that were demonstrably better than his. The Croatian Social-Liberal Party's (HSLS) presidential candidate Drazen Budisa, and the Croatian People's Party's (HNS) Savka Dabcevic-Kucar were both former communists who, like Tudjman, had made their names in the nationalistic "Croatian Spring" of 1971. In August they finished second and third, respectively, behind Tudjman, while the fourth place went to the Croatian Party of [Historic] Rights' (HSP) Dobroslav Paraga. His party could boast that it was the sole "slate without communists" of the many parties on the ballot, but as a neofascist grouping with a tough paramilitary force (HOS) it had unmistakable authoritarian tendencies and was arguably the most openly anti-democratic party of the lot.

Most of the remaining parties took less than two percent of the votes and their futures are probably bleak. This applies to the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS), which claims to be the successor to the HSS that was the leading interwar Croatian party, as well as to Ivica Racan's reformed communists, among others. Their supporters will probably eventually find new political homes in one of the four major groupings, and some observers feel that the HNS will some day merge with the HDZ, since the differences between the two are almost exclusively personal rather than ideological. The regional parties, however, will most likely remain exempt from this trend toward consolidation, since they tend to enjoy strong support among their respective local constituencies. This applies to regional groupings in Istria and parts of Dalmatia, and it could arguably be said that the HSP

enjoys its main strength as the "regional party" of eastern Slavonia and other war-torn regions.

**Growing Authoritarianism?** It is nonetheless the HDZ that holds the commanding heights in the parliament, or Sabor, and a poll of deputies showed that most of the HDZ representatives feel that the country needs strong presidential leadership. Tudjman's selection of his trusted aide Hrvoje Sarinic as prime minister suggested to many critics that Tudjman regards the cabinet as an extension of the president's office and the parliament as simply a rubber-stamp body. Sarinic's defenders argue that he was picked because of his long years of business experience in the West, as a result of which he has little tolerance for communist ways or Balkan *Schlamperei*. Whatever the case, and while the legislature has not yet shown much independence of spirit, it is too early to pass definitive judgment on the new Sabor and its leadership, especially as some key questions remain. These include filling the quotas for ethnic Serbian seputies, setting down the rules for elections to a second house of the Sabor, and, perhaps most importantly, taking up a series of measures that could lead to the banning of the HSP and HOS, together with the jailing of Paraga and some of othr HSP deputies on terrorism charges.

Regardless of what Tudjman's relations with the legislature and the far right may prove to be, the authorities have already shown what is widely regarded as an aggressive attitude toward the press. Croatian radio and television have never left government control, and there were frequent charges during the elections that the HDZ was using television in particular for partisan purposes. Even before August, moreover, the authorities took a series of adminstrative measures against the independent-minded weekly *Danas* and the serious daily *Vjesnik*, so that the former has been driven out of business and the latter seems about to become the official daily of the government. Since August, the authorities have tried to take control of Rijeka's *Novi list*, which did not criticize the HDZ, and of the independent *Slobodna Dalmacija*, which, unlike most of the victims of administrative measures, is economically healthy. In short, a large portion of the Croatian journalistic community has come to the conclusion that the HDZ and the government are determined to control the media as firmly as the communists did.

The economy, too, seems destined to retain a high degree of government involvment for at least the foreseeable future. While the HDZ endorsed the principles of a "social market economy" on the German model and called for privatization early on, in 1991 it delayed most economic reform on the grounds that the war demanded the authorities' full attention. Current legislation on privatization is, moreover, complex, and it allows for enterprises easily to fall under government control by default. The IMF has, however, presented Zagreb with a long list of measures that must taken before Croatia can effectively join the Western economic world, which the HDZ sorely wants to do to ensure long-term prosperity and to strengthen political links with Western countries. The IMF list essentially centers on dismantling the socialist economy, including reducing deficits and eliminating subsidies, and it is likely to be a long while before Croatia can meet its criteria.

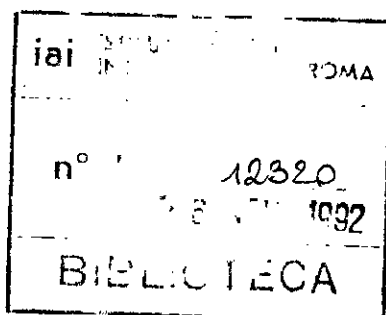
The War and International Relations. Croatia's most immediate international concerns, however, involve matters quite close to home. The first centers on the UN "protected areas" and adjacent "pink zones" within the frontiers of the Tito-era Socialist Republic of Croatia. These places are theoretically under the control of the UN, although UNPROFOR's effective jurisdiction extends for the most part only along their de-facto frontiers with areas under the Croatian military. The interiors of these areas and zones are essentially controlled by bands of rowdy Serb irregulars, who appear to be accountable to nobody. Ethnic cleansing has eliminated most of the local Croatian population, but the UN-sponsored agreement negotiated by Cyrus Vance at the end of 1991 specifies that refugees are to be allowed to return home. They appear to be determined to do so, and Zagreb seems equally impatient to restore its control over the areas and zones, according to its understanding of the Vance agreement. Meanwhile, the Serbian irregulars show no sign of disarming, and the local Serbian civilians have made it plain that they do not want to return to Croatian rule. Tudjman has said he will not extend UNPROFOR's mandate when it expires at the end of February, but this may well be a bargaining ploy; Germany and other Western western countries whose support Tudjman needs would not be happy with him if he were seen as scuttling the Vance agreement.

The second most pressing foreign problem involves Bosnia-Herzegovina and two conflicting viewpoints affecting both short-term and long-term policy toward Croatia's neighbor. Advocates of the first position include Tudjman and some Herzegovinian politicians, who incline toward partitioning the republic with the Serbs and taking western Herzegovina and perhaps some other areas for Croatia. In the long term they view Croatian-Muslim relations as basically antagonistic. Those who favor the second course include most of the HDZ and all of the HSP, and advocate support for Bosnia's territorial integrity. These people regard good Croat-Muslim ties as a sound long-term defense against the more numerous Serbs. The contradictions between these two courses surface frequently in Croatian political life, with the result being that the Muslims frequently suspect the Croats of playing a double game by professing an alliance with the Muslims one day and negotiating with the Serbs about partition the next. The force of events may compel Zagreb to take a definitive stand one way or another, but in the meantime the ambiguity continues.

The third foreign policy issue involves Slovenia and is related to the first two only because it also stems from the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. There the similarities end, however, because while the UNPROFOR and Bosnian questions center on vital political issues, the Croatian-Slovenian dispute involves matters that could easily solved by professional diplomats with a bit of patience and political good will. The present acrimony is the legacy of mutual charges of betrayal made during the two countries' wars of independence 1991, when first Slovenia and then Croatia felt that the other had left it to fight the federal forces alone. Matters have since gotten out of hand to the point that verbal exchanges between leading politicians on both sides have long become commonplace, which is probably more a testimony to the state of the political culture in Zagreb and Ljubljana than to anything else. (There have also been

incidents at frontier posts reminiscent of opera buffa.) The main problems center on economic assets on the other side's territory, as well as on the need for minor adjustments of the old Tito-era frontiers in keeping with ethnic or economic criteria, including redefining Croatia's maritime borders to give Slovenia direct access to the high seas without unduly hurting Croatia's fishing industry.

Croatia's success or lack of it in handling its relations with the Serbs, the Bosnians, and the Slovenes will doubtlessly affect its broader international standing, as will its handling of its massive refugee problem. For Zagreb, that means maintaining or obtaining political and economic support from Western Europe and the US, with Germany, Austria, the Vatican, and Hungary enjoying pride of place among Croatia's friends. For that reason, Western -- especially German -- diplomacy has a special role to play in ensuring that Zagreb follows a prudent and far-sighted policy in its relations with its neighbors in the former Yugoslavia.





# RFE/RL Research Institute

## Draft Research Paper

**Author:** Duncan M. Perry  
**Working Title:** The Republic of Macedonia And The Odds Of Survival  
**Date:** 5 November 1992

**Summary:** The Republic of Macedonia is confronting external and internal dangers which together threaten the existence of the newly created state. Leaders are seeking Western recognition and financial support, while engaging in so far largely unproductive dialog regarding the status of Albanians in the country.

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## DRAFT RESEARCH PAPER

### THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA AND THE ODDS OF SURVIVAL

5 November 1992 Duncan M. Perry

*"That nothing changes in the East is a commonplace which threatens to become tyrannical. Assuredly there is something in the spirit of the East which is singularly kindly to survivals and anachronisms. The centuries do not follow one another, they coexist. There is no lopping of withered customs, no burial of dead ideas."* H.N. Brailsford, Macedonia: Its Races and their Future London: Methuen & Co. 1906, p. 1).

**Summary:** The Republic of Macedonia is confronting external and internal dangers which together threaten the existence of the newly created state. Leaders are seeking Western recognition and financial support, while engaging in so far largely unproductive dialog regarding the status of Albanians in the country.

A small country, landlocked in the center of the Balkans, the Republic of Macedonia is a crossroads of the peninsula. At present, it is also at a crossroads, one involving the very survival of this newly independent state. It faces internally a severe economic crisis and complex and multi-faceted political and social problems which threaten the national identity of the majority Macedonian Slavs and which could destroy the state. Inter-linked are external factors -- various currents blowing across the Balkans that buffet the country -- the Bosnian war, the threat of civil war in Kosovo, Greece's economic embargo, potential threats from neighboring Albania, Bulgaria and Serbia, conflicting Western interests, and international reluctance to intervene to halt the Balkan imbroglio.

An integral part of the Ottoman Empire for 500 years, Macedonia was carved up between Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia following the Balkan Wars (1912-1913). Each of these countries thereupon initiated programs to assimilate the Slav population of the region. During World War Two, Yugoslav partisan leader, Josip Broz Tito engineered the creation of a Macedonian nationality among the Slavs living in what became the Yugoslav Federal Republic of Macedonia, about one third of Ottoman Macedonia, creating an ethnic entity distinct from Bulgarians and Serbs. Since then, Macedonian Slavs have persistently sought to affirm their existence as a separate nationality. Although over time many countries came to recognize Macedonians as a nation, they received little satisfaction regionally. Bulgaria, which has harbored irredentist aspirations concerning Macedonia since the San Stefano Treaty of 1878 ending the Russo-Turkish War, to this day has declined to recognize the existence of a Macedonian nationality. For their part, Serbs, while they recognized the nationality, have generally regarded it as a congerie of Tito's, needed to cement the support of what became the Macedonian people for Yugoslavia. Greece recognized the nationality, but only as part of the greater Yugoslav entity.

With the break up of Yugoslavia, the inhabitants of Yugoslav Macedonia, following the Slovenian and Croatian examples, voted to separate from the rump Yugoslav state on 7 September 1991. That decision set off a series of crises with political, social and economic aspects. All are linked and many are potentially lethal to the existence of the new Macedonian state.

#### Introduction to the Crises

Macedonia's immediate crisis is rooted in economic considerations resulting from its



observance of United Nations (UN) sanctions against Serbia, formerly Macedonia's largest trading partner.<sup>1</sup> It is exacerbated by the economic embargo which Athens imposed against the republic soon after Macedonia declared its sovereignty on 17 September 1991. Greece, its southern neighbor, is demanding as a precondition for recognition, that the republic remove the word "Macedonia" from its official name. And more, it has successfully lobbied against international recognition by the European Community (EC) and the United States. The official EC position was put forward on 27 June 1992 when EC foreign ministers' declined to recognize Macedonia until Greek demands were met.<sup>2</sup> Denial of recognition makes Macedonia, the poorest of the former Yugoslav republics, ineligible for critically needed financial assistance from world organizations including the International Monetary Fund, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank. Despite the hardships wrought by Greece's actions, Macedonia has refused to give up its name.

At stake is not simply a question of national pride, Greek or Macedonian. More fundamentally, the identity of the Macedonian Slavs, the future of the new republic and indeed, the peace of the Balkans, are at issue. An unstable Macedonia opens wide the door to conflict over old irredentist territorial aspirations among Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia. Bulgaria, still regarded with some suspicion by Macedonians, occupied Macedonia three times in this century, and has historically considered Macedonia as western Bulgaria and the Slavs there as Bulgarians. A war over the Republic of Macedonia would place Bulgaria in the situation of having to decide whether to seek to defend this land, which it was actually the first to recognize the after independence was declared, or whether to fight to annex it. In any case, Bulgaria could not remain aloof. Serbia, which many outsiders consider a serious threat to Macedonia, traditionally has viewed Macedonia as "Southern Serbia" and even possessed this region between the end of the Balkan Wars and World War Two. Notwithstanding this, Macedonians themselves do not seem to view Serbia as a critical threat at the moment, but instead, see their northern neighbor as a known quantity and a lost market which they hope soon to regain. On the other hand, if Serbia persists in prosecuting the current war, it will drive Macedonia closer to Bulgaria.

Kosovo, the overwhelmingly Albanian former province of Serbia, constitutes an important factor regarding the fate of Macedonia. Should rebellion against the Serb authorities there occur, the Macedonian Albanians will cross over in large numbers to fight alongside their Kosovar cousins. Such a turn of events would also very likely lead to a Balkan war. Albania, which is no longer encouraging a Kosovo rebellion or supporting a greater Albania in the interest of the preservation of peace, is cautiously improving relations with Macedonia.<sup>3</sup> In fact, Albania now supports current borders and thus the current configuration of Macedonia, although leaders in Tirana are pressing for greater rights for Macedonian Albanians. And Greece, which could have cornered the market in Macedonia and very likely become a major influence, has instead set up a potential disaster which could fuel old rivalries.

Fearing such a turn of events, Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov has been assiduous in his pursuit of recognition and the needed aid. His theme is that Macedonia has gained its independence peacefully and legally, stayed out of the wars of Yugoslav succession, "secured inter-ethnic peace," carried out democratic and economic reforms, and fulfilled the conditions for recognition set down by the EC and CSCE.<sup>4</sup> He has repeatedly noted that his republic has both renounced territorial claims on other states and said that "we do not want to interfere in the internal affairs of neighbors [in the first instance Greece]," a reference to the promulgation of constitutional amendments on 6 January 1992 which explicitly prohibit territorial aspirations and which are directed at reassuring Greece that Macedonia has no intention of preclude creating problems among Greece's Slavophone Greek population.<sup>5</sup> Gligorov also noted that he is willing to enter into a bilateral agreement with Greece

guaranteeing the inviolability of borders and establishing friendship and cooperation. <sup>6</sup>

Recently, Gligorov traveled to London in a effort to lobby for recognition. His trip, seemingly successful, yielded a pledge from British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd that Macedonia would be recognized by December, presumably a reference to the forthcoming Edinburgh EC meeting. The statement, endorsed by the British press, also seems to accord with the mood in other European countries, especially Denmark and the Netherlands. So far, the only large states to recognize the Republic of Macedonia are Turkey and Russia,<sup>7</sup> while Bulgaria, Belarus, Lithuania, the Philippines, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Croatia, and Slovenia have also done so over protests from Greece. None has yet established a full blown embassy however in Skopje. Milan Panic, prime minister of rump Yugoslavia, while declaring Serbia's willingness to recognize Macedonia, has not yet acted and Slobodan Milosevic, strong man of Serbia, may have different ideas.

### The Identity Crisis

The controversy over what the Republic of Macedonia should be called has its origins in the clash between Greek foreign and domestic considerations and Macedonian nationalism. In Greece, where the economy has been in decline and people therefore generally receptive to intensified nationalist rhetoric, nationalists, chief among them then foreign minister Andonis Samaras, decried the adoption of the name "Macedonia" by the newly formed state to the north. He and others demanded that it change its name, omitting the word "Macedonia" to which the Greek's claimed exclusive entitlement. An emotional ground swell of popular support grew in Greece and the prime minister, Konstantinos Mitsotakis, faced a political crisis in 1991 as a result. He evidently chose to adopt the nationalist line in order to preserve his government. He later sacked Samaras, then curiously hardened his position, perhaps discerning that popular sentiment demanded it. Lately Mitsotakis has been gradually moderating, a decision very likely given impetus by adverse world opinion and perhaps the realization that Greece has created a crisis of potentially devastating proportions not only for Macedonia, but for the Balkans -- and for itself.

Greek and Macedonian nationalism are in collision and peace is the hostage. Macedonians, whose view of history does not coincide with that of Greeks, adopted signs and symbols which Greeks associate with their national heritage, among them the emblem which now forms the center piece of the Macedonian republic's flag, a motif from a casket found at the cite of Philip of Macedon's grave in Vergina. Regular articles appear in the Macedonian press which purport to document, using ancient works such as those written by Plutarch, that the Macedonians of Alexander's time and the Greeks "were two different peoples."<sup>8</sup> The object is to prove that modern Macedonians are the direct descendants of Alexander the Great and non-Greek Macedonians, not withstanding massive and credible evidence to the contrary. Greeks fear that such efforts will lead to logic which holds that what was Alexander's ought to belong to today's Macedonians, namely northern Greece. While some Macedonians have advocated this, the government absolutely repudiates any irredentist designs on Greece or Greek citizens.

Such manifestations of nationalism aside, from the Macedonian Slav point of view, the question of "What is in a name?" is tied directly to national identity. Said the Foreign Minister, Denko Maleski in a recent interview, "We have used that name for centuries [sic!] to try to draw a line of distinction between us as a people and the surrounding people, the Bulgarians, the Serbs, the Greeks, the Albanians. The word "Macedonia" for us is not just a word, a name or a state, the word "Macedonia" is part of our history, it is part of our literature, it is part of our children's tales, in is part of our songs. It is very important to our identity. So if we eliminate the word Macedonia from our

name we would in fact create a crisis of identity, we would sterilize the region where we live and we would open again a century-long debate on who these people who live here are."<sup>9</sup> In other words, critical to the Macedonian nation is identity with preservation of the Macedonian name.<sup>10</sup>

Macedonian Slavs, historically insecure about their identity, have persistently worked, over the more than two generations since Macedonia's creation as a former Yugoslav republic, to affirm the existence as a separate nation, one distinct from Bulgaria and Serbia. In large measure they have succeeded and to relinquish the name Macedonia now would be a denial of all of that for which the Macedonian Slavs have striven.

Seeking to diffuse the current crisis, Greece's Prime Minister, Mitsotakis, recently let it be known that if Macedonia changed its *official* name, Greece would not fuss about whatever its called itself internally. This elicited a storm of protest from hard-line nationalists like former foreign minister Samaras as well as the chief political opposition, Andreas Papandreou's Panhellenic Socialist Party (PASOK) party. Even so, Mitsotakis and political moderates in Athens continue to espouse this idea quietly, evidently believing that it would save face for Greece and resolve the issue. It may be too little and too late though, for Macedonians are unlikely to accept the two name solution and at least some countries in Europe may now be ready to recognize Macedonia without the suggested compromise.

### The Albanian Question

The issue of recognition, while critical to Macedonia's survival, is only part of the puzzle which is Macedonia. Another important segment involves internal matters, notably, inter ethnic relations and the rights of all nations within the republic. The state's population was put at 2,038,847 after the 1991 census.<sup>11</sup> The majority are Slavs, who number 1,366,027 and comprise two-thirds of the state's population.<sup>12</sup> Albanians, the second largest ethnic group in the country, are said to number 429,562 and thus constitute 21% of the state's population. Albanian political leaders take strong exception to that figure and place the percentage of Albanians as high as 40% of the state's population.<sup>13</sup> The discrepancy arises because many Albanians did not participate in the 1991 census. They had demanded as a condition of participation that the census materials be available both in the Macedonian and Albanian languages. Although the government prepared guidelines for completing the questionnaire in Albanian, the form was in Macedonian, causing many to boycott the tally. Further, Albanian leaders alleged that because there were no Albanians on the census commission, results of the process would be tampered with and fewer Albanians would be reported than actually existed. Macedonians claimed that the Albanians refused participate because they did not want the fact known that there were fewer Albanians than advertised. Whatever the numbers, the introduction of political pluralism in the Republic of Macedonia provided ethnic minority populations with potential political power. Albanians were quick to seize the opportunity.

Since the creation of the Yugoslav state in 1944 and the founding of a republic of Macedonia within it, Albanians have been a minority in a territory, in which, when under Ottoman control, they held a prominent and privileged position. Largely Albanian regions of Serbia, including Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia and Greece were excluded from the new Albanian state when it was created in 1912-1913,<sup>14</sup> leaving a sizable number of ethnic Albanians in predominantly Slavic lands.<sup>15</sup> The quest for creating a greater Albania was thereby born. Greater Albania, which Albanian nationalists claim should extend as far east as Skopje and Veles in Macedonia, south of Yannina in Greece, north into Montenegro and which encompasses all of Kosovo, is a concept opposed by all that would loose

territory.<sup>16</sup> After World War Two, the Albanians of western Macedonia, who had been made part of the Kosovo-Metohija administrative unit under Italian administration during the war, rejected the idea of becoming part of Macedonia, but were incorporated into the Yugoslav Macedonian state anyway.<sup>17</sup>

During the Yugoslav era, on orders from Belgrade, minority rights gradually broadened though Albanians in Macedonia never achieved a representation in any sector which was proportional to their numbers.<sup>18</sup> At present, Albanians have 23 seats out 120 in the national legislature and five ministries in the current government of 27. Still, Albanian leaders argue that Albanians have been short changed because the distribution of important positions is not in proportion to their numbers. Mithad Emini, Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP) General Secretary, noted in a recent interview that there are few Albanians in the bureaucracy or in important sub-ministerial positions. In fact he asserts that from the Albanian perspective, Slavs, no matter what their party, act like an ethnic block on national issues. The Macedonian constitution gives fuel to this view. In it, the Albanians and other nationalities present in Macedonia are not accorded the same level of recognition or status as that of the Macedonian Slavs. The preamble reads, "Macedonia is established as a national state of the Macedonian people [i.e., Slav, Orthodox people], in which full equality as citizens and permanent co-existence with Macedonian nation is provided for Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Romanies and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia."<sup>19</sup> This document, promulgated in 1991, thus accords Albanians the status of an ethnic minority, while in fact they regard themselves as a constituent nation within multi-ethnic Macedonia. As such, they claim equal rights in culture, government, education -- all spheres of human activity.<sup>20</sup>

According to Emini, Albanians feel cheated are now seeking freedom to use their language and alphabet in all national institutions, in education, and in culture.<sup>21</sup> Long held grievances include the fact that there is no Albanian language university and comparatively little Albanian language instruction in the national university. Moreover, while Albanian language schools exist at the primary level, they are said to be insufficient at the secondary level. Finally, Albanians demand to use their national symbol --the flag of Albania, an idea which Macedonian Slavs translate as a step toward secession, though flying that flag was legal for a time in socialist Yugoslavia.

Macedonian Slavs see these Albanian demands as undermining Macedonian identity, the Macedonian state, the Macedonian nation. They see Albanians as a minority population which, granted, should have all rights, but which has no right to claim special rights beyond those accorded by the constitution. Albanians, whose birth rate is the highest in Europe and whose life-styles, religion and culture differ radically from those of the Macedonian Slavs, do not typically mix readily with the Slavs and vice versa.<sup>22</sup> Not surprisingly, there has been little dialog and relations between Macedonian Slavs and Macedonian Albanians are now under great strain.

### **Macedonian Nationalism**

Historically, Macedonian Slavs considered Macedonian Albanians, especially the Muslims among them, as former oppressors who now propagate far more prolifically than the Slavs and who abuse the state system for personal gain by not paying taxes and ignoring the law. Still, there was little civil violence among the peoples, merely tension and suspicion; a de facto accommodation was struck as Tito's government maintained a tight grip on nationalism.

Now, Albanians are demanding full equality and say they want "meaningful co-existence "with the Slav population," but feel that the Slavs do not reciprocate. Slavs are leery that Albanians are

seeking to set up the conditions needed for secession, thus endangering the state. And while this may well be a correct assessment of long term Albanian goals, not to treat seriously the Albanian demands creates an apocalypse now situation instead of conditions under which time could be bought through compromise and thus at least potentially ways developed of holding the state together through affirmative action, prosperity, and education. The danger is that while both sides claim to seek a common ground, if neither willing to agree to a compromise in time, both sides may find themselves confronting each other, certainly in anger and possibly even in civil war. 23

For now, a democratic and peaceful solution seems possible, for Albanian leaders steadfastly deny that they want to secede from Macedonia, arguing that it is their homeland too and that they accept the multi-ethnic make-up of the state and even the state's name -- Macedonia. Further, they indicate that they know that change comes slowly and requires currently unavailable resources. So they would like the government to pledge to the Albanian population a series of concrete measures that will be enacted over time, say ten years, measures that will move toward fulfilling of Albanian demands.

## Politics

The key to resolving these explosive issues is in the hands of politicians and so far there has been little progress. After a two month process, a new government was formed in September 1991, replacing the technocrat cabinet formed by Nikola Kljusev. The new cabinet is a three party coalition made up of the Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity/National Democratic Party coalition, the Social Democratic League, of Macedonia and the Reform Forces/Liberal Party. It is headed by the 30 year old Branko Crvenkovski, an engineer by training.

Crvenkovski is seeking stability and prosperity. He is conciliatory toward the ever more strident Albanian deputies. That his cabinet includes five Albanians is a mark of his intentions. Another indicator is that the government supports creating broader educational opportunities for Albanians in the Albanian language, resources permitting. However, there are some Albanian demands that will certainly generate problems. Notable among them is the idea of federalizing the country. The Albanian vision of Macedonia would include a federal arrangement. However, since Albanians do not live in clearly defined and contiguous territories, but rather scattered in villages and towns, the concept of cantonization seems less than workable. When pressed about the matter, Albanian leaders indicate that their idea of cantonization involves a process of insuring proportional representation in those areas where the Albanians have the majority, like Tetovo, Debar, Gostivar, and perhaps Struga. The idea is to create an Albanian infra-structure in the public sector for at present, there are places like Tetovo, which is reportedly 80% Albanian, but where Albanians are not represented in government. 24 From the government's point of view such an idea is unnecessary and would very likely breed fear of the secession of western Macedonia among the majority population. Besides, the government contends that there is no need for such an approach, as it is willing to find reasonable solutions to outstanding problems, working with all peoples. 25

Stevo Crvenkovski (no apparent relation to the prime minister), one of three national vice presidents, ardently confirmed this in an interview with the RFE/RL Research Institute. He stated that government "is absolutely willing to solve the [outstanding] questions," but time and resources are inadequate. The problem is compounded because people have high expectations "that once you have a democratic regime, everything will be OK within 24 hours. ... We are now in the gap between these high expectations and our real ability to change things. We are changing things very fast but for Albanians it is not fast enough." 26

For their part, the Albanian deputies have chosen to respond to major legislative issues in a curious way. Instead of voting against legislation of which they do not approve, they boycott the balloting. Thus, Albanian parliamentarians refused to vote on the state's constitution among other enactments. They boycotted the voting on the national anthem and when they could not persuade the Sobranie to include Albanian on the new national currency, they boycotted the vote then too. Leaders evidently believe this strategy underscores the idea that Albanians are a separate nation and that by not voting they are in effect not recognizing the legality of the decisions taken.

Resolution of ethnic issues depends chiefly on the parliament which is deeply divided. Representatives of the righting xenophobic, Slavo-centric nationalists are pitted against Albanians and left-leaning and centrist deputies. One place to measure the state of majority-minority relations is this parliament. There, one of the most important and sensitive issues confronting legislators in the current session was resolved on 27 October, the law on citizenship. The debate, begun earlier in the year was deferred until October, has focused on the establishment of a residency requirement in order to become a Macedonian citizen. The law that was passed specifies 15 years of residence before citizenship can be awarded. Albanian deputies predictably boycotted the session, evidently expecting such an outcome which precludes refugees from other former Yugoslav republics as well as people from elsewhere, from becoming citizens easily.

The law effectively precludes the many immigrants from Albania, Kosovo, and elsewhere already in Macedonia, from having a voice in government. This decision indicates the depth of fear felt by Macedonian Slavs concerning preservation of their fragile country. They point out that it is the only homeland of the Macedonian Slavs and it should not become a bi-national country. The Albanians, on the other hand they note, have an historic homeland and a state -- Albania -- to which they may repair. Thus, the Macedonian Slavs have been unwilling to countenance changing the Albanians' minority status to that of a co-equal nation. This thinking also accounts for why an influx of Muslims, chiefly Albanians, would be seen by the Macedonian Slavs as a threat for the immigrants would also increase the political importance of the Albanian community at the expense of the Slav majority, and some say, eventually make Macedonia into an Albanian land.

## Options

Balkan problems are rarely uncomplicated. For the Republic of Macedonia today, this statement is doubly true and all of its problems are interconnected. At best it has an even chance of surviving at present. If it remains economically on the ropes for much longer, those odds will diminish considerably. Unless the economic situation improves rapidly and soon, internal stress resulting in large part from external forces, especially Greece's opposition to recognition which precludes financial aid to Macedonia and which severely restricts fuel and goods transiting from Thessaloniki, augmented by Skopje's observance of the UN sanctions against Serbia, will cause competing nationalists from among the Slavs and the Albanians to collide. In this case, compromise will become increasingly impossible yielding a scenario wherein the Albanians could see better advantage in joining a greater Albanian state to be made up of western Macedonia, Serbian-administered Kosovo and Albania rather than staying in the heretofore more prosperous Republic of Macedonia.

But, even if the economic picture improves, there is serious danger of conflagration resulting from a spill over of the Bosnian war into Kosovo. Gligorov and Crvenkovski are especially concerned about such a possibility. Although Milan Panic, Prime Minister of the rump Yugoslav state,

has pledged the restoration of Albanian cultural and educational institutions in Kosovo, in an effort to reduce tension there, Kosovar Albanian expectations may exceed what Serbs are prepared to give. Should this prove true, Macedonian Albanians and Kosovar brethren could join in a struggle which inevitably would involve the full force of the rump Yugoslav military. Albania would very likely not stand by if this happened. Macedonia would do its best to stay out of the imbroglio, but with its citizens fighting on Serbian territory against Serbia, Serbia's response is not certain. Moreover, a Kosovar war would be a war for independence, a further extension of which is the creation of greater Albania at the cost of western Macedonia to Skopje. Thus, the likelihood of Albanian secession from Macedonia is significantly increased in the event of a Kosovo explosion.

All of these circumstances place the West in a precarious situation. It will soon need to decide whether withholding the recognition of Macedonia is going to create another Bosnia -- or worse -- or whether it would begin a process of Balkan healing by enabling the nascent land to receive financial aid and thus have a chance to establish some economic stability. Having been burned by the Bosnian example, European and American politicians are understandably worried. Macedonians, however, argue that there need be no fear as the two cases are very different. Macedonian Foreign Minister, Denko Maleski, in a recent interview, noted that Macedonia is not a land divided among religions and nationalities in the way Bosnia was. Rather, it is a country where the political leaders have all agreed on the cohesion of the state and where leaders are prepared to work for it. Maleski contends, "Unlike the Bosnian situation, we have a consensus among the political parties and among the two major ethnic groups, the Macedonians and the Albanians, that Macedonia should be an independent state with a government elected and with the institutions that are functioning now. We have that consensus now and that consensus did not exist in Bosnia."<sup>27</sup> Albanian leaders seem to endorse this position,<sup>28</sup> though whether both sides can preserve the peace will depend on issues not yet resolved. Leaders on both sides are saying the right things -- compromise, dialog, discussion, but there is so far little evidence of progress if the result on the vote on citizenship can be used as a gauge. While perhaps hearing each other, both sides seem to have failed to listen to each other.

The next move seems to be up to the Macedonian Slavs whose steps or lack of action toward rectifying Albanian grievances will demonstrate the level of commitment the government has toward resolving the issues. Meantime, no matter what their intentions, if Kosovo explodes in rebellion, the odds against Republic of Macedonia's survival in tact will diminish greatly, giving rise to the specter of a Balkan land grab and decades of further warfare, unrest, repression, and human misery.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Macedonia has enforced the sanctions despite that fact that it has not been admitted to the UN.

<sup>2</sup>Reuter, 28 June 1992. The Greek position is explained in a brief issued by the Greek embassy in Germany called "Die Frage Makedonien," *Griechenland aktuell* (June 1992).

<sup>3</sup>Louis Zanga, "Tirana Afraid of War over Kosovo," *RFE/RL Research Report* (forthcoming).

<sup>4</sup>Kiro Gligorov, "Message by President Gligorov to the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the Member-States of the European Community Meeting at the Ministerial Council of the EC Meeting to be held on May 11, 1992 in Brussels," May 10 1992.

<sup>5</sup>Republic of Macedonia, *Ustav na Republika Makedonija* [Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia] (Skopje: NIP "Magazin 21," 1991, p. 5).

<sup>6</sup>Gligorov, "Message."

<sup>7</sup>See Suzanne Crow, "Russia and the Macedonian Question," *RFE/RL Research Report*, (forthcoming).

<sup>8</sup>Vasil Il'ov "Svetot go osvojuvat za Makedonsite," *Nova Makedonija*, 1 September 1992, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup>Interview with Denko Maleski, Skopje, 11 October 1992,. See Stefan Troebst, "Makedonische Antworten auf

die "Makedonische Frage" 1944-1992: Nationalismus, Republiksgruendung, nation building," *Suedost Europa* (1992) Vol. 7/8, pp. 423-442.

<sup>10</sup>See Kiril Haramiev, "Macedonian Nation Building," (forthcoming).

<sup>11</sup>Republic of Macedonia, "Macedonia Basic Economic Data," (Skopje, Statistical Office of Macedonia, 1992), p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>The 1981 Yugoslav census put the number of Macedonian Slavs at 1,281,195 and the Macedonian Albanians at 377,726. Thus, the Macedonian Slavs represented 67% of the population, the Albanians 20%.

<sup>13</sup>Sami Ibrahim, Vice President of the PDP, contends the number is 40%. *Illyria* (22 August 1992), p. 6.

<sup>14</sup>See Stavro Skendi, *The Albanian National Awakening, 1878-1912* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967 for the best treatment of the topic.

<sup>15</sup>See Sabrina P. Ramet, *Social Currents in Eastern Europe* (Durham: Duke, 1991) pp. 173-194; Peter Prifti, "Kosova: The Struggle for Statehood," *Albanian Catholic Bulletin* (XIII) 1992, p. 81.

<sup>16</sup>See map in *Albanian Catholic Bulletin* (Vol. XIII) 1992, back cover.

<sup>17</sup>Stephen E. Palmer, Jr. and Robert R. King, *Yugoslav Communism and the Macedonian Question* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1971), p. 175; Robert R. King, *Minorities under Communism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 128.

<sup>18</sup>King, p. 140ff.

<sup>19</sup>"Preamble," *Ustav*, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup>Interview with Mithad Emini, Skopje, 15 October 1992. Subtle and not so subtle reminders of the Slav exclusivity are to be found everywhere. The new national anthem, for example, extols the exploits of Slavs and Vlachs, focusing on the abortive Ilinden Uprising of 1903 against the Ottomans. Albanians, while a few participated in this event on the rebel side, more generally filled the ranks of the ruling Ottoman forces. Clearly, Albanians and most likely Turks, Macedonia's third largest population, do not regard this event with the same reverence as the Slavs who take it as a symbol of their nascent nation's struggle for independence.

<sup>21</sup>According to the constitution, Macedonian is the only official national language (though other languages may be used in tandem as appropriate) and this is written in the Cyrillic alphabet while Albanian is written in the Roman script. *Ustav*, Article 7, pp. 6-7.

<sup>22</sup>Hugh Poulton, *The Balkans: Minorities and States in Conflict* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1992), p. 83.

<sup>23</sup>Emini Interview.

<sup>24</sup>Emini Interview.

<sup>25</sup>Interview with Crvenkovski interview, Skopje, 15 October 1992.

<sup>26</sup>Crvenkovski Interview.

<sup>27</sup>Maleski Interview.

<sup>28</sup>Emini Interview.



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## Draft Research Paper

**Author:** Louis Zanga  
**Working Title:** Tirana Afraid of War Over Kosovo  
**Date:** 4 November 1992

**Summary:** A policy reversal has become evident in Tirana's approach to the Kosovar problem. The stress these days is placed on seeking peaceful means of dealing with the Kosovar question. Even Albania's recognition of the Republic of Kosovo, is under scrutiny. It seems that fear of open hostilities with Serbia and pressure from the West have induced the Albanian leaders to tread carefully regarding the Kosovar problem.

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## DRAFT RESEARCH PAPER

TIRANA AFRAID OF WAR OVER KOSOVO  
October 29, 1992 Louis Zanga

*Summary:* A policy reversal has become evident in Tirana's approach to the Kosovar problem. The stress these days is placed on seeking peaceful means of dealing with the Kosovar question. Even Albania's recognition of the Republic of Kosovo, is under scrutiny. It seems that fear of open hostilities with Serbia and pressure from the West have induced the Albanian leaders to tread carefully regarding the Kosovar problem.

The real possibility that Kosovo may become the stage for the next ethnic war in the former Yugoslav lands and in the process involve Albania too, is being felt with great trepidation in Tirana these days. Simply put, if the war in Bosnia spreads to Kosovo, leaders fear that Albania would be dragged into the conflagration in order to aid brother Albanians in an uneven fight against the Serbs. This fear has led to new sensitivity to the Kosovo question in Tirana and is reflected by the general mood among leaders who are now treading more carefully on the increasingly sensitive issue of Kosovar independence. Numerous official and non-official statements stressing the peaceful approach to the issue, namely to rely on dialogue instead of confrontation, contrast with Tirana's former more assertive policy toward the complex Kosovar question.

As Albania's democratization process gathered momentum in 1991, nationalist issues moved to the top of the political agenda. And in the new democratic Albania, Kosovar matters soon reached a qualitatively new stage in keeping with the lively democratic politics throughout the postcommunist Balkans. Meetings between ethnic Albanian leaders from the former Yugoslavia and their counterparts in Albania became commonplace. In talks with the Albania's new president, Sali Berisha, the latter endorsed independence for Kosovo and also for the Albanians of Macedonia, but always provided that this was achieved by peaceful means.<sup>1/</sup> Some Albanian officials began to put the stress on unification of historically Albanian lands, as for example foreign minister Alfred Serreqi did in a recent interview. Published under the heading "All Albanians Must Be Reunited," where in he said in part:

We have to speak up, sometimes even shout, to make Europe listen. The Albanian issue has been unjustly ignored until now. We will strive to correct this. We will not seek border changes through violence or disrespect of the Helsinki and Paris charters, but we will not hesitate to demand that all Albanians live in their ethnic territories. It is not just to keep them apart and refuse their self-determination. Obviously, our only means will be democratic.

## TIRANA AFRAID OF WAR OVER KOSOVO

Today, the tone of Albanian officials toward the Albanians in rump-Yugoslavia has become much mellowed and less belligerent. Albania, of course, is not prepared either economically or militarily and would not be able to challenge successfully its powerful northern neighbor in a bloody conflict which could then turn into a full-fledged Balkan war. Under these circumstances, Tirana seems to have not much choice but to stress the peaceful approach to the problem. Still the voices in Albania are not fully in harmony. While many advocate a peaceful approach to resolving the Kosovo problem, some argue that Serbia, should the war in Bosnia spread to Kosovo, should be met with force, even though the struggle would be uneven.

By far one of the most forceful advocate of caution is the prominent author, Ismail Kadare, who regards the Kosovar crisis as a most serious problem. In a recent interview in the youth newspaper *Zeri i Rinise*,<sup>3/</sup> he was asked whether any progress had been made with regard to the Kosovar problem following the London International Conference on 26 August. He replied that the situation was static and then proceeded to say that:

There is only anxiety, hesitancy and war of nerves. Kosovo is a test case for all of us. But this is a sacred test which allows no superficiality, arrogance or hot-temper. Above all, manipulation of Kosovo for group or party interests is unforgivable. In the first place, I believe that a massacre should be avoided in Kosovo. This does not mean to compromise principles...Still, one should not resort to desperate approaches. Desperate acts may be taken by individuals but not by nations. No one has the right to incite a people to such acts. What is then the solution?...The Kosovar file should remain open. The Balkans are changing rapidly, each week, each month. Nothing is permanent.

Kadare here is making a strong plea for coolheadedness and is warning certain party leaders not to play with the fate of the nation for personal interest. He is also calling for the exercise of patience since developments in the Balkans are fluid and no one can predict their course. He may sound somewhat idealistic but apparently he sees no other way if bloodshed is to be avoided.

But there are also others, in contrast to Kadare, who employ incendiary language to describe the pending threat of war in Kosovo. They argue for a stand and fight position should Serbia use force in Kosovo. The same youth newspaper *Zeri i Rinise*<sup>4/</sup> published a whole page article of the author Fatos Arapi who concluded his message in very nationalistic and highly pessimistic terms:

Should the crazy hand of Serb chauvinism pass from the Bosnian flames...and light up the "southern front," then the Albanians have no choice but to enter the sacred temple..."let us face the bullets with our teeth." What

## TIRANA AFRAID OF WAR OVER KOSOVO

choice do we have?! It is said this is the way the freedom of people is written.

Fear of a possible blood bath in Kosovo is not limited to Albanians alone, foreign chancelleries and international media which focus on the growing tension in Kosovo, are also very concerned. Tirana's tread slower approach to the Kosovar question is, in fact, in part a result of Western counsel, persuasion and even pressure to find means of defusing the issue. The newspaper of the Socialist Party ( ex-Communist ) *Zeri i Popullit* which eagerly seeks to discredit the ruling Democrats any time it discovers a discrepancy in their policies, had precisely the foreign pressure in mind in a recent commentary. The commentary entitled: "Forgetfulness or Diplomacy!" appeared in bold print and is signed only "observer." It noted that during the recent 47th session of the UN General Assembly, Albanian Premier Aleksander Meksi had failed to use in his official address the words "Republic of Kosovo." The commentator wondered about this grave omission at such an important gathering and labelled it an "unforgivable" act since Albania had recognized the republic, had hosted its president and premier and had allowed Albanians to demonstrate during rump-Yugoslav prime minister Panic's one-day visit in Tirana on August 10.<sup>5/</sup> The commentary concluded that such an omission may give rise to the illusion that "only a little pressure is needed" to make the Albanians change their position on the national question.

These journalists, of course, are mainly interested in exploiting for propaganda purposes Meksi's omission as a way of striking back at Democrats who charged that the Communists in the past talked a lot but did little for Yugoslavia's Albanians. Still, Meksi's failure to mention the republican status of Kosovo in his UN speech does not seem to have been unintentional, but rather appears to reflect a policy reversal on this weighty question.

The Socialists kept up their propaganda pressure on the ruling Democrats by raising the issue during a parliamentary debate which examined Meksi's six months foreign policy record. The Socialists' foreign policy expert, the deputy Bashkim Zeneli, criticized the lack of a sound policy in this field:<sup>6/</sup>

Why are there changes in the state's positions regarding Kosovo? What is today's position in contrast to that which the party in power had only 7-8 months ago? Why does the state position no longer mention The Republic of Kosovo? The parliament remains in the dark, the people remain in the dark about this. And who has the right to act in this way?

The propaganda aspect of Zeneli's charges aside, it is evident that Tirana's initial euphoria regarding Kosovo's independence in comparison to six months ago has evaporated.

## TIRANA AFRAID OF WAR OVER KOSOVO

Tirana's changed position on the Kosovar question has caught the attention of foreign observers too. The reliable Swiss daily *Neue Zuercher Zeitung* commented on this development by noting that the Albanian leadership, in a policy reversal, had more or less switched to the EC and the USA line which calls for a special status of Kosovo in rump Yugoslavia and rejects recognition of independence.<sup>7/</sup> Fear of a general Balkan conflagration is given as the reason for this policy reversal. The Swiss reporter goes so far as to say that even Kosovar officials have shown understanding for Tirana's new position. Kosovo's representative in Tirana, Ali Aliu ( a leading member of Rugova's opposition party The Democratic Alliance ) is quoted by the *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*: "One should not consider this a stab in the back of "President Rugova" by the Albanian government. Of primary importance is to avoid blood-spilling. The start of war in Kosovo would be at the same time a death sentence for the Albanians. Nor could one count in such a case on Albania's military help."

Tirana has yet to admit or explain its modified position on the question of Kosovo's independence. But it seems that today the Albanian leadership is seriously worried that the Serbs are very close to achieving their main objective of consolidating Serbia. Now that the Serbs are approaching victory in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Tirana may think that it is Kosovo's turn since it stands in the way of the Serb's final objective of creating greater Serbia. Be that as it may, it is still too early to tell how this policy modification is being received in Kosovo, but undoubtedly there will be some bitter reaction to it. Kosovars in Albania have already voiced concern over this policy reversal in the form of a "Declaration" by the political association "Kosova" which was set-up in Albania after the downfall of communism ( the number of Kosovars, pre-war and post-war, living in Albania is unknown but some estimates speak of up to 200,000 ) . The statement which was published in the Democratic Party organ *Rilindja Demokratike* is not critical of the Albanian government but tries to remind Tirana of its stated obligations on the Kosovar question and implies that it should meet them, especially since it recognized Kosovo's republican status.<sup>8/</sup> It says among other things that Albania's new policy on Kosovo began after the victory of the Democratic Party on 22 March 1992 and that the Albanian state recognized the Republic of Kosovo and it encouraged others to do so.

One finds further evidence of Tirana's policy modification concerning the Kosovar question, and even signs of confusion and ambiguousness, in a declaration of the Albanian foreign ministry concerning the country's relations with its neighbors published in *Rilindja Demokratike*.<sup>9/</sup> The declaration first reiterated the need for "prudence and understanding" in the face of the Yugoslav crisis as well as Milosevic's "aggressiveness as the personification of the chauvinist and irrational Serb wing." In contrast, the declaration praised as "very clear and encouraging" the words of Greek premier Konstantinos Mitsotakis who, despite the fact that he favors greater autonomy for

## TIRANA AFRAID OF WAR OVER KOSOVO

Kosovo, has opposed the idea of independence. In the German weekly *Der Spiegel* Mitsotakis however also accused Tirana of encouraging the Kosovars in their demands for independence.<sup>10/</sup>

The framers of the declaration ignored Mitsotakis's interview and instead concentrated on criticizing Greek political forces which are ill-disposed to Albania and to the Kosovar question:

An increasing number of interviews are being given by Greek officials, even top ones, who claim to be interpreters of the Albanian question. The Albanian people do not need to borrow spokesmen. Albanian Kosovar political managers have long since become known for their patience and wisdom for which they have gained the deserved sympathy of the freedom loving world. No one has the right to evaluate in a prejudiced manner the political solution of the problem of Kosovo and the constructive policy of the Albanian government.

Through this declaration, the Albanian leaders are trying to convince their Greek neighbors and other states of their non-belligerent behavior regarding the Kosovar question. The document supports the Albanian-Serb dialogue launched by Panic and Rugova and speaks of the international praise for the "constructive character" of Albanian policy toward Kosovo and of the policy of the Kosovar leaders too.

In mid-October, a delegation of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, headed by its president, Ruslan Khasbulatov visited Tirana, the highest Russian delegation to do so since the victory of democracy in Albania.<sup>11/</sup> In this case too, one of the main topics of the bilateral talks was the Yugoslav crisis. Both sides stressed that the only way to solve the problems is through negotiations, dialogue, peace and not through change of borders. He praised Russia's stand in the Security Council concerning the Yugoslav crisis, which he said will be productive not by relying on "old schemes of old interests, but by taking into account new realities." By this Berisha is saying that Moscow should refrain from applying the traditional pro-Serb line to the problems of present day rump Yugoslavia.

Berisha, at the same time reiterated the position that the Kosovar conflict can be solved "only" through peaceful ways and means. And in this context he gave full support to the Rugova-Panic meeting in Pristina on 15 October and the creation of the working groups between the two sides in order to bring the much needed detente and create the necessary climate for the solution, through negotiations, of the political status of Kosovo. He concluded by saying that 6 million Albanians live in the Balkans and although 3 million of them lived in former Yugoslavia, "they were not demanding resettlement or any change of borders. They do not represent a threat to any other people."

## TIRANA AFRAID OF WAR OVER KOSOVO

The Albanian Foreign Minister Alfred Serreqi told another member of the Russian delegation, the deputy foreign minister Boris Kolokolov, that the Yugoslav crisis "cannot be solved without the contribution of Russia." He added that Albania opposed the "violent" change of borders and he favored a dialogue between the legitimate representatives of Kosovo and Serbia, "in the presence of a third party." The Serbs reject this form of a meeting. The Russian visitor replied that he was of the same opinion as regards the solution of the question of Kosovo through dialogue.

*Conclusion.* Coolheadedness appears to prevail today in Tirana as regard the question of the political status of Kosovo. Fear of a possible explosion of armed hostilities in that region which could engulf Albania too is one explanation for Tirana's decision to make some amendments in its policy toward the Kosovar question. The playing down of the terms Kosovo Republic is one aspect of this policy reversal. Another explanation may be the pressure from abroad on Tirana to take the peaceful approach to the problem. Some Albanians, on both sides of the dividing line, will be upset about this unexpected new foreign policy thinking. But right now Tirana seems to have no other choice but the peaceful approach since the country can hardly afford a clash with its powerful northern neighbor. It is this which Kadare probably has in mind when he talks about the necessity to avoid "desperate acts" and avoid playing with the destiny of "nations." Tirana's new policy is designed to show the world that Albania is doing what it can to prevent the spreading of the war launched by the Serbs against the Slovenes, Croats, and Muslims. Given this policy, Albanians are relying on Europe and the United States to insure that the Bosnian war does not spread to Kosovo.

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1 Patrick Moore, "Albanians in Yugoslavia," *RFE/RL Research Report*, no. 14, 3 April 1992.

2 *Illyria*, 3 June 1992.

3 *Zeri i Rinise*, 3 October 1992.

4 *Ibid.*, 14 October 1992.

5 *Zeri i Popullit*, 3 October 1992.

6 *Ibid.*, 9 October 1992.

7 *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, 20 October 1992.

8 *Rilindja Demokratike*, 15 October 1992.

9 Louis Zanga, "The Question of Kosovar Sovereignty." *RFE/RL Research Report*, no. 43, 30 October 1992.

10 *Rilindja Demokratike*, 18 October 1992.



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# Serbia at the Edge of the Abyss

Paul Shoup

*The political situation in Serbia remains deadlocked following the imposition of sanctions at the end of May and demonstrations by the opposition against Slobodan Milosevic's regime at the end of June and the beginning of July. It would appear that Milosevic's days are numbered. The opposition has developed a number of strategies to effect the transition to the post-Milosevic era. Yet it is far from clear whether a democratizing transition and the lifting of sanctions will be accomplished in time to avert a social and economic collapse, even civil war, in Serbia.*

The drama surrounding international efforts to end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to mount with the convening in London on 26 and 27 August of the conference on Yugoslavia. Attending the meeting were the parties to the conflict as well as other nations and organizations—some forty groups in all. The participants recommended the tightening of sanctions against Serbia and agreed to a number of measures that, if implemented, could ease the fighting, especially around Sarajevo: the regrouping of heavy arms, which would be placed under UN supervision; the closing of detention camps; and the granting of safe passage to humanitarian convoys. Nevertheless, whether these recommendations will be implemented remains unclear. Much depends upon the cooperation of local Serbian and Muslim forces and the pressure Serbian leaders put on the Serbian combatants to end the fighting under the terms laid down by the conference. The fact that many of those attending the conference had

serious doubts that this pressure would be applied was affirmed by the participants' condemnation of Serbia for its aggression toward Bosnia and Herzegovina, recommendations to tighten the sanctions against Serbia, and growing pressure for armed intervention (which the conference resisted).

Meanwhile, the outcome of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina remains closely tied to events in Serbia itself and to the ability of the opposition in Serbia to carry out a peaceful transition to a democratic form of government and to bring about an end to the sanctions—issues that were apparently not addressed or that were considered of less importance to those taking part in the conference. This article addresses these aspects of the crisis.

After the imposition of sanctions by the UN Security Council on 30 May, Serbia was plunged into a crisis without precedent in its stormy history. While the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina has monopolized most of the media's attention, it is developments in Serbia over the next few months that promise to have a profound effect on the course of events throughout what was formerly Yugoslavia. The success or failure of international efforts to contain ethnic strife

in the Balkan states depends, in turn, on these developments.

## Milosevic's Waning Fortunes

The challenges facing Serbia, in short, are to effect a transition to a democratic form of government that would result in the removal of the president of Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic, and to persuade the UN Security Council to lift the sanctions imposed at the end of May under Resolution 757. Unless these changes can be carried out before the end of the year, the sanctions may do far-reaching damage to the Serbian economy and society, with the concomitant risk that Milosevic's regime will be followed by some new, even more distasteful, authoritarian form of rule. At the same time, the response in Serbia to the policy of "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia and Herzegovina has not been comparable to the outrage expressed in the West, notwithstanding the efforts of the opposition to raise the issue in the campaign to unseat Milosevic. The issue of the detention camps has also engaged the opposition, but it has been used to advantage by Milosevic because of charges, which later turned out to be false, that such camps were operating in Serbia proper.

The crisis in Serbia had been building up for some time. The origins of the problem lie in the failure of Serbia to make the transition to a pluralist democratic order following the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the breakup of the Titoist system in Yugoslavia in the late 1980s. The first free elections in Serbia in December 1990 were a triumph for Milosevic, who managed to garner the support of Communists and Serbian nationalists, two normally irreconcilable groups,

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for his authoritarian regime. From that time on, the democratic forces in Serbia have found themselves in the minority, forced onto the defensive by the aggressive nationalism of the Milosevic regime. Control over state television has been especially important in enabling Milosevic's government to manipulate public opinion, especially in the countryside, where television is virtually the sole source of news.

Milosevic's problems began mounting last fall, as the war in Croatia became increasingly unpopular. The conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which broke out in March, was the turning point. Although Serbia has thus far escaped physical destruction and evasion of the sanctions is widespread, the economic costs of the war and of the sanctions are visible in soaring inflation and a drastic decline in living standards. An estimated 200,000 Serbs have fled the country, most of them to escape conscription into the army. At the end of May a coalition of opposition forces, the Democratic Movement of Serbia (DEPOS), was organized with the backing of a number of nationalist intellectuals who had previously supported Milosevic (notably Matija Beckovic).<sup>1</sup> Also at the end of May, the bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church issued a statement calling, albeit indirectly, for Milosevic's removal;<sup>2</sup> this was followed by a similar appeal from a number of members of the Serbian Academy of Sciences. At the same time, elections to the federal parliament resulted in a decline in the strength of the ruling Serbian Socialist Party and in an increase in support for Vojislav Seselj's ultranationalist Radical Party.

The imposition of the sanctions at the end of May brought the crisis to a head. The opposition warned that civil war threatened Serbia and predicted Milosevic's imminent downfall. The pressure of the opposition on the regime culminated in a strike of

university students from 15 June to 10 July and mass protests organized by DEPOS and called the *Vidovdan* [St. Vitus's Day] Assembly (St. Vitus's Day being the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo). The protests lasted from 28 June to 5 July and were attended (according to public opinion polls) by some 293,000 people.<sup>3</sup> Since June the tension has eased somewhat: the students have returned to their homes for the summer, and workers in factories, which are increasingly idle, have been given extended vacations with pay. The advent of a new federal government, headed by President Dobrica Cosic and Prime Minister Milan Panic, blunted the attack on Milosevic and the Serbian regime. While polls show a drop in the popularity of Milosevic and the ruling Socialist Party of Serbia,<sup>4</sup> the Serbian regime has attempted to ride out the protests by limiting the autonomy of the university, restricting public gatherings, and attempting to gain control over Serbia's leading newspaper (and erstwhile supporter of the regime), *Politika*, by nationalizing the enterprise of which *Politika* is a part.<sup>5</sup> In sum, the sanctions have not so far broken the political deadlock between the regime and the opposition in Serbia, although the fortunes of Milosevic are decidedly on the wane.

### Three Plans for a Transition

As the crisis in Serbia has deepened, the controversy over how to implement the transition to democracy has grown, above all over the issue of how to effect Milosevic's removal—"the

question of questions," as one political commentator put it. Three strategies have emerged: that of the moderate wing of the Democratic Party; the more radical approach of the DEPOS coalition; and the proposals of Cosic, speaking in his capacity as president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY, that is, Serbia and Montenegro).

The moderates within the Democratic Party have argued that Serbia is on the verge of civil war and that a successful transition can only be achieved through a gradualist approach to the transfer of power from Milosevic to a more democratic regime. In early June the Democrats issued a document entitled "Platform for the Prevention of Civil War," which attempted to justify the gradualist approach. The platform, which showed a strong preference for creating new institutions to ease the pressure of transition, advocated the formation of a Serbian coalition government in which all parties, including the Serbian Socialists, would be represented; the creation of a temporary State Council, whose task it would be to arbitrate among institutions and groups during the transition; and a number of "state crisis headquarters," which would assume responsibility for mediating among ethnic groups and easing domestic tension during the period of transition. The transitional government was to organize elections to a constituent assembly, which would adopt a new Serbian Constitution. The Yugoslav federation, introduced at the end of April, would be "frozen"—in effect, power would be turned over to the two republican governments of Serbia and Montenegro until the new constitution was adopted.<sup>6</sup>

After the adoption of the platform the moderate wing of the Democratic Party increased its support for the strategy advocated by Cosic and the federal leadership, playing down the notion that the transition would require new institutions and the

<sup>1</sup> *The International Weekly* (Belgrade), 23–29 May 1992, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 6–12 June 1992, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Borba* (Belgrade), 18–19 July 1992, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Support for the Serbian Socialist Party dropped to 23.7% of the electorate in July. Still, the Socialists remained the single largest party, followed by Seselj's Serbian Radical Party, with the support of 13.8% of the electorate, and the Democratic Party, with 9.3% (*ibid.*, 22 July 1992).

<sup>5</sup> The timing of the move may have been occasioned by the fact that the television channel owned by the *Politika* group had begun to report the news more objectively, a sign that it was breaking with the regime.

<sup>6</sup> *The International Weekly*, 13–19 June 1992, p. 4.

## SERBIA

POPULATION 9,791,500  
CAPITAL AND ITS POPULATION Belgrade, 1,700,000

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS Serbs, 6,430,000 (65.8%); Albanians, 1,690,000 (17.2%)\*; Hungarians, 345,400 (3.5%); Yugoslavs, 318,000 (3.2%); Muslims, 238,000 (2.4%); Montenegrins, 140,000 (1.4%); Romanians, 137,200 (1.4%); Croats, 109,000 (1.1%); Slovaks, 67,200 (0.6%); Macedonians, 47,500 (0.4%); Romanians, 42,300 (0.4%) Bulgarians, 25,200 (0.3%) Unknown, 61,300 (0.6%)

\* Inconclusive figure because of the Albanian boycott of the census.

NOTE: All figures as of 1 April 1991.

SOURCE: *Jugoslovenski pregled*, no. 1 1992, p. 11.

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC Slobodan Milosevic (born in 1941)  
PRIME MINISTER Radoman Bozovic (born in 1953)

HISTORY Serbs settled in the Balkans in the seventh century. In the twelfth century they established their own state, which in the fourteenth century became the most powerful in the Balkans. From 1459 to 1815 Serbia was under Ottoman rule. In 1815 it was granted autonomy and in 1878 was recognized as an independent principality by the Congress of Berlin. Serbia became a kingdom in 1882. In 1918 it became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. (It was renamed Yugoslavia in 1929.) In 1945 Serbia became a constituent republic of socialist Yugoslavia. In the mid-1980s Serbian intellectuals and leaders, led by Slobodan Milosevic, revived historical territorial grievances and aspirations, stimulating a resurgent Serbian nationalism. In September 1990 Serbia adopted a new constitution that calls for a market economy, increased human rights, a multiparty system, and the consolidation of the Serbian state. It also, however, removed the self-governing autonomy of the provinces of predominantly Albanian Kosovo and Vojvodina. In December 1990 the Socialists (formerly the League of Communists) won in multiparty elections. New elections are scheduled for November 1992. After the violent breakup of the Yugoslav federation Serbia was joined only by Montenegro in forming the rump Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; a federal constitution was adopted on 27 April 1992.

THE ECONOMY Serbia's economy is mainly based on agriculture. Serbia's agricultural sector supplied about 50% of the former Yugoslavia's farm produce. Private farms accounted for some 45% of Serbia's grain production and 75% of its livestock production. Serbia is a major grower of fruits and vegetables; Vojvodina is the main producer of wheat, corn, oats, and rye and produced a fifth of the former Yugoslavia's total agricultural output on only about 13% of the total land available for cultivation. Livestock farming and fishing are also very productive. Agricultural productivity in the period 1985-1990 dropped by 7%, but it rose by 8% in 1991 over the 1990 figures. Serbia (including its provinces) has a considerable number of large power, industrial, mining, and manufacturing plants. It is rich in natural resources. Kosovo has one of the largest lignite fields in Europe. Large lead and zinc ore deposits are located in Kosovo. Serbia produced all of the former Yugoslavia's copper ore and a third of its lignite. Unemployment stands at almost 15% and industrial productivity dropped by 18% in 1991. Serbia still remains self-sufficient in food and energy, but it cannot produce enough oil to meet its needs.

Milan Andrejevich

convening of a constitutional assembly.<sup>7</sup> This led to a split within the Democratic Party and the formation of a new party, the Democratic Party of Serbia, composed of the more "radical" Democrats (Vojislav Kostunica and others) who have joined DEPOS and who continue to support the concept of an East European-style transition, in which power is at the outset transferred from the existing government to new institutions representing the democratic elements in society.

Under the plan laid out by Cosic—the second of the three approaches to the transition—elections at all levels of government would be held in November under new electoral laws that would allow the opposition to compete with the Serbian Socialist Party on a more equal footing.<sup>8</sup> Cosic accepted a role for a roundtable (or "political council") in which the opposition would participate in preparing these laws; but he resisted the demands of DEPOS that the roundtable assume the functions of a shadow cabinet.<sup>9</sup>

Both of the gradualist approaches to the transition would permit Milosevic to remain in office—or, in the case of the Cosic plan, to be reelected if he chose to run for president of Serbia in the elections in the fall. The proposal that elections be held for a con-

stitutional assembly is opposed by Cosic and increasingly appears to be in disfavor with the moderates in the leadership of the Democratic Party. Furthermore, a centrist group of politicians and deputies appears to be emerging that supports the Cosic transitional scenario; its members come not only from the Democratic Party but from the Serbian Socialist Party as well, from which a small faction broke away to form a Social Democratic Party. This centrist coalition envisages the transition's taking place within the existing institutional structure; Milosevic would eventually step down, but the issue of his resignation would not be pushed to the forefront of the transition, thus lessening the danger of civil war.

The third plan is that favored by DEPOS, whose strategy has been put forward on a number of occasions, most dramatically during the demonstrations of 28 June to 5 July. DEPOS's demands include the immediate resignation of Milosevic; the formation of a roundtable, which would take upon itself certain formal powers as a government and agree on new laws governing elections, parties, and the media; the formation of a transitional government in which the Serbian Socialists would play a minor role or be excluded entirely; and elections to a constitutional assembly, to be held, according to some accounts, ninety days after the adoption by the Serbian Assembly of the laws approved by the roundtable.<sup>10</sup>

Behind these demands lies a strategy of massive resistance to the regime. While DEPOS insists that its actions are peaceful and that it seeks to employ the techniques of transition of East European states to oust the Milosevic regime, its opponents have accused the alliance of taking to the streets and leading the country into civil war. (In practice, DEPOS realizes that conditions in Yugoslavia are not the same as in the rest of Eastern

Europe and that a significant proportion of Serbs will continue to support the Serbian Socialists and the Milosevic regime. Thus, the strategy of DEPOS is much more cautious in practice than the rhetoric of people such as the leader of the Serbian Renewal Movement, Vuk Draskovic, would suggest.)

### The Problems of Implementing a Transition

DEPOS's policies for a transition are complicated by the heterogeneity of the groups within its ranks, ranging from supporters of Prince Aleksander to left-leaning intellectuals who make up the Citizens' Council. While the nationalist parties within DEPOS are adamantly opposed to the present federation and, therefore, find themselves at odds with Cosic, whose nationalist outlook they largely share, members of the Reform Party and others in the Citizens' Council are prone to support the efforts of the federal leadership to find a way out of the crisis. What holds DEPOS together, meanwhile, is the conviction of all its members that the transition cannot get under way as long as Milosevic is in power. Removing Milosevic, therefore, remains the first order of business for the parties and groups in DEPOS, their many differences notwithstanding.

The imposition of sanctions has brought the debate over the transition into sharp focus. Although all the parties of the opposition have condemned the sanctions for the hardships they create for the average Serb, they are also aware that the sanctions provide them with a powerful weapon to use in trying to remove Milosevic. While Milosevic is never mentioned in UN Resolution 757, the West has made clear that there is little or no hope of the sanctions' being lifted until Milosevic leaves office.<sup>11</sup>

Paradoxically, however, the sanctions place several obstacles in the way

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the views of Ljubomir Tadic in *Borba*, 21 July 1992, p. 9. Tadic opposes the idea of a constitutional assembly and says that Cosic's approach to the transition should be supported by the Democrats.

<sup>8</sup> The elections, if they are to be held in November, will require amendments to the federal constitution, which stipulates that no elections can be held during the first and the last six months of the term of the federal parliament.

<sup>9</sup> See *Borba*, 15 July 1992, p. 2, for Cosic's speech to the parliament in which he set out the elements of his plan for holding new elections. Plans were under way in mid-August, with the support of Cosic, for a roundtable to meet under federal auspices and discuss procedures for elections in November.

<sup>10</sup> See *ibid.*, 26 June 1992, p. 1, for the basic demands. The provision for a ninety-day waiting period for elections was made by Vuk Draskovic (*ibid.*, 28 July 1992, p. 5).

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, the interview with Warren Zimmerman, a former US ambassador to Yugoslavia, in *ibid.*, 22 June 1992, p. 15.

of a successful transition. First, they speed up the process of economic and social collapse and raise the specter of violence and civil war in Serbia, possibly before elections can be held in the fall. Second, the conditions for lifting the sanctions require that Serbia demonstrate to the UN Security Council that it is no longer involved in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a difficult task as long as the fighting there continues, and almost impossible as long as "ethnic cleansing" and other violations of human rights are carried out by the local Serbs. Third, Serbia must be prepared to grant autonomy to the Albanians in Kosovo. While the need to adopt such a policy is more or less acknowledged by Serbia (the federal and Serbian governments have pledged their support for minority rights as advanced as those in the rest of Europe), its implementation could result in the de facto secession of Kosovo from Serbia, placing the Serbs in a precarious position and recreating the crisis of the 1980s that led Serbia to curtail the autonomy of Kosovo in the first place.

The dilemma posed by the sanctions is particularly acute for the federal leadership and for the centrists in both the opposition and the breakaway faction of the Serbian Socialist Party. The gradualist approach to the transition advocated by these groups is based on the assumption that Milosevic will remain in office at least until elections are held in the fall. This strategy runs the risk of delaying the lifting of sanctions beyond the critical moment when Serbia's economy can no longer sustain even a reduced standard of living. A peaceful transition needs time, yet this is precisely the element that the sanctions (and the refusal of Milosevic to resign) appear to rule out.

How these problems will be resolved in the coming months is impossible to predict. On the one hand, Milosevic has done nothing to facilitate the transition. Talks between DEPOS and Milosevic during the *Vidovdan* demonstrations produced

no concessions from Milosevic, who stated that he would resign only after the elections or if a referendum were held on the issue of his continued presence in office.<sup>12</sup> There have been rumors that Milosevic is prepared to step aside and that, when the time comes, he will decline to run a second time for the Presidency of Serbia.<sup>13</sup> Yet Milosevic's actions during July—especially his criticism of the Serbian Socialist Party in a speech in Leskovac late in the month<sup>14</sup>—gave quite the opposite impression. Furthermore, Milosevic is known to have a fatalistic streak, which could lead him to become increasingly passive as the crisis deepens. He has encouraged, if not provoked, the policy of ethnic cleansing and has done nothing to curb the rash of threats by extremists against journalists and members of the opposition.<sup>15</sup> None of this is encouraging and lends weight to the arguments of DEPOS that Milosevic will not voluntarily leave office.

Still, the situation could change rapidly, and Milosevic may find himself in a position in which he has no option but to step down. Until recently Milosevic could count on the support of a majority of the population, especially in the rural areas. Now public opinion is shifting, and an increasingly large group supports Milosevic's removal. (As of the middle of July, a slim majority of Serbs favored DEPOS's demand that Milosevic resign.<sup>16</sup>) If Milosevic faces a further erosion of popular support in the countryside and among the workers in the state sector, he may have to resign, unless

he chooses to turn to a policy of outright repression, which could be sustained over a longer period only with the support of the army. While information on the position of the army is difficult to obtain, it appears that the military has decided not to get involved in the political conflict now taking place in Serbia.<sup>17</sup> In effect, Milosevic could find himself deprived of all support outside his own party, setting the stage for his removal.

### A Daunting Agenda

The tasks that a transitional government would face if Milosevic were ousted and the government were in disarray would be staggering. It would be expected to arrange for elections to elect the members of a constitutional assembly (under the DEPOS plan), to maintain law and order in Serbia, to negotiate the removal of sanctions, and to make peace with the minorities. All this seems beyond the capacity of a government composed of parties ranging from ultranationalist to moderate leftist and beset with conflicts among strong-willed personalities.

It is with this situation in mind that the supporters of Prince Aleksander argue for a return of the monarchy, suggesting that the installation of Aleksander as king would introduce a stabilizing element in the political situation once Milosevic had been forced out of office and at the same time would secure the support of the army and the Church for the transition.<sup>18</sup> One of the most respected correspondents for the publication *Vreme*, Stojan Cerovic, believes that a return of the monarchy is the most probable outcome of the transition.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 30 June 1992, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 July 1992, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 July 1992.

<sup>15</sup> The most disturbing incident took place in June, when the correspondent Desa Trevisan was shot in the hand with an air gun after threats from a group calling itself the War Veterans (*The International Weekly*, 20–26 June 1992, p. 4). For the letter from foreign correspondents complaining of death threats, see *Borba*, 9 June 1992, p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> *Borba*, 22 July 1992, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> See the analysis by Milos Vasic, "On the Eve of a Decision," *Vreme*, 22 June 1992, pp. 27–29.

<sup>18</sup> Prince Aleksander participated in the "Vidovdan" demonstrations in support of DEPOS, in which individuals supporting the monarchy, notably Matija Beckovic, play a leading role.

<sup>19</sup> Stojan Cerovic, "Possible and Impossible," *Vreme*, 22 June 1992, pp. 16–17.

Efforts to bring back the monarchy would nevertheless entail substantial risks. First, such a move might open old divisions within Serbian society between Chetniks and the Communists in the Serbian countryside—divisions that Milosevic has until now been able to paper over through his support for Seselj and his Radical Party. Second, the position of Aleksander on the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina could greatly complicate the task of lifting sanctions, since the prince has taken a stand (through his Crown Council) in favor of self-determination for the Serbs and, by implication, for changes in the existing republican boundaries. Third, the transitional government would be burdened with another contentious issue—organizing a referendum for or against the monarchy—at a time when negotiating an end to sanctions should take priority. Finally, the return of the Karadjordjevićs to Serbia would almost certainly lead to the secession of Montenegro, where republican sentiment is strong, while antagonizing the minorities, who make up approximately 30% of the population of Serbia.

Thus, the mechanisms by which the transfer of power will take place in Serbia are clouded in uncertainty and surrounded by controversy. There is an almost obsessive concern that the country will find itself plunged into civil war. As Slobodan Selenic has remarked, "All of Serbia is against itself."<sup>20</sup>

Still, the transition in Serbia has gained momentum with the passing months, and the democratic spirit in Serbia is deep-rooted. All national institutions now favor the removal of Milosevic. As Milosevic loses popularity, Cosic and Panic gain in stature. (Cosic is not popular in Montenegro, however, because of past statements that cast doubt on the existence of a Montenegrin nation.) Panic has spoken out boldly against the war and enjoys increasing popularity in Serbia, making it difficult for Milosevic to

engineer his removal through a vote of no confidence by the federal parliament, which consists mostly of Milosevic's supporters. Panic's government has made a concession to Milosevic by appointing Vladislav Jovanovic, a former foreign minister of Serbia, as minister of foreign affairs for the FRY. At the same time, the federal government includes a number of able and respected individuals, including Oskar Kovac, the deputy prime minister, and Tibor Varadi, minister of justice. (Panic is also defense minister.)

### Is Cosic Equal to the Task?

Cosic, for his part, has pushed for constitutional reforms at the level of the two republics that would secure the control of the federal government over foreign affairs, defense, and economic policy, a strategy that would seem to ensure that the federal and the Serbian governments will come into conflict. Cosic nevertheless continues to exhibit an ambivalent attitude toward the West and toward the minorities in Serbia—two hallmarks of the Milosevic regime. At the same time, he has supported an end to the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina and has criticized Serbian participation in campaigns of ethnic cleansing, issues about which Milosevic has been either silent or less than forthright.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, if Cosic is to engineer the transition, it appears that he must overcome two formidable obstacles: first, he must persuade DEPOS to give up its demands for elections to a constitutional assembly (and with this, the possibility of adopting a new federal constitution or of bringing back the monarchy).<sup>22</sup> Second, utilizing the powers of the federal government,

Cosic must overcome the resistance of the Milosevic regime to liberating the media, lest the opposition boycott the elections scheduled for November. Finally, Cosic must be ready to put pressure on Milosevic to resign if the political situation deteriorates still further or if the sanctions bring Serbia to the breaking point.

Whether Cosic is capable of decisive action as the crisis deepens is unclear. He has spoken frankly of the problems besetting the country and has consulted widely with the opposition and representatives of the minorities, while pledging to meet the conditions for lifting the sanctions demanded by the UN Security Council. At the same time, Cosic was closely associated with Milosevic in the past, and his attitude toward many of the key issues that must be resolved over the next few months remains unclear.<sup>23</sup> By contrast, Panic has come out boldly, if somewhat naively, for an end to the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the disarming of all the participants in the conflict. Like Milosevic, Cosic has a fatalistic and somewhat pessimistic side to his character, evident in his writings on the history of the Serbs and in his comments to the press on the future of Serbia.<sup>24</sup> The fact that

the demands of the opposition (*Vreme*, 6 August 1992, p. 6).

<sup>23</sup> This uncertainty was borne out by an interview with Cosic in the 10 August 1992 issue of *Der Spiegel*. Cosic said, "Under the present circumstances of a lasting war and the status of Serbs in these states [Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia] being unresolved, we will not recognize the existing boundaries under any circumstances."

<sup>24</sup> See his recently published collection of essays, *Srpsko Pitanje, Demokratsko Pitanje* [Serbian Question, Democratic Question] (Belgrade: Politika, 1992). In his comments to a gathering in Montenegro, he said he thought that sanctions would be lifted within a few months, but he also predicted that Serbia would find its creative forces "paralyzed—in some areas of life, perhaps for all time" (*ibid.*, 29 June 1992, p. 1).

<sup>21</sup> For the Cosic position, see his letter of mid-July to the UN Security Council, issued by Tanjug on 14 July 1992 and translated in FBIS EEU-92, no. 135, p. 41.

<sup>22</sup> Recently DEPOS appears to have softened its stance and has said that it will participate in the elections in the fall if the media are freed from state control and the electoral laws rewritten to reflect

<sup>20</sup> *Borba*, 22 June 1992, p. 18.

the weaknesses in Cosic's character mirror those of Milosevic is not an encouraging sign if, as is likely, the two must work together to keep Serbia afloat as the crisis worsens.

### Disunity among the Opposition

The democratic opposition has been encouraged by the fact that the polls show a loss of support for Milosevic and for the Serbian Socialist Party. The electorate's switch from the Serbian Socialists to Seselj's Serbian Radical Party appears to have ceased as a result of rifts within the ranks of the Radicals over the issue of the return of the monarchy and because of Seselj's violent public outbursts. Yet great difficulties beset the building of a civic society in Serbia. The democratic opposition is weak outside Belgrade, Vojvodina, and several cities in Serbia proper. Alternative movements, characteristic of the transitional process in Eastern Europe, have yet to catch fire in Serbia, and the party system is marked by a multiplicity of small parties without mass support. All this may change in the months ahead, however, if control of the media can be wrested from Milosevic and as the economic crisis penetrates into rural areas.

The division of the opposition into the DEPOS camp and those who would support Cosic's plan remains a major obstacle to the transition. There is a very real danger that as the situation in Serbia deteriorates and the position of Milosevic weakens, the struggle between the two groups will intensify. DEPOS will only participate in elections that have been preceded by a period of liberalization of the media and that would, preferably, result in the holding of a constitutional assembly. Cosic is clearly opposed to the ouster of Milosevic by the extra-constitutional means that DEPOS has championed until recently. Given the fact that neither side has the clear-cut support of the majority of Serbs, the battle between them could lead to political stalemate and drift as the situation in Serbia worsens.

### How Will the Serbs React?

Finally, there is the question of whether a transitional government could persuade the UN Security Council to lift the sanctions against Serbia. There is a growing reaction in Serbia against the excesses being committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a realization that the sanctions will not be lifted unless the war ends and the policy of ethnic cleansing is reversed. DEPOS has issued statements deploring the siege of Sarajevo and the forced transfers of non-Serbian minorities in Serbian-occupied areas of Croatia. The Democratic Party has stated that it would support a system of national cantons in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whereby Serbs would occupy only those areas in which they form a majority of the population. Cosic, in turn, has come out against ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and has criticized the Serbs involved in such actions.

Nevertheless, there are differences between Serbian and Western perceptions of the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the steps that Serbia must take before the sanctions are lifted. These differences could stand in the way of removing the sanctions, even if Milosevic were no longer in power. On the one hand, the question of where Serbian cantons would be located within Bosnia and Herzegovina will be difficult to resolve. Most Serbs, while they are critical of the excesses committed by the Serbian irregulars in Bosnia and Herzegovina, support Serbian military goals in northern Bosnia and fear a Croatian military counteroffensive that would divide western Bosnia from the remaining Serbian areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina and from Serbia proper. While most opposition parties are willing in principle to consider some form of autonomy for Kosovo, the status of the Serbs under an Albanian administration in Kosovo raises extremely delicate issues and could lead a transitional government to resist efforts to allow Kosovo to exercise effective self-rule.

It is not clear, moreover, to what degree a transitional government would

be willing or able to return displaced Moslems to their homes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Such a government would probably have less control over the policies now being pursued by the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina than Milosevic and would find it difficult to support a policy that, if carried through, would reestablish the numerical superiority of the Moslems in eastern Bosnia. Supporting the return of Moslems to their homes would be especially difficult for a Serbian government in Belgrade if this resulted in the region's becoming part of a Moslem canton in which the Serbs (among whom are those who have been involved in excesses against the Moslems) were in a minority.

There is a real possibility, in short, that a post-Milosevic government would find itself mired in negotiations over the lifting of sanctions as economic and social conditions in Serbia deteriorated to a point where Serbia itself was threatened with civil war. If such a conflict were to arise among Serbian groups in a struggle for power, it could quickly spread to the minorities in Serbia, with obvious international ramifications. Serbia would have to collaborate closely with the international community to avoid this "dark hole" situation. The international community, for its part, would be under pressure to lift the sanctions, at least in part, to avoid collapse and civil war in Serbia.

The most difficult adjustment that the Serbs must make if sanctions are to be lifted is to recognize that Serbs outside Serbia proper will have the status of a minority in areas where they do not constitute a majority of the population. The refusal of Serbs outside Serbia to accept such a status was a major factor in the outbreak of the civil war in Croatia in 1991 and in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the spring of this year. Accepting such a status would require Serbs to place their trust in the hands of the very groups—the Moslems, Albanians, and Croats—with whom they have been at war. Only a far-reaching international commitment



## THE FORMER YUGOSLAV LANDS

to guarantee minority rights, perhaps in some cases through establishing UN protectorates, would seem enough to overcome Serbian resistance to such a change in their status.

### Conclusion

Serbia is on the edge of an abyss. Most national institutions have turned against Milosevic; yet he remains in power, supported by the political and administrative structures inherited from the old regime and by those who fear that his

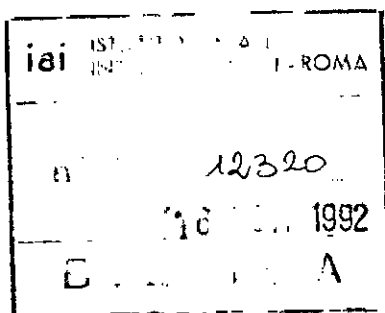
departure would be the signal for anarchy and civil war in Serbia. It is difficult for the opposition to persuade the Serbs to take to the streets to overthrow the regime as long as the position of the army remains undecided. Even if Milosevic is removed, negotiations over the lifting of sanctions will be painful, possibly prolonged.

For Serbia and the Balkan states, the next six months are crucial. The success of the transition in Serbia and the end to the war in Bosnia and

Herzegovina will determine the outcome. It may be that the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be ended unless a democratic government comes to power in Serbia and cooperates with the international community in finding a settlement to the Bosnian crisis. If this is the case, the transition in Serbia will, for better or for worse, be the decisive event of the civil war in the former territories of Yugoslavia.

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# RFE/RL Daily Report

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## SUCCESSOR STATES TO THE USSR

**SHAKHRAI RETURNED TO CABINET IN CHARGE OF NATIONALITIES AFFAIRS.** Sergei Shakhrai has been returned to the Russian cabinet as chairman of the State Committee on Nationalities Policy with the rank of deputy premier. ITAR-TASS reported on 5 November. Shakhrai, who is currently representing Yeltsin in the Russian Constitutional Court in the CPSU case, will take up his new post on 25 November. His appointment with the rank of deputy premier, which his predecessor did not enjoy, is an indication of the increased importance of the nationalities question. Valerii Tishkov, Director of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Ethnography, who resigned as chairman of the state committee at the end of September complaining that he was not consulted. Tishkov suggested that Shakhrai would be an ideal successor as he had more political clout. (Ann Sheehy)

**SHAKHRAI'S APPOINTMENT WELCOMED BY RUTSKOI, FILATOV, AND SHUMEIKO.** Shakhrai's appointment has been welcomed by Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoi, First Deputy Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Sergei Filatov, and First Deputy Premier Vladimir Shumeiko, who all consider that his legal expertise will be useful in his new post. Filatov and Shumeiko both suggested that progress might now be made in implementing the federal treaty so as to give more rights to the republics and regions, which they see as the key to the success of the economic reform. (Ann Sheehy)

**STAROVOITOVA DISMISSED AS YELTSIN'S NATIONALITIES ADVISER.** A decree dismissing Galina Starovoitova as Yeltsin's adviser on nationalities issues was issued on 4 November, Interfax and ITAR-TASS reported. No reason was given for her dismissal, which came as a complete surprise to Starovoitova, although she told Interfax that she had lately had difficulty in arranging meetings with Yeltsin. Starovoitova has been one of the most prominent reformers, but has run into criticism for her liberal stand on nationalities issues. She has frequently been criticized by both Yeltsin's right-wing opponents and by "centrists" for advocating the right of the Armenian majority to secede while denying the same

right to the Russian-speaking majority in the self-proclaimed Dniester republic. (Ann Sheehy)

**MORE ON GOVERNMENT DEAL WITH CIVIC UNION.** First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Shumeiko said that the government has adopted many of the proposals included in the Civic Union's economic program. According to Interfax on 4 November, Shumeiko had asked the leader of the Civic Union, Arkadii Volsky, about the existence of a list of alternative ministers which the Civic Union allegedly sent to the president. Volsky denied the existence of such a list. Volsky said that if the parliamentary faction of Smena issues such a list, he would demand the exclusion of Smena from the Civic Union coalition. (Alexander Rahr)

**FURTHER PRONOUNCEMENTS ON GOVERNMENT CHANGES.** At a news conference in Moscow on 5 November, President Yeltsin declared that he would not enter into any kind of alliance with the Civic Union regarding a government reshuffle, Interfax reported. He said that only three or four small amendments contained in the Civic Union's anti-crisis program would be introduced into his government's own program. At another news conference on the same day, one representative of the Civic Union stated that "we have no wish to dictate any names to the president," while another insisted that no discussion had taken place at the meeting between Yeltsin and the Civic Union concerning a reshuffle at government or any other level. And Vice-President Rutskoi told "Mayak" that the Civic Union had given no lists to President Yeltsin of possible changes in the cabinet. (Keith Bush)

**YELTSIN'S VISITS TO BRITAIN AND HUNGARY.** President Yeltsin told the same news conference that he would not appoint an acting president to mind the store during his official visits to Britain and Hungary scheduled for next week. "I shall not give up the reins of power to anybody. I shall rule Russia and direct the progress of reforms from there." (Keith Bush)

**YELTSIN OFFERS TO DISCUSS STRATEGIC ARMS CUTS WITH CLINTON.** During a telephone conver-

sation with President-Elect Bill Clinton, Yeltsin offered to discuss strategic arms reductions at a proposed post-inauguration summit in Moscow, Interfax reported on 5 November. The arms reductions would apparently be based on the June 1992 US—Russia agreement to cut strategic nuclear forces to approximately 3,000 warheads on each side. The June agreement has not yet been formalized in a treaty because of new Russian positions concerning the use of silos and the elimination of land-based multiple warhead missiles. It was unclear whether Yeltsin suggested any further reductions, or concessions on the points that are now stalling the negotiations. (Doug Clarke and John Lepingwell)

**RUSSIAN CASUALTIES IN TRANSCAUCASUS.** The press center of the Transcaucasian military district announced on 5 November that 59 Russian servicemen or military dependents had been killed since the beginning of the year and 100 wounded as a result of attacks on military facilities within the district, Interfax reported. The highest number of deaths were reported in Georgia, where 42 were killed and 35 wounded. Six people lost their lives in Armenia and 12 were wounded while 11 servicemen were killed in Azerbaijan and 53 wounded. Also in that republic 3,217 artillery pieces were seized. Another 634 pieces were lost in Georgia. The press center also reported that 1,306 military cars had been hijacked with only 119 recovered. (Doug Clarke)

**SITUATION NORMALIZING IN NORTH OSSETIA.** The Press Service of the North Ossetian Security Council said on 5 November that the cease-fire was generally being observed in the Prigorodnyi raion of North Ossetia and that Ingush armed formations had been expelled from all settlements, ITAR-TASS reported. An active exchange of hostages was also taking place. The North Ossetian Ministry of Health reported that since the night of 30 October 115 people had been killed and 272 wounded. Yusup Soslanbekov, the Chechen chairman of the parliament of the Confederation of Peoples of the Caucasus, told ITAR-TASS that the confederation did not favor either side, and its armed units had not been asked by either side to intervene. (Ann Sheehy)

**GRACHEV AND BARANNIKOV TO NORTH OSSETIA.** Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev (an Afghan veteran) flew to North Ossetia on 5 November to oversee the efforts of Russian troops as they sought to disarm Ossetian and Ingush militants, Interfax reported on 5 November. Grachev was accompanied by Interior Minister Viktor Barannikov.

According to Interfax, the two are expected to draw up proposals on the conflict for an upcoming meeting of the Russian Security Council. They were expected back in Moscow on 6 November. (Stephen Foye)

**AFGHAN VET TO HEAD RUSSIAN INGUSH COMMITTEE.** Ruslan Aushev, an ethnic Ingush and a much decorated veteran of the Soviet war in Afghanistan, was named on 5 November as the chief Russian administrator in Ingushetia, AFP and Interfax reported. The 38 year-old Aushev has long been involved in Afghan veteran affairs and was most recently serving as an advisor to Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoi. AFP also reported that the Russian government had created a new executive headquarters under the leadership of Interior Minister Viktor Yerin that is tasked with establishing order and guaranteeing "the security of Russian citizens in the conflict zone." Boris Gromov, a Russian Deputy Defense Minister and also an Afghan veteran, was among those named to that body. (Stephen Foye)

**DUSHANBE FEARS RENEWED ATTACK.** According to agency reports on 5 November the streets of Tajikistan's capital were deserted and the city was paralyzed because the inhabitants feared anti-government forces will attack again. Supporters of deposed President Rakhmon Nabiev invaded the city and seized government buildings on 24 November, retreating two days later after considerable loss of life in battles with government supporters. The fears of Dushanbe residents were given some substance by the refusal of anti-government forces to accept a proposal from Central Asian leaders for the formation of a state council in Tajikistan that would include all factions. (Bess Brown)

**CALL TO SELL UKRAINE'S NUCLEAR WARHEADS.** Western agencies reported on 5 November that a Ukrainian First Deputy Prime Minister has suggested that Kiev ought to sell or auction off to the highest bidder nuclear warheads that remain in the country. Ihor Yukhnovsky apparently told a news conference that the 176 strategic warheads on Ukrainian territory belong to the Ukrainian people and should not be given up for free. He suggested that Russia should get first option on the warheads, with other states already possessing nuclear weapons also eligible to make a bid. (Stephen Foye)

**UKRAINE TO LEAVE RUBLE ZONE "SHORTLY."** Ukrainian Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma told a news conference in Kiev on 4 November that Ukraine will shortly introduce the coupon and ignore cash

currency, *The Financial Times* reported on 5 November. This would effectively take Ukraine out of the ruble zone. Kuchma warned of impending economic disaster in Ukraine. He plans to restrict the allocation of credit to faltering state enterprises and to raise the Ukrainian Central Bank's discount lending rate to at least 50% a year at a time, as the newspaper notes, when inflation is exceeding that rate in a month. (Keith Bush)

**RUSSIAN CENTRAL BANK TO STEM DOLLAR FLOW TO FSU NATIONS.** The Russian Central Bank has issued orders temporarily forbidding enterprises, banks and other organizations of countries of the former Soviet Union (FSU) from buying hard currency on the Russian market, according to Interfax on 5 November. The Central Bank recently granted enterprises and individuals significantly broader freedom to convert rubles into hard currency. The Bank apparently feared that, without the ability to control the creation of ruble purchasing power in the other nations of the region, Russia would experience increased dollar outflow and further depreciation of the ruble. The Central Bank also put restrictions on investment in Russia by enterprises of other FSU nations. (Erik Whitlock).

**RUBLE SLIPS FURTHER.** The ruble exchange rate eased to 399, up from 396, rubles to the dollar on the Moscow Interbank Currency Exchange on 5 November, *Biznes-TASS* reported. Volume traded was \$40.46 million. (Erik Whitlock)

**IMF WARNS OF RUSSIAN HYPERINFLATION.** The managing director of the International Monetary Fund, Michel Camdessus, told bankers in Bonn on 5 November that Russia faced a risk of hyperinflation that could destroy confidence in its economy, Reuters reported. Camdessus claimed that Western aid promised to Russia for 1992 was being disbursed as planned, with \$11.4 billion of support put in place during the first half of the year, including about \$9.2 billion in grants and credits and \$2.2 billion in debt deferrals, and a further \$7 billion's worth of grants, credits, and debt deferrals in the second half of 1992. He said that Russia had agreed to postponement of the \$6 billion stabilization fund until inflation had been brought under control. (Keith Bush)

**MORE ON RUSSIAN PRIVATIZATION.** Russian Deputy Prime Minister Anatolii Chubais has announced that preparations are underway for auctions of state property in December, where

privatization vouchers can be used to purchase shares, according to "Novosti" reports on 5 November. The first auctions are programmed to be held in the Vladimir oblast', Perm, Moscow and St. Petersburg. Several large enterprises are to be put up for auction, as well as Intourist hotels and Berezka foreign currency shops. According to Chubais, these auctions will help to raise the value of the vouchers which, according to a report in *Finansovye izvestiya* on 29 October, are currently being traded in Moscow for an average of 5-7,000 roubles, well under their face value of 10,000 roubles. (Sheila Marnie)

**HOW THE RUSSIANS RATE THEIR STANDARD OF LIVING.** An opinion poll carried out by the Russian Center for Public Opinion and Market Research (VTsIOM) suggests that 41% of Russians think that they live badly, over 50% that they live "averagely", and 8% that they live well, according to an Interfax report of 5 November. Other VTsIOM research suggests that 47% of Russians think that life is difficult, but "tolerable". On the basis of this, sociologists claim that the situation may not be as catastrophic as it has been portrayed in the mass media. (Sheila Marnie)

**NABIEV REJECTED STATE COUNCIL.** In an interview issued by Interfax on 5 November, deposed Tajik President Rakhmon Nabiev said that his supporters would reject the plan for a state council of all factions proposed by Central Asian leaders at a summit in Alma-Ata on 4 November, because such a council would perpetuate the influence of Supreme Soviet Chairman Akbarsho Iskandarov, who has been acting president since Nabiev was forced to resign at gunpoint. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev told journalists after the summit that in his opinion Nabiev should not try to reclaim the presidency of Tajikistan because not enough of the country's citizens back him. (Bess Brown)

**OPPOSITION BOYCOTT IN BELARUSIAN PARLIAMENT.** Opposition deputies in Belarus have announced that they would boycott certain actions of the parliament, Western news agencies reported on 5 November. The decision was taken to protest parliament's earlier rejection of calls for early elections. The boycott was announced in a statement signed by 32 lawmakers from the opposition Belarusian Popular Front and broadcast by Radio Minsk. The deputies said that they would continue to attend parliamentary sessions but abstain from certain debates and voting. (Roman Solchanyk)

## CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

**SERBS BLOCK UN AID CONVOY.** Western agencies reported on 5 November that Serbian civilians in Bratunac had blocked a UN convoy heading from Serbia into Bosnia to the mainly Muslim town of Srebrenica, whose 30,000 inhabitants have been under siege for about six months. Both towns are just inside Bosnia's border with Serbia. This is not the first incident in which apparently well-organized Serb civilians have prevented UN convoys from reaching besieged Muslims. Milan Panic, the prime minister of Serbia-Montenegro, has repeatedly promised that UN convoys could use Serbia and Serbian-held territory in Bosnia to transport relief supplies, and has also promised to provide the trucks. (Patrick Moore)

**UN HAS SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN PEACE-KEEPING.** Cedric Thornberry, the deputy chief of the UN mission in former Yugoslavia, said on 5 November that Sarajevo faced famine and that the nominally UN-controlled areas of Croatia were submerged in chaos thanks to armed and uniformed Serbian gangs. The 6 November *Washington Post* quoted him as saying that the "armed criminals... usually target Croats and other minorities, usually old people." Thornberry added that Serbian aircraft had apparently violated the UN no-fly zone in Bosnia 18 to 20 times, but it was not clear whether they had actually engaged in military operations against Muslims and Croats, the *New York Times* reported. He blamed both Serbs and Croats for hindering relief shipments bound for Sarajevo, and said that Serb forces in Croatia had refused to tell the UN where they had placed mines in the giant Peruca hydro-electric dam. (Patrick Moore)

**RUSSIAN GENERAL VISITS HERZEGOVINA.** Radio Serbia reported on 5 November that Russian General Viktor Filatov paid an official visit to Serb-controlled areas of Herzegovina to observe the situation there and to see for himself "who is defending himself and who is the aggressor." Filatov, a member of the General Staff of the Russian Army, said that aggression was being waged against Serbs and promised to recommend to the Russian General Staff that Russia support the Serbs. The Russian Defense Ministry's newspaper *Krasnaya zvezda* has generally taken a pro-Serb line, which suggests that Filatov may have support within the Russian high command. (Milan Andrejevich)

**IRAN PLEDGES TO SUPPORT BOSNIA.** Sarajevo Radio reported on 5 November that the general

headquarters of Iran's armed forces issued a statement pledging their readiness to provide "any kind of material or moral assistance" to the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina if ordered to do so by Iran's leaders. In an interview broadcast by Tehran TV on 5 November Alija Izetbegovic, President of Bosnia-Herzegovina, said Bosnia's Muslims and government were grateful to Ayatollah Khamene'i, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, and the government and people of Iran, for declaring their support for the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Last week Izetbegovic paid an official visit to Teheran. (Milan Andrejevich)

**NEW ROMANIAN PREMIER PREPARES PROGRAM, STARTS TALKS.** On 5 November Romania's Prime Minister-designate Nicolae Vacaroiu presented a preview of his government's program. At a press conference broadcast by Radio Bucharest, Vacaroiu said that his government's top priority would be to ensure supplies of heat, energy and food for the winter. He also pledged to work out together with his team a long-term strategy for economic changes in Romania. Vacaroiu, who was a little known senior Finance Ministry official before being nominated prime minister by President Ion Iliescu, spoke on the prospects for economic reforms in Romania. While insisting that he was fully committed to pursuing reforms, he warned against decisions that might lead to a sharp drop in living standards. Vacaroiu also stressed the importance of the state's role during the period of transition to a market economy. In a first round of talks on his future cabinet, Vacaroiu met with leading figures from the economic and financial spheres. (Dan Ionescu)

**BULGARIAN PARLIAMENT PRESIDENT NAMED.** Alexander Yordanov, a Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) MP, was elected president of the Sобрание or parliament on 5 November, according to BTA. He replaced Stefan Savov who was forced out of office by opposition from the predominantly Turkish Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF), the lynchpin in contemporary Bulgarian politics. MRF deputies withdrew their support for the minority UDF government of Filip Dimitrov, voting no confidence on 28 October, thus causing the prime minister to resign. While relations between the UDF and the MRF are strained, Yordanov's appointment, which received a clear endorsement from the MRF, may signal willingness by both sides to resume

cooperation. Neither wishes to work closely with the Bulgarian Socialist Party, the only other party with seats in the parliament. (Duncan Perry)

**CANDIDATE NOMINATED FOR LATVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER.** On 3 November the chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council Foreign Affairs Commission Indulis Berzins announced that the commission had approved a proposal by Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis to nominate its commission member Georgs Andrejevs to the post of Latvian Foreign Minister, the RFE/RL Latvian Service reported. Andrejevs, a doctor of medicine of Russian extraction who is fluent in Latvian, Russian, English, and German, had been recommended because of his excellent performance heading the Latvian delegation to the Council of Europe. The Latvian Supreme Council will vote on his candidacy next week. (Saulius Girnius)

**CZECHS WANT HAVEL FOR PRESIDENT.** According to a public opinion poll published on 5 November, a solid majority of Czechs would like to see former Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel as the Czech Republic's first president. The Prague-based Institute for Public Opinion said that 57% of the Czech Republic's citizens favor Havel's candidacy. Havel has indicated his willingness to reenter politics if there is broad support for him. (Jan Obrman)

**DRAFT OF CZECH CONSTITUTION READY.** Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus announced on 5 November that the Czech government has completed work on a draft constitution for the Czech Republic, Czechoslovak Television reported. It will be submitted to the Czech parliament for approval on 10 November. The draft would create a bicameral parliament, introducing a Senate in addition to the existing lower house, the National Council. Members of the Senate would be elected for six-year terms; Senate elections would alternate, with one third of its members facing elections every two years. It is not clear whether the draft will win the support of opposition parties which is crucial since Klaus' coalition does not have the necessary three-fifths majority in the parliament to adopt constitutional laws. (Jan Obrman)

**LEADER OF THE HUNGARIAN DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY OF VOIVODINA TESTIFIES.** Andras Agoston, the chairman of the Hungarian Democratic Community of Voivodina testified before the human rights committee of the Hungarian parliament on 4 November. Agoston said that the peace

efforts in his country were not proceeding well, and it was feared that the civil war might even escalate. Agoston said the Hungarians supported the policy of Yugoslav Prime Minister Milan Panic, but that Panic could only be truly acceptable to the Hungarians if he were willing to start a dialogue with them. The DCV leader said talks could only be based on the Carrington plan. He stressed that Voivodina Hungarians did not want the borders changed, but wished to ensure that their human rights were respected within the present borders. According to Agoston, some 25,000 Hungarians have left Voivodina as a result of the war, and the Serbs wanted to replace them with 30,000 Serbians. This was unacceptable for the DCV because it would change the ethnic composition of Voivodina. The report was carried by MTI. (Judith Pataki)

**SOLIDARITY ACCEPTS CONSUMPTION LIMITS.** During talks on the government's proposed "pact on state firms" on 5 November, Solidarity agreed that consumption should be limited to half of the growth in national income over the next ten years. The rest, the union agreed, should be devoted to increased spending on investment. The formerly procommunist OPZZ federation has objected to this proposal, arguing that the government was trying to burden the unions with responsibility for declining living standards in recent years. Labor Minister Jacek Kuron argued that unions have an interest in encouraging investment: "the unions won't be able to defend workers' interests if the economy collapses." Solidarity leader Marian Krzaklewski told reporters that the union had won government concessions on many issues and was prepared to sign the pact. (Louisa Vinton)

**CAMDESSUS ENCOURAGED BY EAST EUROPEAN ECONOMY.** International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Michel Camdessus has said several countries in Eastern Europe have made encouraging economic progress, Western media reported. Speaking to bankers in Bonn on 5 November, Camdessus specifically named Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. He said recent developments in those countries justified "cautious optimism" that the sharp drops in output during the past few years were "possibly at an end." He added that 1993 may see positive growth in their gross domestic product for the first time in almost five years. "We are possibly at a turning point," he said. (Jan Obrman)

**ARMS SALES TO SUDAN ILLEGAL, STRASKY SAYS.** Czechoslovak Prime Minister Jan Strasky

said on 5 November that Slovakia was violating present laws in negotiating the sale of armored personnel carriers to Sudan, CSTK reported. Sales to sensitive areas, to which Sudan belongs (its government is believed to support international terrorism), require federal government approval. Strasky said that Slovakia had already shipped one vehicle for testing and that the Slovak economics ministry has created a commission to handle future sales. (Jan Obrman)

**RUSSIA AND LITHUANIA SIGN AGREEMENT ON OIL AND GAS.** On 3 November in Moscow Lithuanian Deputy Prime Minister Bronislavas Lubys and his Russian counterpart Aleksandr Shokhin signed an agreement on supplying oil and gas to Lithuania in 1992, Radio Lithuania reports. Russia will send Lithuania 1,400 million cubic meters of natural gas (at \$75 per thousand cubic meters) and almost a million tons of crude oil (at \$110 per ton). The payment can be made in hard currency or rubles at the official Russian exchange rate. (Saulius Girnius)

**POLISH PRIME MINISTER IN BONN.** During her first official visit to Bonn Polish Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka received once again Germany's pledge to support Poland's efforts to enter the European Community. According to a report in the Warsaw daily *Rzeczpospolita* of 6 November, Germany Chancellor Helmut Kohl promised to support Poland's cause at the forthcoming EC summit meeting in Edinburgh and suggested that Poland might join the EC in about ten years' time. Kohl emphasized, however, that EC acceptance of Poland's full membership would depend on the success of economic changes in the country. Suchocka also attended a joint sitting in Bonn of the foreign committees of the Bundestag, the French Assemblée Nationale, and the Polish Sejm. Before she leaves for Poland on 6 November, Suchocka is scheduled

to meet German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel and other German economic and political officials. (Jan de Weydenthal)

**NATO AGAINST SUSPENSION OF WITHDRAWALS.** According to BNS of 5 November, citing the NATO News Bulletin, the NATO leadership thinks that last week's suspension of troop withdrawals from the Baltic states violates international law. NATO reportedly called on Russia to continue the pullout. (Rina Kionka)

**RUSSIA KEEPS VIOLATING LATVIAN AIRSPACE.** Russian military aircraft continue to violate Latvian airspace, according to the Latvian Defense Ministry, whose spokesman told Diena on 4 November that between 30 October and 1 November alone, Russian military aircraft performed 24 unsanctioned flights over Latvia en route to Ukraine and Russia. During October, Russian military planes made some 88 uncleared flights. (Rina Kionka)

**YELTSIN'S MESSAGE TO HEADS OF BALTIC STATES.** At a Moscow press conference on 5 November Russian President Boris Yeltsin said that his decision to suspend troop withdrawals from the Baltic States had been made since the Defense Ministry had overstrained the process by stationing some units in open fields, Radio Lithuania reported. Yeltsin said that the schedule signed with Lithuania would be followed and that commissions had been formed to discuss such schedules for Latvia and Estonia which would not be linked with the rights of the Russian-speaking minorities there. He denied that the suspension was the result of internal Russian political pressure. (Saulius Girnius)

[As of 1200 CET]

**Compiled by Keith Bush & Anna Swidlicka**

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# The First Month of the Bosnian Peace Process

Patrick Moore

*The UN and EC have succeeded in bringing together Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian delegations to discuss constitutional questions concerning the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but substantive progress seems elusive. Meanwhile, the fighting in Bosnia has intensified, reports of massacres of Muslims by Serbs continue to emerge, and the safety of land and air relief operations remains in question. Publicity in the international media about alleged Islamic freedom fighters coming to Bosnia from the Middle East appears somewhat exaggerated, but there have been fresh signs that the Serbs might be attempting to extend "ethnic cleansing" to the Sandzak and Vojvodina. The United Nations, for its part, seeks to strengthen relief operations, while discussions continue in the United States and elsewhere about what the international community can and should do in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

At the end of August the London Conference on the former Yugoslavia managed to persuade the key international and local players to agree on both a code of conduct and a mechanism to maintain momentum in the negotiations aimed at eventually ending the conflict.<sup>1</sup> Nobody promised or expected a quick or dramatic solution of the crisis, but at least there were now standards against which the various parties' performance could be judged.

## The Geneva Talks

The United Nations and the European Community, as the sponsors of the peace process, had worked out a

three-pronged strategy for confidence building in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>2</sup> The first element centered on starting political negotiations in Geneva on the constitutional future of the republic, in the framework of a working group, one of six set up in London. (The other five working groups also had organizational meetings.) This involved bringing representatives of the three warring factions—the Serbs, the Croats, and the mainly Muslim Bosnian government—together for talks without preconditions, under the chairmanship of veteran Finnish diplomat and former UN Undersecretary-General Martti Ahtisaari.

The talks opened on 18 September, but within four days the leaders of the Serbian and Croatian delega-

tions, Radovan Karadzic and Mate Boban, had left the negotiations to subordinates and returned home; meanwhile, the Bosnian group, composed of two Muslims, two Serbs, and two Croats, continued under the leadership of Foreign Minister Haris Silajdzic. The three delegations refused to sit together at a common table, so UN and EC officials had to begin by meeting with each group separately. The warring factions engaged in much name-calling and public posturing, but on 21 September the Bosnian delegation put forward the first concrete proposal of the talks.

The Bosnian plan called for a "democratic, secular, and decentralized state" made up of "constituent units—regions that do not have the character of a state" and that could be based upon towns or cities.<sup>3</sup> This seemed to be a formula designed to achieve the Muslim goal of maintaining a unitary republic—lest the Muslims find themselves partitioned between the Serbs and Croats or left with a tiny, unviable rump state—while appearing to make a concession to the Serbs, who reject centralization and are basically in favor of outright partition along ethnic lines.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, for his part, attacked the idea of partition as "alien to democracy," because the nationalities live so intermixed as to make drawing such borders impossible without massive

<sup>1</sup> Patrick Moore, "The London Conference on the Bosnian Crisis," *RFE/RL Research Report*, no. 36, 11 September 1992; and *Novi Vjesnik*, 8 August 1992.

<sup>2</sup> *Financial Times*, 14 September 1992.

<sup>3</sup> Reuters, 21 September 1992.

## POLITICS

population transfers, such as those engineered by Serbian forces in recent months in the violent process known as "ethnic cleansing."<sup>4</sup> But the Bosnian proposal was probably unrealistic, since it is highly unlikely that the three peoples could return soon to living together peacefully in ethnically mixed communities. There are two reasons for this: the first is the hatreds that have been unleashed by the violence, particularly by ethnic cleansing; and the second is the fact that the Serbs control about 70% of the republic's territory and show little sign of being willing to give up any substantial part of it.

In any event, the opening moves had been made, and EC chief negotiator Lord Owen said he had felt "the ice pack cracking" and hoped that the outlines of a solution could soon emerge.<sup>5</sup> However, his UN counterpart, Cyrus Vance, said that "real progress" could be years away.<sup>6</sup>

### "In a Peacekeeping Mode"

If the first aspect of the three-pronged UN and EC strategy seems like something of a long-term proposition, the interrelated second and third elements call for immediate attention. They involve the provision of massive humanitarian aid for Sarajevo and other besieged population centers and the extension of the monitoring mission on the ground to deter any expansion of the fighting. Related goals include persuading the warring parties—the Serbs in particular—to register their heavy guns with UN monitors; obtaining the release of prisoners from "detention centers" and closing those camps altogether; and tightening UN sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro.

<sup>4</sup> *The New York Times*, 22 September 1992; and Patrick Moore, "Ethnic Cleansing in Bosnia: Outrage but Little Action," *RFE/RL Research Report*, no. 34, 28 August 1992.

<sup>5</sup> RFE/RL Correspondent's Report (Munich), 24 September 1992.

<sup>6</sup> Reuters, 22 September 1992.

This is a tall order under any circumstances and, given the intensity of the passions and hatreds in Bosnia, is bound to take time to implement (to the extent that it was realistic in the first place). As one official of a Western country that had offered troops for relief operations put it: "We're in a peacekeeping mode."<sup>7</sup> Another stated: "We can't control the situation, but we do monitor it."<sup>8</sup>

The basic problem that has been preventing the EC and the UN from carrying out the second and third elements of their strategy and the related objectives is that the fighting has continued in earnest the entire time. The Serbs, who have the overwhelming bulk of heavy artillery, registered some of it with monitors (while maintaining that they would nonetheless use it if they chose) and then proceeded to blast Sarajevo with tanks in some of the heaviest shelling of the war, particularly on 17 September.

There is, in fact, a pattern to the fighting in that all the parties involved are trying to shore up their positions before the harsh Balkan winter arrives by late October. This accounted for some of the particularly fierce battles in and around Sarajevo for individual suburbs, as well as for Serb attacks on Muslim- and Croat-held towns that lie on the land route connecting Serbia proper with Serbian enclaves in Bosnia and Croatia. Among the hardest hit have been Gradacac, Bosanski Brod, Jajce, and Brcko. The Muslims, for their part, briefly broke the Serbian siege of Gorazde at the time of the London Conference and then claimed to have opened the route to that embattled town for good on 18 September.

### Ethnic Cleansing and Reported Massacres

As the fighting continues, so does the cruelty to civilians. Serbian refugees

<sup>7</sup> *The Washington Post*, 25 August 1992.

<sup>8</sup> *The New York Times*, 15 September 1992.

from the communities around Gorazde said Muslims had killed Serbian civilians and burned Orthodox churches when the Bosnian forces broke through the siege lines in August.<sup>9</sup> Outside observers have yet to confirm the numbers of victims that the refugees have cited, but it is clear that the Muslims did take brutal revenge for the siege and for ethnic cleansing.

But, as before, the bulk of the known atrocities continued to be committed by the Serbs. Vance and Lord Owen went to Banja Luka on 26 September and saw 3,000 to 4,000 Muslim and Croatian refugees being fired upon and shelled as they tried to cross over to the Bosnian side during a round of ethnic cleansing.<sup>10</sup> The US State Department, moreover, claimed that same day that an additional 3,000 Muslims had been massacred near Brcko during the summer, although Bosnian Serb leaders strongly denied the charge and challenged Washington to produce evidence. Elsewhere, international relief officials indicated that the Serbs were beginning a final drive to "cleanse" northwestern Bosnia and the Banja Luka area of their remaining 200,000 Muslims. Finally, press reports appeared in Croatia and in the West suggesting that Serbian irregulars were beginning to extend ethnic cleansing to the Sandzak—possibly with at least the tacit approval of the Montenegrin authorities—and that 70,000 out of the 400,000 Muslims there had already been forced to flee.<sup>11</sup> Other reports suggested that ethnic cleansing was being extended to Hungarian and other non-Serbian communities in Vojvodina as well.

Perhaps the most attention, however, was given to the massacre of more than 200 Muslim men at Varjanta

<sup>9</sup> Reuters, 2 September 1992.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 September 1992.

<sup>11</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 27 September 1992; *The Washington Post*, 29 September 1992; and *Nedjeljna Dalmacija*, 9 September 1992.

near Travnik in August. *The Washington Post* first published the story on 22 September, and on 28 September it said that Serbian police officials had meanwhile confirmed the essence of the report. The Varjanta incident is important because it demonstrates once again how rogue units or commanders can violate agreements reached by their superiors, the result being a human tragedy and a further intensification of ethnic hatred. It appears that the Serbian authorities had agreed to an exchange of populations involving the men, but just as the Muslims neared the Bosnian lines they were killed under the direction of a rogue police officer. Reports from Bosnia suggest that "the Serbs" in the fighting often consist of at least four groups: outside military men from Serbia, who ultimately make the decisions; nationalistic local Serbs, who participate in ethnic cleansing; other local Serbs, who are sympathetic to the plight of their Muslim neighbors but are generally powerless to do much for them; and frequently drunken groups of paramilitary fighters and bandits whom nobody can control.<sup>12</sup> It would appear that elements from the second or fourth group were responsible for what happened at Varjanta.

### Ensuring the Flow of Relief Supplies

Even if all that the outside world can do regarding ethnic cleansing is to monitor and condemn it, the UN and the EC are nonetheless committed on the question of maintaining at least a minimal flow of relief supplies to Sarajevo and possibly to other besieged towns as well. The Bosnian authorities have repeatedly asked for guns rather than food, saying there is little point in keeping people from starving only be shot by the Serbs; but the international community continues its arms embargo on Bosnia as well as the rest of the former Yugo-

slavia, and throughout September it discussed the issue of ensuring the flow of relief supplies. The problem required urgent attention, for a variety of reasons. First, on 3 September unknown forces outside Sarajevo shot down an Italian relief plane, apparently with a heat-seeking shoulder-launched missile. Serbian, Croatian, and Muslim units were all present in the area at the time, and all had access to such weapons.<sup>13</sup> Relief flights were immediately suspended, and, although spokesmen from all three warring sides subsequently assured the UN that future flights would be safe, some of the countries participating in the relief effort insisted that electronic antimissile systems be installed on planes before flights were resumed.<sup>14</sup>

Second, the question of reopening land routes to Sarajevo was given high priority on the international agenda in view of the danger to relief flights, even though the airlift had started in June in response to Serbian attacks on land-based convoys. But the security of the overland routes from Split through the mountains or from Ploce up the Neretva Valley did not look any better in September than it had in June. Promises of safe conduct from politicians or military commanders had often proved worthless when aid convoys were confronted by irregulars or rogue units on the ground, and, in another twist on the theme of raiding relief missions, on 21 September organized groups of Serbian civilians blocked a convoy headed from Sarajevo to Srebrenica. Third, the continued fighting remained a problem for aid workers, and two French soldiers were killed when their convoy drove into a firefight between Muslims and Serbs near the Sarajevo airport shortly after the Italian plane was shot down.

<sup>13</sup> *The Washington Post*, 17 September 1992.

<sup>14</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 September 1992.

The question of land routes became more pressing as winter approached. This was partly because the expected rains would render many of the roads and trails on the Split route useless and hence made the reopening of the long-closed Neretva route rather urgent, although that would involve replacing numerous destroyed bridges and clearing mines. Matters were also pressing because the harsh Balkan winter sets in already in October, making the need to deliver food, medicine, fuel, blankets, and clothing all the more acute. And Bosnia and Herzegovina had been one of Yugoslavia's poorer republics, where obtaining adequate heating and fuel supplies was often a problem even in peacetime.

In response, the UN sought to deal with both the land and air issues. On 14 September the Security Council authorized the addition of 6,000 troops primarily from Western Europe to the UN contingent of 1,500 already in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was not clear, however, what this would mean in practice, because, although the resolution authorized the use of "all necessary means" to ensure aid deliveries, UN relief commander Major General Philippe Morillon said bluntly that "we have absolutely no intention to force our way through blockades."<sup>15</sup>

Apparently there was a consensus on establishing a "no-fly" zone at least along the routes used by relief flights, but the United States, the United Kingdom, and France had not agreed on the details by the end of the month.<sup>16</sup> The Serbs alone had aircraft in Bosnia, and they were believed to shadow the relief flights as a way of sneaking up on Croatian or Bosnian positions. Some suggested that the Croats or Muslims might have shot down the Italian plane while aiming for a nearby Serbian one (or in an effort to drag Western countries into

<sup>15</sup> *The New York Times*, 24 September 1992.

<sup>16</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 15 September 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Author's interview with refugee from Dobo, 24 September 1992.

the war). Furthermore, during the course of the month the Serbian planes frequently attacked Bosnian cities and towns. This may have been the "last hurrah" of an air force running low on fuel and spare parts; or the planes may have been giving desperately needed support to thinned-out ground forces that lacked adequate artillery cover. Whatever the case, Bosnian President Izetbegovic protested to the UN against air strikes against Jajce and other towns and urged the setting up of a no-fly zone.

### On the Ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina

On the ground, the relations between the three warring factions continued to be dominated by politics as usual.<sup>17</sup> The Serbs repeatedly urged the Croats to join them in partitioning the republic, while on 23 September the Croatian and Bosnian authorities signed another defense pact after weeks of reports of incidents involving their respective armed units. Relations between the Croats and Muslims are complex and operate on a number of levels. These involve not only Presidents Izetbegovic and Franjo Tudjman but local warlords, commanders in the field, irregulars, and various politicians. The official 70,000-strong Croatian Army (HVO) is leading the defense of Gradacac and some other Bosnian towns, and its publications for the troops urge a close alliance with the Muslims against a common enemy. Meanwhile, at least 2,000 men in the 10,000-strong, far-right paramilitary Croatian Defense Forces (HOS) may be Muslim recruits, who are attracted by the HOS's firm rejection of any partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Serbs.

As to the Serbs, some estimates suggest that their ranks consist of 15,000 former soldiers of the Yugoslav Army plus 30,000 irregulars serving under local warlords and a few thou-

<sup>17</sup> Patrick Moore, "A New Phase in the Bosnian Crisis?" *RFE/RL Research Report*, no. 31, 31 July 1992.

sand "wild irregulars" who live from plunder. The Bosnian forces, for their part, have perhaps 20,000 men under arms plus another 40,000 for whom there are no weapons. They have only two tanks against the Serbs' 300, and the Serbs have an artillery advantage of 3.5 to 1 over the Bosnians.<sup>18</sup>

Some observers in Serbia and in the West have long suggested that Bosnia might try to overcome this military imbalance by obtaining massive quantities of weapons (in violation of the UN arms embargo) and of Islamic freedom fighters from Turkey and the Middle East.<sup>19</sup> These rumors were given fresh life when, on 4 September, Croatian officials seized 4,000 guns and more than 1 million rounds of ammunition at the Zagreb airport aboard an Iranian plane allegedly carrying relief supplies for Bosnia. Some reports claimed that two similar flights had already managed to deliver their cargos and that this particular interception might have been the result of pressure by the American authorities.<sup>20</sup>

Reports of massive arms transfers are probably unfounded, if for no other reason than that it is difficult to see how the weapons could be gotten past Serbian troops and planes if relief supplies could not. As to the Islamic soldiers, they appear to number only a few hundred at the most; and while the Bosnian population seems to respect and admire their courage in coming to fight, stories are already legion of culture clashes between pious Islamic fighters and aid workers from the Middle East, on the one hand, and the secularized, European Bosnian Muslims seeking only to protect their homes, on the other.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *The New York Times*, 10 and 19 September 1992.

<sup>19</sup> *Die Presse*, 12 September 1992; and *Nedjeljna Dalmacija*, 16 September 1992.

<sup>20</sup> *The European*, 3-6 September 1992; and *The New York Times*, 10 September 1992.

<sup>21</sup> *Die Zeit*, 18 September 1992; and Reuters, 23 September 1992.

### Djakarta and New York

Whether the Islamic world is helping the Bosnians with men and arms or not, it is undeniably active on Bosnia's behalf on the diplomatic front.<sup>22</sup> One example was the summit of the non-aligned countries in Djakarta, Indonesia, at the start of September. Tito's Yugoslavia had always been in the forefront of that movement, but in Djakarta a number of Islamic countries sought to have the rump Yugoslav state consisting of Serbia and Montenegro expelled because of Serbian atrocities in Bosnia. Some African countries objected, and the conference ended, after much acrimonious discussion, without a final decision; Indonesia had shelved the issue on the grounds that the discussion was taking up too much time at the expense of other topics. A resolution was passed condemning the war crimes, but it was not as specific or sharp as some Muslim countries wanted. In any event, after returning home, Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad, who has increasingly tried to present himself as a spokesman for Third World causes, made a blanket offer of asylum to Bosnian Muslim refugees displaced by ethnic cleansing.<sup>23</sup>

But the center of international activity remained not Djakarta but the United Nations in New York. The vote in the Security Council authorizing 6,000 additional troops for relief work attracted attention, as did a subsequent proposal to expel Serbia and Montenegro from the UN because of the Serbian aggression against Bosnia, a member of the world body.

While most Western countries were keen to see the measure passed as a further means of putting pressure on Belgrade, Prime Minister Milan Panic of the rump Yugoslavia attracted some sympathy for his apparently moder-

<sup>22</sup> Patrick Moore, "Islamic Aspects of the Yugoslav Crisis," *RFE/RL Research Report*, no. 28, 10 July 1992.

<sup>23</sup> *Far Eastern Economic Review* (Hong Kong), 17 September 1992.

ate position against outright expulsion. He said that his country should not be barred from the UN but could reapply for membership as a new state, thereby implicitly acknowledging the Western, Croatian, Slovenian, Macedonian, and Bosnian position that the rump Yugoslavia is not the automatic successor to Tito's state.

The increasing evidence of political differences between Panic and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, whom many regard as the one man most responsible for the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the outbreak of the war, seemed to strengthen Panic's hand. (It was, in fact, an open secret that Western governments had been hoping all along that Panic would eventually break Milosevic's power in Serbia.) Some Russian observers, moreover, have long been critical of what they regard as Moscow's selling out of a traditional ally, Serbia, to please Western countries, and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev hosted a meeting between Panic and the representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council to enable Panic to plead his case.<sup>24</sup>

In the end, votes in the Security Council on 19 September and in the General Assembly two days later led to Belgrade's suspension from the work of the United Nations but did not cancel its membership outright.<sup>25</sup> Panic's position had been weakened somewhat by the appearance, at the time of the voting, of a US report to the UN designed to "prepare the way for war crimes trials" against Serbia for systematic ethnic cleansing.<sup>26</sup>

#### A Growing

##### International Involvement?

On 21 September, the same day as the General Assembly vote, US President

<sup>24</sup> Suzanne Crow, "Russia's Response to the Yugoslav Crisis," *RFE/RL Research Report*, no. 30, 24 July 1992; and *The Washington Post*, 23 September 1992.

<sup>25</sup> RFE/RL Correspondent's Report (Munich), 24 September 1992.

<sup>26</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, 23 September 1992.

George Bush addressed that body. He offered to make American bases, intelligence agencies, engineering units, and logistical and communications facilities more readily available for UN peacekeeping operations. He did not, however, as many observers noted, offer to provide any new money for peacekeeping, to pay the \$282 million that Washington owes the UN in back dues, or, above all, to send American ground troops on any peacekeeping mission in Bosnia.<sup>27</sup>

There remains, in fact, much opposition in the United States to any military involvement in Bosnia, despite calls from many sectors of the public for armed intervention to protect human rights in connection with ethnic cleansing. That opposition is particularly strong in some military circles, which fear that, as in Vietnam, they might be sent to handle a poorly defined task without adequate resources or freedom of action. They suspect that they would also again be without firm political support at home for what could prove to be a protracted conflict in an area where many believe that the United States has no vital interests.<sup>28</sup> In the end, they predict, the military would again be blamed for any failure, whereas the real fault, in their estimation, would lie with political leaders who neglected to set clear, feasible goals and provide the means to attain them. As Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney put it: "The ultimate question is: 'How many Yugoslavs are you willing to kill to stop Yugoslavs from killing other Yugoslavs?'"<sup>29</sup>

In the meantime, American involvement is limited to providing technical assistance in tightening the blockade of Serbia and Montenegro

<sup>27</sup> *The New York Times*, 22 September 1992; and *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 September 1992.

<sup>28</sup> *International Herald Tribune*, 21 and 29 September 1992; and *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 September 1992.

<sup>29</sup> *International Herald Tribune*, 17 September 1992.

and to sending diplomats and a "small contingent" of other civilian personnel to parts of the Balkans outside the war zone to help with international efforts aimed at ending the conflict. Warren Zimmermann, a former ambassador to Yugoslavia, will coordinate the overall operation, and Ambassador Robert Frowick will go to Macedonia, which has just set up frontier posts to monitor its border with Serbia.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, the question remains as to what the ultimate role of the international community as a whole can be. One school of thought is that the London Conference has set up ground rules and a mechanism and that what is necessary now is to follow through doggedly. Advocates of this view note that special human rights envoy and former Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki has recommended not only setting up a war crimes commission but also giving UN forces the power to gain access to "detention camps." This, some argue, could provide a test case for the international community's will to enforce the provisions of the London Conference to which the warring factions have already agreed.

Others, however, see the situation in a more negative light, maintaining, for example, that "the arrangements being offered are unlikely to serve any useful function until the fighting in some sense comes to rest"; that is, until the belligerents are sufficiently exhausted, stalemated, or satiated and want to stop the fighting.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, it is argued, the UN will be powerless to carry out any of its objectives on the ground if any one of the belligerents chooses not to live up to its commitments. The coming weeks should offer ample opportunities to see whether the optimistic or pessimistic views prove more tenable, at least in the short run.

<sup>30</sup> *The New York Times*, 17 September 1992; and Reuters, 15 September 1992.

<sup>31</sup> *Financial Times*, 21 September 1992.

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CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS CONCERNING THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

1980	4 May	Death of Tito
1981	spring	Unrest and repression in Kosovo
1986	autumn	Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences lists Serbian grievances against Yugoslavia and 1974 constitution
1987		Rise to power of Slobodan Milosevic; nationalist rhetoric and street pressure become key elements of Serbian political culture
1988	summer	Serbian constitutional amendments limit autonomy of Kosovo and Vojvodina as set down in 1974
	October	Street pressure leads to overthrow of Vojvodina government
1989	February	Strikes and violent repression in Kosovo, with 31 dead according to official figures
	March	Belgrade government forces through constitutional changes at the expense of Kosovo and Vojvodina; Kosovo Albanian leaders arrested
	28 June	Milosevic delivers major speech at Kosovo Polje to mark the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo Field
		Serbs in Croatia demand their own autonomous province
	September	Slovenian constitution amended to permit secession from the federation
1990	January	Slovenian delegation walks out of Extraordinary Congress of the League of Communists; Croatia and Slovenia call for multiparty system and a loose confederation
	February	Slovenian and Croatian communist parties break with the LCY; Serbia imposes economic blockade on Slovenia
	April-May	Free parliamentary elections, first in Slovenia, then in Croatia. Similar elections follow in other republics in the course of the year, in all cases bringing nationally-oriented leaderships to power through multiparty contests

	mid-year	Serbia effectively abolishes Kosovo's provincial government
	August	Serbian irregulars block roads leading to Knin and stage a referendum for a "Serbian Autonomous Region of Krajina," which is not recognized by Croatian President Franjo Tudjman's government, which opposes any substantive Serbian self-rule
	September	Kosovo Albanian legislators hold clandestine session in Kacanik and adopt constitution proclaiming Kosovo a republic within the Yugoslav federation
	December	Krajina Serbs declare autonomy and set up armed formations with weapons from federal stocks; Slovenes vote by 88% to separate from Yugoslavia; constitutional proposals in coming months, especially from Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina fail to bridge the gap between Serbian demands for a strong federation and Slovenian and Croatian calls for no more than a loose confederation.
1991	January	Beginnings of civil war in Croatia
	February	Spegelj affair heightens tensions between Croatia and the federal army
	March	Serbian bloc prevents the federal presidency from functioning; clashes between Serbian irregulars and Croatian militia in Krajina, while federal army demands that the Croats withdraw; large anti-Milosevic demonstrations in Belgrade
	May	12 Croatian police killed in Borovo Selo in Slavonia; federal defense ministry demands that it be allowed to "restore order"; Serbian bloc prevents Croat Stipe Mesic from assuming the rotating post of president of the federal Presidency; 86% of Croatia's population turns out to vote 94% for independence; EC urges Yugoslavia to remain united
	June	US Secretary of State James Baker visits the area and backs Yugoslav unity
	25 June	Croatia and Slovenia vote to begin process leading to independence



- 26-7 June Federal forces attack Slovenia
- 28 June EC sets CSCE process in motion over the Yugoslav crisis and stops financial aid
- July Increased fighting across areas of Croatia with large Serbian populations, especially the Dalmatian hinterland and eastern Slavonia; ceasefire agreements come and go.
- 1 July Mesic elected Presidency president
- 18 July Army and Slovenia reach agreement that effectively lets Slovenia go its own way after humiliating the federal forces
- 24 July Federal government of Prime Minister Ante Markovic makes one last attempt at a political and economic stabilization program
- July-August EC observers sent to Croatia as EC tries repeatedly to hammer out a diplomatic solution to the crisis; Germany takes the lead in acknowledging that the old Yugoslavia is probably dead and that the use of force in the crisis is unacceptable; Austria takes a similar position, with Britain and France cautious
- September Serbian shelling of Vukovar and Osijek in eastern Slavonia enters a new, intensive phase
- 9 September Macedonians vote 95% in favor of independence; the 20%-plus Albanian minority boycotts the vote pending clarification of its future rights
- 18 September Austria and Hungary agree to coordinate their policies on the crisis, including joint actions in international bodies
- 26-30 September Kosovo Albanians vote for independence in clandestine referendum
- 1 October Kosovo Albanian leaders receive a rousing reception in the Albanian parliament
- 5-6 October Serbian crown prince Alexander Karadjordjevic visits Serbia
- 7 October Major Serbian air attack on Zagreb

- 8 October Slovenia and Croatia resume moves toward full independence
- 16 October Kosovo: Albanian university students join younger pupils and students in school boycott to protest Serbianization; underground Albanian school system subsequently set up
- 22 October Albania recognizes Kosovo's independence
- 8 November EC imposes economic sanctions on Serbia and is joined by the US the next day
- 12 November Major shelling of Dubrovnik
- 17 November Vukovar surrenders after months of shelling; it had become a symbol of Croatian resistance; Tudjman and the far-right blame each other amid much recrimination
- 26 November *Washington Post* reports on forced population transfers, later to become known as "ethnic cleansing"
- 2 December EC finalizes sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, calling the federal army "terrorist"
- 5 December Mesic resigns federal presidency, saying it had become "irrelevant"
- 18 December Press reports of a massacre of Croats by Serbian cetniks at Vocin, Slavonia
- 19 December *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* says that 500,000 people in Croatia alone have become refugees since the fighting began
- 20 December Ante Markovic resigns

- 21 December Bosnian Serbs declare their own republic
- 23 December Germany recognizes Croatia and Slovenia

- 1992
- 1 January UN special envoy Cyrus Vance announces that Serbia, the army, and Croatia have agreed to his peace plan including UN peace-keeping forces known as UNPROFOR
  - 13 January Vatican recognizes Croatia and Slovenia
  - 14 January UN military observers arrive in Croatia

15 January EC decision to recognize Croatia and Slovenia comes into effect; Macedonia left unrecognized by Greek veto

29 February Two-day referendum on Bosnian independence begins amid Serb boycott; Muslims and Croats vote overwhelmingly in favor

March UNPROFOR operation takes shape in Croatia

1 March First shooting in Sarajevo

9 March Some 40,000 demonstrate against Milosevic in Belgrade

10 March Joint US-EC statement on the crisis pledges coordinated action and marks the start of a new active role for Washington prompted by concern over Bosnia

27 March Bosnian Serbs proclaim own constitution

April Serbian offensive into Bosnia; Visegrad subjected to ethnic cleansing

6 April EC decides to recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina

7 April US recognizes Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia

8 April Serbian air force stages attacks across Bosnia

21 April Major fighting in Sarajevo

27 April Serbia and Montenegro proclaim a new "Yugoslavia"

May UN begins Sarajevo relief missions, first by air then by land

14 May New coalition government in Slovenia pending fresh elections in November; President Milan Kucan tops polls

24 May Clandestine legislative and presidential elections in Kosovo; Ibrahim Rugova elected president

27 May Serbs shell bread line in Sarajevo, with television coverage dramatically bringing the Bosnian crisis home around the world

30 May UN approves sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro

15 June Dobrica Cosic becomes president of rump Yugoslavia

16 June Croatia and Bosnia announce agreement to cooperate more closely in the war

26 June First major policy meeting on the crisis of the top-US leadership

27 June Second visit of Prince Alexander to Belgrade begins

28 June Some 100,000 take part in anti-Milosevic protests in Belgrade; French President Francois Mitterrand pays surprise visit to Sarajevo

2 July Milan Panic announces his appointment as prime minister of rump Yugoslavia

3 July Herzegovinian Croats declare their own self-governing community

7 July Macedonian government of Nikola Kljusev falls

10 July NATO, CSCE, and WEU decide on naval blockade of Serbia-Montenegro

11-12 July Serbian forces launch major new offensive in northern Bosnia

July and August Newspaper articles and television footage vividly depict Serbian detention camps in Bosnia; major international attention focuses on ethnic cleansing, with Serbia increasingly being blamed around the world for the worst excesses in the war

2 August Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and his HDZ win impressive victory in presidential and legislative elections

4 August Russia follows Bulgaria and a small number of other countries in recognizing Macedonia

26-27 August London Conference on the crisis; first meeting to bring all major domestic and foreign actors together; participants from former Yugoslavia agree on set of principles to resolve the conflict; mechanism for a peace process set up

end August UN special human rights envoy Tadeusz Mazowiecki pays his first visit to the Yugoslav area and says there that human rights "do not exist" in Bosnia; he particularly condemns Serbian ethnic cleansing

3 September Italian relief plane shot down by unknown forces; UN suspends flights to Sarajevo

4 September Macedonian coalition government takes office under Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski; Albanians are included

14 September Security Council votes to increase UN forces in Bosnia by 6,000

17 September Serbs subject Sarajevo to particularly heavy shelling as part of a new offensive

18 September First round of talks opens between warring Bosnian factions as part of the peace process

22 September UN votes to bar Serbia-Montenegro effectively from membership

22 September US calls for setting up war crimes commission

23 September Croatia and Bosnia sign another text on cooperation

30 September Tudjman and Cosic sign agreement leading to evacuation of Prevlaka peninsula near Dubrovnik by Serbian forces on 20 October

30 September Russian UN officer talks about 1,000 angry Croatian refugees out of a march back to their old homes now under Serb control in eastern Croatia

late

September New wave of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia; international agencies predict up to 400,000 deaths in the coming winter

1 October Serbs begin ethnic cleansing in Sarajevo

3 October International relief flights to Sarajevo resume

5 October Tudjman says that he and Cosic have agreed to "orderly" population transfers

6 October UN votes to set up war crimes commission, but supplies few specifics as to how it will function

6 October Strategic Bosanski Brod falls to Serbs; Muslims again suspect a deal between

Serbs and Croats to partition Bosnia  
at the Muslims' expense

- 9 October UN votes to establish a no-fly zone over Bosnia, but does not state how it will be enforced
  - 14 October Vance warns that "a spark from Macedonia could ignite" the Balkans
  - 15 October Panic opens talks with Kosovo Albanians
  - 15 October Mazowiecki calls for independent international broadcasting to the former Yugoslavia to offset the promotion of ethnic hatred in Serbian and Croatian media
  - 17 October Rumors of a coup in Bosnia; subsequent reports of fighting between Croats and Muslims in the Travnik area
  - 17 October Croatian parliament votes to lift immunity of three far-right deputies; critics across the political spectrum charge Tudjman and the HDZ with growing authoritarianism toward the press and toward political opponents
  - 19 October Serbian police take over federal interior ministry in an apparent power struggle between Panic and Milosevic
  - 20 October Tudjman and Cosic sign agreement to reopen Zagreb-Belgrade highway and set up liaison officers in each other's capitals
  - 21 October Izetbegovic publicly endorses a division of his republic into 8-10 cantons on a non-ethnic basis and announces he will not run for reelection when his term runs out in December
- 
- 22 October Forensic pathologist with Mazowiecki team announces that at least four mass graves have been found at Vukovar, probably containing some of the 3,000 Croats still reported missing
  - 28 October News agencies report that Croats appear to have "ethnically cleansed" Prozor after defeating Muslim forces
  - 28 October Bosnian Serbs reject Vance-Owen plan for cantonization
  - 29 October Tudjman urges Muslims to accept a partition along ethnic lines

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