

Research Team 5: The International Community & the FRY/Belligerents

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The International Community and the FRY/Belligerents

Matjaž Klemenčič

Introduction:

Soon after the Tito's split with Stalin in 1948 at the beginning of the 1950s, the question surfaced as to how much foreign aid Tito's Yugoslavia would need. The American economic analyst answered in terms of billions of U.S. dollars, and then one of the highest ranking American administration officials replied that it was important just to keep Tito afloat.¹ At the end of 1980s when Ante Marković tried to keep his economic program going, only a few politicians in the West understood the importance of its implementation. The citizens of Yugoslavia were in desperate need of an identification symbol after the economic failure of self-management socialism and the collapse of the nonaligned movement. It would be the convertible dinar, for which Marković fought as part of his economic program and which could not succeed without economic aid from the West.² As A. Ross Johnson emphasized, the international community—including both the United States and the Soviet Union/Russian Federation—tried to maintain the status quo and hold together a Yugoslavia that had become an empty shell.³ Instead of seeking to facilitate a peaceful transformation, the international community attempted to perpetuate the ancien régime, and tried to preserve SFRY, it did very little to stop the violence.

¹ Lorraine M. Lees: *Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia and the Cold War* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).

² Matjaž Klemenčič and Mitja Žagar: *The Former Yugoslavia's Diverse Peoples: A Reference Sourcebook* (Series: Ethnic diversity within nations). (Santa Barbara, CA, Denver, CO, and Oxford, U.K.: ABC-CLIO, 2004), p. 289

³ A. Ross Johnson, "Security and Insecurity in the Balkans," in Klaus Lange and Leonid L. Fituni (eds.): *Integrating Regional and Global Security Cooperation* (Munich: Hanns Seidel Stiftung, 2002), pp. 113–118.

thus bears considerable responsibility for the violence and insecurity that followed. Both the United States and Russia, along with other states, ignored the truth that no state, whatever its origins, can expect to survive without the support and at least the passive allegiance of most of its citizenry.⁴

According to most of Western authors, the foreigners, i.e. the political leaders from most of Europe and also the USA, in the late 1980s wanted desperately to keep the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. Some other authors blame the West not only for the dissolution but also for the breakup of the former Yugoslavia into pieces in such a violent way.⁵ Also Slobodan Milošević started his defense in Hague by blaming the foreigners for the break up of Yugoslavia. Milošević, who was acting as his own lawyer in front of the Hague Tribunal, said: "the international community was the main force for the destruction of Yugoslavia, accusing Germany, Austria, USA and Vatican... There is a fundamental historical fact that one should proceed from the beginning when seeking to understand what lead to everything that happened in Yugoslaviafrom 1991 until today, and that is the violent destruction of a European state Yugoslavia which originated from the statehood of Serbia, the only ally of the democratic world in that part of the world over the past two centuries."⁶

We as a team do not believe that, regardless of the policy of the foreigners towards the former Yugoslavia, it could possibly have been kept in one piece. It might have been possible that the dissolution process would have been more peaceful if the superpowers had acted differently. The ignorance with which European and non-European powers approached the Yugoslav situation is evident in a letter that one of the officials of the British Foreign Office wrote to an official of one of the Macedonian émigré organizations in May 1991, responding to the demand for recognition of Macedonia as an independent state:

*... As you are no doubt aware, the Macedonian issue is seen differently by the Greeks, Yugoslavians and Bulgarians; Her Majesty's Government is aware of the positions taken by the different groups. However, we feel that any problems which exist should be resolved by the parties concerned, and it would not be appropriate for Britain to intervene ...*⁷

The team also agrees that the United States had a decisive role in the process of dissolution of Yugoslavia.⁸ There were three phases of U.S. policy in European wars in

⁴ Sabrina P. Ramet: *The Three Yugoslavias: The Dual Challenge of State-Building And Legitimation Among the Yugoslavs, 1918–2003* – manuscript.

⁵ Marek Waldenberg: *Rozbicie Jugosławii: od separacji Słowenii do wojny kosowskiej*. (Warszawa: Scholar, 2003); Jelena Guskova: *Istorija jugoslovenske krize 1990–2000* (History of the Yugoslav Crisis 1990–2000), 2.vols. (Beograd: Izdavački grafički atelje "M," 2003).

⁶ Milošević launches his defense, *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Balkan Report* Vol. 8, No. 32, 3 September 2004 .

⁷ *Macedonian Tribune* (27 June 1991), p. 3.

⁸ Albert Bing, "Hrvatsko-američki odnosi 1991–1995" — first draft of his doctoral dissertation, University of Zagreb; Paul Shoup, "The Disintegration of Yugoslavia and Western Foreign Policy in the 1980s" – unpublished paper at International Conference 'Rethinking the Dissolution of Yugoslavia,' Centre for South-East European Studies, School of Slavonic and East European Studies/University College London, 18–19 June 2004; Jože Pirjevec: *Jugoslovenske vojne 1991–2001* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2003); James Gow: *Triumph of the Lack of Will: International Diplomacy and the Yugoslav War* (New York: Columbia University Press; London:

general: (1) The U.S.A. initially did not want to interfere in a primarily European problem—much as they didn't during the wars of Europe in the first half of the 20th century. Then they started to interfere in their capacity as a superpower to end the fighting, first through (2) diplomacy and, finally, (3) armed intervention. U.S. policy toward Yugoslavia was also determined by domestic public opinion polls.

The U.S. since 1948 supported united and—since Tito's death—also democratic Yugoslavia. Even more, American diplomats and politicians occasionally tried to persuade Tito to democratize Yugoslavia. There were studies over the years for the State Department that described fully the complicated national makeup of Yugoslavia and questioned its future cohesion post-Tito. Some already in 1970s described scenarios of a disintegrating Yugoslavia.⁹ Our team member Ross Johnson defined pre-1991 U.S. policy as that of supporting a united, independent (non-Soviet) Yugoslavia during the Cold War. This was made clear at the time of President Nixon's visit in September 1970 and on many other occasions. Democratization was largely ignored. Radio Free Europe never broadcast to Yugoslavia (until 1994). Johnson characterized U.S. policy toward the SFRY in the 1980s as one of “malign neglect” and he wrote: “*Long-standing U.S. policy generally focused on all-Yugoslav and Belgrade-centered developments, but this was not explicitly or consciously “pro-Serb.”*” He conducted a RAND policy study for the State Department in the early 1980s, drawing on extensive discussions with U.S. and Yugoslav officials in most of the republics, which attempted (without much success) to counter this “centralist”—not pro-Serb—

Hurst, 1997); Steven L. Burg and Paul S. Shoup: *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*. (Armonk, NY, and London, U.K.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999); Dimitrij Rupel: *Skrivnost države. Spomini na domače in zunanje zadeve 1989–1992* (Secret of the State, Memoirs of Internal and Foreign Affairs, 1989–1992). (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1992); Stipe Mesic: *Kako je srušena Jugoslavija – politički memoari* (How Yugoslavia was put into ruins – Political Memoires), 2nd rev. ed. (Zagreb: Mislav Press, 1994); Mario Nobilo: *Hrvatski feniks. Diplomatski procesi iza zatvorenih vrata, 1990–1997* (Croatian Phoenix. Diplomatic Processes Behind the Closed Doors, 1990–1997). (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Globus, 2003); Izetbegović Alija: *Čudo bosanskog otpora* (Miracle of Bosnian resistance). (Sarajevo: BiH Press, 1995); Alija Izetbegović, *Sjećanja: autobiografski zapis* (Sarajevo: TKD Šahinpašić, 2001) Borisav Jović: *Zadnji dnevni SFRJ – odlomci iz dnevnika* (Last days of the SFRY – Excerpts from the Diary). (Ljubljana: Slovenska knjiga, 1996); Michael Libal: *Limits of Persuasion. Germany and the Yugoslav Crisis, 1991–1992*. (Westport and London: Praeger, 1997); Bill Clinton: *My Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004); Klaus Peter Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle bei der völkerrechtlichen Anerkennung der Republik Kroatien unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des deutschen Außenministers Genscher*. (Marburg: Tectum Verlag, 2000); Henry Wynaendts: *L'Engrenage: Chroniques yougoslaves, juillet 1991–août 1992*. (Paris: Denoël, 1993); Jelena Guskova: *Istorija jugoslovenske krize 1990–2000*. (Beograd: Izdavački grafički zavod Atelje “M”, 2003); David Rieff: *Slaughterhouse: Bosnia and the Failure of the West*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995); Hayden Robert M.: *The Beginning of the End of Federal Yugoslavia: The Slovenian Amendment Crisis of 1989* (=The Carl Beck Papers, Number 1001). (Pittsburgh: The Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Pittsburgh, December 1992); Gale Stokes, John Lampe, Dennison Rusinow and Julie Mostov, “Instant History: Understanding the Wars of Yugoslav Succession,” *Slavic Review*, vol. 55, no. 1, (1996), pp. 136–160; Sabrina P. Ramet, “The Yugoslav Crisis and the West: Avoiding ‘Vietnam’ and Blundering into ‘Abyssinia’”, in *East European Politics and Societies*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Winter 1994), pp. 189–219; Warren Zimmermann: *Origins of a Catastrophe: Yugoslavia and its Destroyers—America's Last Ambassador Tells What Happened and Why* (New York: Times Books, 1996) Daniele Conversi, “German-Bashing and the Breakup of Yugoslavia,” *The Donald W. Treadgold Papers in Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies*, no. 16 (Seattle: The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, March 1998).

⁹ *Communist Political Succession: U.S. Policy Toward Post-Tito Yugoslavia*, The RAND Corporation, R-1058-DOS (abridged), June 1972, Arnold L. Horelick and A. Ross Johnson, public release in 2003.

American bias.¹⁰ The inconsistencies of U.S. policy during this period were evident from Ambassador Warren Zimmerman's address to the International Institute for Strategic Studies Conference in Zürich in September 1991, where he (1) called for support for the Ante Marković government; (2) criticized German Foreign Minister's Hans Dietrich Genscher's approach to Yugoslavia; and (3) said Yugoslavia was a European and not an American issue.¹¹

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) came out in October 1990 with the forecast that Yugoslavia would cease to function within one year and would probably dissolve within two. Also, according to this report: economic reform would not stave off the breakup.

The agency predicted that Serbia would block Slovenian and Croatian attempts to secede from the Yugoslav confederation, that there would be a protracted armed uprising by the Albanians in Kosovo, and that Serbia would foment uprisings by Serbian minorities in Croatia and Bosnia. The CIA noted the danger of a slide from ethnic violence to organized civil war between republics but considered it unlikely. It concluded flatly that there was nothing the United States or its European allies could do to preserve unity and that Yugoslavs would see such efforts as contradictory to advocacy of democracy and self-determination. From historian's point of view this report is relatively good analysis of the situation in then Yugoslavia. In the "key judgements" the CIA analysts wrote that neither the Communist Party nor the Yugoslav National Army would be able to hold the federation together: The correctly found out that the party was in shambles and that the army lost prestige because of its strong Communist Party identification and because much of the country considered it a Serb-dominated institution. They also wrote that no all Yugoslav political movement had emerged to fill the void left by the collapse of the Titoist vision of a Yugoslav state, and none will.¹²

Discussion on historic background, economy as well as maps and tables which followed in the CIA report are accurate and correct, which is important because of discussion on the controversy on the knowledge of highest US officials on what happened in Yugoslavia and the reasons for that what happened in the 1990s in former Yugoslavia which follows in this report.

As then U.S. Ambassador to Belgrade Warren Zimmermann wrote in his memoirs, this prescient analysis erred only on Kosovo, which remained tense but quiet, and on the timetable for civil war, which unfolded even faster than predicted. In its main elements, the estimate

¹⁰ Ross Johnson, "Political Leadership in Yugoslavia: Evolution of the League of Communists," RAND R-2049/1, November 1983, public release on March 6, 2003.

¹¹ International Institute for Strategic Studies, Conference, 33rd (1991), Zurich, Switzerland. *New dimensions in international security*. London: Brassey's for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1991/1992.

¹² YUGOSLAVIA TRANSFORMED Abstract: NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE Pages: 0023 Pub Date: 10/1/1990 Release Date: 9/29/1999 Case Number: F-1995-00796, http://www.foia.cia.gov/search.asp?pageNumber=1&freqReqRecord=nic_geo_eur.txt. — First time mentioned in *New York Times*, 28 November, 1990, p. A7.

proved dead accurate. He didn't disagree with the CIA report findings—the embassy had been warning about breakup and violence for a year—but he saw its air of inevitability, in the perfervid atmosphere of Washington, as a major problem. He worried that its bald assertion that nothing could be done might take the heart out of American efforts to stave off the worst. He believed that the high cost of failure warranted continued American efforts to seek a formula for unity. “*This game can be won,*” he argued in a piece of inflated advocacy in November. “*Dissolution is not inevitable.*”¹³ In spite of CIA warnings, it became clear, if not before, then after the visit of Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany in the second half of May 1991, that the United States did not want to get intensively involved in the Yugoslav crisis and that the U.S. would let the European states, especially the EC, try to solve it. The so-called CIA report tells us that the CIA analysts and their advisors knew well the Yugoslav situation and that they even predicted well what was to come. The question is, whether the politicians in the U.S. wanted to know it and whether the politicians wanted to act accordingly? There is also another question, if there was anything the international and therefore also U.S. politicians could do to prevent the eruption of the crisis?

The senior George Bush's administration was, however, too busy resolving the crisis in Iraq and did not want to be involved in another regional crisis. The key personalities of this period were U.S. Ambassador to Belgrade Warren Zimmermann; Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, who had also served as US Ambassador to Yugoslavia in late 1970s; and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, who had served as military attaché in Belgrade in early 1960s. They represented the “pro-Serbian lobby” in Bush Sr.'s administration, which was connected to Yugoslavia also through political and economic interests (e.g. the Yugo-America Company, in which Henry Kissinger, former U.S. secretary of state, took part).¹⁴ These members of the Bush administration at the beginning supported the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and the reform policy of Ante Marković, though not very effectively. The U.S. Secretary of State, James Baker, often said: “*We don't have a dog in this fight,*” and President Bush asked Scowcroft at least once a week: “*Tell me again what this is all about.*”¹⁵

The U.S. politicians were then so naïve (as they ignored the power of the national/ethnic movements and national/ethnic problems in general that could not be solved by economic

¹³ Warren Zimmermann: *Origins of a Catastrophe: Yugoslavia and its Destroyers*.....p. 84.

¹⁴ Ben Cohen and George Stamkovski (eds.): *With No Peace to Keep ... United Nations Peacekeeping and the War in the Former Yugoslavia* (London: Grainpress Ltd., 1995), p. 149; Jane M. O. Sharp: *Anglo-American Relations and Crisis in Yugoslavia* (Paris: Serie transatlantique, 1999), p. 16; Compare *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 17 December 1991.

¹⁵ Laura Silber and Allan Little: *Yugoslavia. A Death of a Nation*. (London: Penguin Books, 1997), p. 201.

measures) that they believed that the market-oriented economic reforms of Ante Marković, along with financial aid from the West, especially the U.S.A., could stop nationalist and separatist tendencies. The question here is whether they really believed this or were they simply acting out of despair. The U.S.A. let the EU take the lead. Although its own diplomats closely followed the situation, including the building crisis in Kosovo, in the 1980s, they were not heard in the State Department.¹⁶ At the end of June 1991, the State Department tried to pacify the situation and appealed on the basis of following the principles of safeguarding human rights and democratic changes, which they said could help keep Yugoslavia together.

Politics of Missed Opportunities (1990–June 1991)

This is not the place to recount the well-known chronology of dissolution that followed the Slovenian plebiscite of December 1990. As Susan L. Woodward has argued, the core motivation of U.S. urgings for greater European participation was to ensure Europe's responsibility for the transition in Eastern Europe. Many saw a more cynical motive to U.S. policy, however, as if it demanded from the Europeans that they prove their ability to go it alone and, in expectation of their inability to do so, served to demonstrate the continuing importance of NATO and U.S. leadership. But the decision to use the UN to organize the military coalition for Desert Storm was even more significant in its negative consequences for the Yugoslav conflict. With Yugoslavia's long history of participation in the UN, strong ties with Third World countries, and non-membership in the EC or in NATO, the UN was the one international organization that could mount an external intervention that all parties in Yugoslavia would most likely accept as neutral and legitimate. UN preoccupation with Iraq and the use of the UN to protect a U.S. vital security interest sent the strong message that no such intervention would occur in Yugoslavia.¹⁷

For the Croats and Slovenes an important issue was to become a member of EC as soon as possible and as Slovenes and as Croats and not as "Yugoslavs." It might be oversimplification, but this was the thinking in the circles of Slovene intellectuals who gathered around *Nova revija*.¹⁸ Both the federal government and Slovene and Croatian politicians had been actively seeking explicit support from European institutions and governments for their separate programs.

¹⁶ Louis Sell: *Slobodan Milošević and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (Durham, N.C., & London: Duke University Press, 2002).

¹⁷ Susan L. Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy. Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War* (Washington, D. C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), pp. 157–158.

¹⁸ Slovene intellectuals published a Slovene national program in *Nova revija*, vol. 6, no. 57 (1987).

On 23 December 1990 the citizens of Slovenia, and on 19 May 1991 the citizens of Croatia, voted for independent states by a vast majority. Slovenia's and Croatia's drives for independence gained a substantial boost on 13 March 1991, when the European Parliament passed a resolution declaring "*that the constituent republics and autonomous provinces of Yugoslavia must have the right freely to determine their own future in a peaceful and democratic manner and on the basis of recognized international and internal borders.*"¹⁹ While most European governments continued to support the federal government and to insist that the Yugoslavs stay together, the apparently uncontroversial nature of this declaration, as if fully in line with Council for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) principles, according to James Gow, demonstrates how far Slovenia and Croatia had influenced European opinion and how little chance there was that alternatives to republican sovereignty would be heard, as pointed out by Susan L. Woodward.²⁰

The team concluded that Slovenia and Croatia had influenced European public opinion, but not to the extent that no alternatives to republican sovereignty would be heard. Successive European and US initiatives—the Vance Plan, the Cutileiro Plan, the Vance-Owen Plan, the Owen-Stoltenberg Plan, the Z4 Plan, etc.—were all ready to compromise the principle of republican sovereignty in one way or another. As Woodward suggested, Yugoslav Foreign Minister Budimir Lončar explicitly sought help in mediating the political crisis from the EC instead of the U.S.A., in the hope that this would energize political support for the federal government's pro-Europe reforms and counteract mounting sympathy for Slovenia and Croatia. The question is, however, whether the federal government of the SFRY was sincere in its pro-European reforms. Woodward wrote also that Germany had already joined the ranks of Austria, Hungary, and Denmark in at least covert support and encouragement of Slovene and Croatian independence.²¹

Unless and until evidence is produced to the contrary, the team must assume that Germany (and also Austria, Hungary, Denmark etc. were not secretly working for Croatian/Slovenian independence at the beginning of 1991. Even at the beginning of the crisis in June 1991, according to the available sources, Germany did not intend to support the break up of Yugoslavia. During the last quarter of 1991, however it was Germany who persuaded EU and even the US later to recognize Slovenia and Croatia and BIH.²²

¹⁹ James Gow, "Deconstructing Yugoslavia," *Survival*, vol. 33 (July/August 1991), p. 308.

²⁰ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., p. 158.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

²² Interview of Matjaž Klemenčič with James Baker on 2 February, 2005.

This position is supported by the points made by then head of the South-Eastern European Section of the German Foreign Ministry Michael Libal in his *Limits of Persuasion*. This book provides the reader not only with the insights of a participant in the events but also with the very good analysis of a historian and political scientist. Libal claims that although the German parliamentarians demanded from German government recognition of Slovenia and Croatia in June of 1991, the German government tried to use the threat of recognition as a method of pressure on the Serbs of Croatia and the Yugoslav government to end the military fighting. It is interesting to note that the first to demand recognition were German Social-Democrats, who were then in opposition; but they were also very soon followed by Christian-Democrats of the government party of Chancellor Kohl. On 24 August, German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher called the Yugoslav ambassador in Bonn, Boris Frlec,²³ to make clear the attitude of the German government not only to him but also, via an appropriate press release, to the public at large. Genscher denounced the action by the Serb irregulars and the army as efforts to change the internal borders by force and as a threat to the negotiation process, and demanded the withdrawal of the Yugoslav People's Army (*Jugoslavenska narodna armija* — JNA) to their barracks. With an explicit reference to the relevant decision of the last CSCE meeting, he also requested that the Yugoslav government establish control over the irregular armed forces. The cores of Genscher's *démarche*, however, were two sentences that raised the threat of recognition:

*“If the bloodshed continues and the policy of faits accomplis by force supported by the Yugoslav army is not halted immediately, the Federal Government [of Germany] must seriously examine the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia in their given frontiers. It will also commit itself to a corresponding examination with the European Community.”*²⁴

As Serbs did not give in and violence continued, Germany continued to pressure the EC to take action.

While Germany reluctantly supported the independence of Slovenia and Croatia, the Soviet Union wanted Yugoslavia to be preserved at all costs. The Soviet Union expressed its views in a letter of 4 August 1991 to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in which it criticized the EC for not doing everything it could to solve the Yugoslav crisis. The policy of the Soviet Union towards Yugoslavia was based on the historical friendship of the Russians with the Serbs. Also the Orthodox religion bonded the Russians

²³ Boris Frlec was since 1989 ambassador of SFRY in Bonn. It is interesting to note, that he was a Slovene who in accordance with Brioni Agreement still continued to represent Yugoslavia. In 1997–1999 he was also Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Slovenia.

²⁴ Libal: *Limits of Persuasion* ..., p. 39.

with the Serbs, as it had the Greeks.²⁵ Already during the first period of the Yugoslav crisis, the Soviet Union had also experienced independence movements and declarations of independence of some of her Soviet republics, especially in the Baltic and Transcaucasian republics. Therefore the Soviet Union was predestined to be interested in preserving the unity of Yugoslavia. Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Alexandrovich Bessmertnych had stated already in April 1991 that keeping the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia was “one of the preconditions for stability in Europe.”²⁶

At the beginning of July 1991, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent written warning to all neighbors of Yugoslavia in which it warned them not to “use” the Yugoslav crisis and to abstain from any activities that would tend to renew the old territorial demands of Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania, and Austria towards Yugoslavia; or in other words, they should abstain from any usage of Yugoslav dissolution movements to satisfy their own nationalistic interests. Soviet ambassadors in the countries neighboring Yugoslavia were given explicit instructions to do everything possible to convey a message that the Soviet Union supported preservation of Yugoslavia.²⁷

It is important to note, however, that—in spite of the fact that the Soviet Union sent a message to the international community that she would not inactively look upon the activities of breaking up of Yugoslavia, especially involving any outside intervention—the Soviet political leadership decided that it would help Yugoslavia only politically through international institutions, and not militarily.²⁸ The first deputy of Soviet Foreign Minister, Julij Mikhailovich Kwizinskiy even said that because of its internal political and economic problems, the absolute priority in the foreign policy of the Soviet Union was to have good relations with the U.S.A, Western Europe, and Germany in particular. Everything else was subordinated to that.²⁹

Such a stand of the Soviet Union disappointed Serb politicians and the pro-Serbian leadership of the “Yugoslav People’s Army.” According to the Yugoslav Defense Minister, General Veljko Kadijević, the U.S.A. wanted to change the regime and the sociopolitical system in Yugoslavia. The assessment of the situation by Kadijević and Jović was that

²⁵ See: Takis Michas, *Unholy Alliance: Greece and Milosevic's Serbia in the Nineties*, Eastern European Studies No. 15, (May) 2002 (College Station, Tex : Texas A&M University Press, 2002).

²⁶ Quoted in Peter Radan, “Secessionist Self-Determination: The Cases of Slovenia and Croatia,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (November 1994), p. 187; Guskova: *Istorija jugoslovenske krize 1990–2000 ...* — in Part two of this book there is a special chapter devoted to relations of Soviet Union/Russia towards the Yugoslav Crisis.

²⁷ Jović: *Zadnji dnevni SFRJ ...*, p. 354 (entry for 10 July 1991).

²⁸ Jović: *Zadnji dnevni SFRJ ...*, p. 356 (entry for 11 July 1991).

²⁹ Jović: *Zadnji dnevni SFRJ ...*, p. 360 (entry for 7 August 1991).

dissolution of the Yugoslav Federation with the policy of “executed facts” (declarations of independence of Slovenia and Croatia, rebellions of Albanians in Kosovo, etc.) and other acts against the constitution would lead to civil war and the direct military interference of foreigners. All this, they stated, was part of a unified plan to destroy the SFRY as an independent and unified state.³⁰

The Serb political leadership and most of the officers of the Yugoslav army still insisted on the doctrine of alertness to danger from a “foreign enemy” that was developed in Socialist Yugoslavia after World War II. All the citizens of Yugoslavia had “to carefully observe the actions of foreign enemies, who wanted to change the political system in Yugoslavia or who worked towards the dissolution of Yugoslavia.” Therefore we should not be surprised that they looked for the reasons for the crisis in the activities of foreigners and not in the unsolved Yugoslav national question, the more or less undemocratic regime, and other problems. The Yugoslav leadership also blamed Gorbachev, who, according to them “cheaply sold out the ideas of socialism and communism.” His activities broke the Warsaw Agreement, broke socialism in Eastern Europe, destabilized the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, broke the established relations among powers in Europe, and enabled enemies of socialism to carry on their activities.³¹

In relation to the Yugoslav crises, countries in the non-aligned movement had different reactions. As one of the founders of the non-aligned movement and from 1989 again the presiding country, Yugoslavia enjoyed great respect; and many of the non-aligned countries (especially the African ones) owed a “great debt” to Yugoslavia. Therefore the Yugoslav crisis presented a profound shock for many of them. A large gap in understanding of the Yugoslav crisis showed among some countries who supported the unity of Yugoslavia at all costs. Some Muslim countries (i.e. Algeria, Egypt, Malaysia, Pakistan, Iran, Tunisia, etc.) watched the events in the region of former Yugoslavia through the prism of an endangered situation for the Muslim population in Yugoslavia. This standpoint of Muslim countries towards the situation in Yugoslavia was a great disappointment, especially for the Serb politicians. After the meeting of the Coordination Bureau of the Non-Aligned on Bali, Indonesia, in May 1992, Jović wrote, among other things: “*Many countries which received help from Yugoslavia ... turned their back to us and did not become ashamed ...*” Support of

³⁰ Jović: *Zadnji dnevni SFRJ* ..., pp. 362 (entry for 8 August).

³¹ Jović: *Zadnji dnevni SFRJ* ..., p. 107 (entry for 16 February 1990).

the non-aligned countries (which then represented almost two thirds of the member states of the UN) would be very important for the Serb policy.³²

Also Hungary, which then already wished to attain candidate status to join the EU and NATO, and due to its large Hungarian minority in Vojvodina (in Serbia), could not support the breakup of Yugoslavia.³³ From May 1990, the Hungarian foreign political concepts became increasingly transparent and assertive on three objectives: European integration, good neighborly relations, and support for Hungarians in the neighboring countries. The Yugoslav tensions, however, complicated attempts to execute these objectives in tandem. In the given situation, the Hungarian government attempted to synchronize its decisions with the views of the West European and prominent international organizations, this did not mean, however, that contrary views were not expressed either by members of the government or in government circles. As Foreign Minister Géza Jeszenszky—rather unfortunately from the diplomatic point of view—stated publicly, Hungary aims to establish “friendly” relations with Croatia and a “correct” one with Serbia.³⁴

The statement that Hungary did not support the dissolution of Yugoslavia is opposed by Jović, who in his memoirs wrote that the U.S.A. in December 1990 “... asked Hungary to use all forces and with American help destroy the socialist system in Yugoslavia and also destroy the unity of Yugoslavia, and especially to take measures against Serbia.” According to Jović, Americans viewed in Serbia the chief supporter of socialism in Yugoslavia. Therefore the U.S.A. blamed Hungary because Hungary did not get itself into position to influence politicians in Yugoslavia, but it did every effort in this regard.³⁵ Jović supported this by citing the import of weapons by Croatia from Hungary in 1990, which Croatia did illegally, from his point of view, to form its own army.

In January 1991 a discussion took place at a meeting of the Presidency of SFRY.³⁶ At the end of January 1991, Belgrade TV showed a film of Yugoslav counterintelligence services in which the Croatian Minister of Defense, General Martin Špegelj, and Croatian Minister of the Interior Josip Boljkovac were caught talking about the import of 20,000 tommy-guns from Hungary.³⁷ Hungarian historian Imre Szilágyi wrote in his paper that the foreign secretary of the Hungarian government traveled to Belgrade and expressed regret over the “tension created by the issue in the progressing Hungarian-Yugoslav relationship,” and also expressed his

³² Jović: *Zadnji dnevni SFRJ ...*, pp. 447–466 (entry for 14 May 1992).

³³ Imre Szilágyi, “Hungary and the Disintegration of Yugoslavia,” paper presented at Association for the Study of Nationalities, Ninth Annual World Convention, New York, Columbia University, 15–17 April 2004.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Borisav Jović: *Zadnji dnevni SFRJ – odlomki iz dnevnika*. (Ljubljana: Slovenska knjiga, 1996), p. 224 (entry for 10 December 1990).

³⁶ Jović: *Zadnji dnevni SFRJ ...*, p. 237 (entry for 9 January 1991).

³⁷ Jože Pirjevec: *Jugoslavija 1918–1992. Nastanek, razvoj ter razpad Karadjordjevićeve in Titove Jugoslavije*. (Koper: Založbe Lipa, 1995), p. 411.

hope that the dispute could be amicably settled. The Hungarian government insisted that it was prepared to provide guarantees that such incidents would not occur in the future and expressed hope that re-established ties would be characterized by trust. Finally, the government issued a statement: *“The Hungarian government presumes with regard to its relations to Yugoslavia that the Yugoslav Socialist Federal Republic is a federative union of several nations. Yugoslavia’s borders are guaranteed by international documents, its statehood is organic to the European status quo which guarantees peace, security and cooperation on the continent, and Hungary is not interested in the destabilization of Yugoslavia.”*

However, the dispute was far from over, since the Hungarian State Secretary of the Defense Ministry, Ernő Raffay, shortly after the arms delivery affair, asserted that the arms export prevented the intervention by the Yugoslav People’s Army in Croatia. In his reply, the Yugoslav deputy foreign minister pointed out that this statement is a classical example of interference in the country’s internal affairs, challenged the Hungarian government to state its position on the issue, and insisted that the affair was not yet closed. In this context, Slovene Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel presented a detailed description of the considerations (at times contradictory) of Hungarian politicians. Rupel arrived in Hungary on 22 January 1991 and held talks with Prime Minister József Antall and Foreign Minister Jeszenszky. Antall opined that a kind of fault-line runs through the so-called Central European region separating the countries influenced by Western Christianity from those influenced by Byzantine Christianity or Islam, and this fault-line runs through Yugoslavia itself. Antall emphatically praised Slovenia and Croatia as friendly countries and supported the independence aspirations of Slovenia. At the same time, however, he pointed out to the Slovenians that Milošević was holding the half-million (sic!) Hungarians in Serbia as hostages; hence Hungary had to refrain from taking hasty steps.

On the other hand, he emphasized that the question of recognition of Slovenia and Croatia as independent states must be coordinated with the European Community, the Council of Europe, and NATO. To the suggestion that Slovenia would be pleased if Hungary were to be among the first to recognize Slovenia, Antall replied that Hungary will not be the first to do so, adding that Slovenia would not benefit much even if Hungary did it in conjunction with Austria. At that time, nobody in Western Europe thought seriously about the disintegration of Yugoslavia. (Strangely, this meeting was not even mentioned in the Hungarian press).³⁸

Comment [MK1]:

³⁸ Imre Szilágyi, “Hungary and the disintegration of Yugoslavia”..., *ibid.*

Italy, by contrast, remained in an ambivalent position. The Italian foreign minister, Gianni De Michelis, strongly supported a united Yugoslavia. In spring 1991 he said to his Slovene counterparts: “*My dear sirs, in Europe there is no place for new states, and I am sure that you do not want to emigrate to another continent.*”³⁹ He also opposed changing of internal Yugoslav borders. He expressed this standpoint very clearly at a conference of foreign ministers on 10 July 1991, where he also interceded on behalf of a system of minority protection that would be based on international law.⁴⁰ This situation mirrors the special Italian experience: after World War II the German-speaking minority of South Tyrol had to give up its rights to self-determination in exchange for political autonomy within Italy. During the Yugoslav crisis this type of autonomy served as a possible model to solve the Serb problem in the so-called *Krajinas*.⁴¹ This would, in accordance with the political intentions of the Italian foreign minister, also hinder the widening of German influence towards the South-East (through independent Slovenia and Croatia) and protect Italian interests.

France also fought for the further existence of a united Yugoslavia, basing its policy towards Yugoslavia on traditions of French-Serb friendship. From a strategic point of view, Yugoslavia was an important factor in European stability. Keeping together the Yugoslav federation would, in the French view, avoid spreading of separatist and nationalist tendencies in other European regions. On the other hand it would also thwart plans for establishing a new *Mitteleuropa* under German leadership. In an interview in *Le Monde*, French president François Mitterrand said: “*I would like to remind [you]...of the answer of Bismarck to the question of why in 1866 after he won at Sadowa in a battle with Austria-Hungary, he did not divide this monarchy, as happened in 1918. Bismarck’s answer was: ‘Austria-Hungary knows how to handle South Slavs. We [Germans] of course do not.’ Therefore he did not want to change the balance of power in the region ...*”⁴² In French policy also the standpoint developed that the rights and interests of the Serb minority in Croatia were threatened after Croatia declared its independence and they were no longer under the jurisdiction of federal Yugoslavia. Mitterrand said in an interview published in *Le Monde* on 9 February 1993.

A Croatian Serb could feel threatened also in the past but he could feel protected by the federal state. He was a Yugoslav [citizen]. In independent Croatia he would become a Croat [citizen] and—according to his [Croatian Serb] opinion—because

³⁹ Jens Reuter, “Jugoslawien: Versagen der internationalen Gemeinschaft?” *Südosteuropa*, vol. 42, no. 6 (1993), p. 333.

⁴⁰ Michael Libal: *Limits of Persuasion* ..., p. 23.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Le Monde* (13 September 1991), pp. 2, 3.

*there is no guarantee from federal authorities for his minority protection, he must get guarantees for his rights from the other authorities in charge ...*⁴³

The French state was concerned with the question of the status of minorities in future newly established states, especially the rights of the Serb minority in Croatia. Also the pressure of Germany to recognize Slovenia and Croatia proved, from the French point of view, that Germany was protecting those republics.⁴⁴

France on the one hand did not want to get involved in the war; on the other hand it had its own minority problems, especially with separatists in Corsica, Basques, as well as with new immigrant minorities, especially some militant Algerian groups.⁴⁵

Great Britain tried to keep a low profile on the Yugoslav crisis, especially because the U.S.A., its greatest ally, did the same. On the other hand Great Britain also had to fight with centrifugal forces, especially in Wales, North Ireland, and Scotland, which did not always agree with the politics of the central government in London. In spite of the fact that Great Britain in history had intensive contacts with Serbia, it did not want to get involved. It also did not want to take the same side as France, with which it had estranged relations in the past and which was under pressure from Germany because it opposed recognition of Slovenia and Croatia.⁴⁶

Great Britain was, in spite of this, (at least indirectly) involved in the Yugoslav crisis as a member of NATO, the EC, the OSCE, the Western European Union (WEU), and the UN. The former British foreign secretary, Lord Peter Carrington, presided over an EC peace conference on Yugoslavia. British press commented on the attempts of Great Britain to keep Yugoslavia together as “a fight against a German zone of influence” in the Balkans.

The position of the Netherlands towards the Yugoslav crisis is also interesting, especially because the Netherlands presided over the EC in the second half of 1991. Since it was exactly at that point that the armed conflicts started in Yugoslavia, the role of the Netherlands was even more important.⁴⁷

At the beginning of the conflict, Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers and Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek led the policy of keeping Yugoslavia united and of non-recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. Therefore, the German newspaper *Die Welt* described

⁴³ *Le Monde* (9 February 1993), p.2.

⁴⁴ “Deutschland als Schutzmacht?“, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (5 July 1991).

⁴⁵ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle* ..., pp. 96–97.

⁴⁶ Roger Morgan, “Die bilateralen Beziehungen zwischen Großbritannien und Frankreich seit 1945.” In Kastendiek Hans, Rohe Karl and Angelika Volle (Eds.): *Länderbericht Großbritannien. Geschichte – Politik – Wirtschaft – Gesellschaft*. (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 1999), pp. 449–458

⁴⁷ On the role the Netherlands played see Norbert Both, *From Indifference to Entrapment: The Netherlands and the Yugoslav Crisis 1990–1995* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000), 267 pp.

van den Broek as behaving as if “he would be minister of interior of Yugoslavia” and that he tried to show “Croats as aggressors.” According to Peter Zeitler, in the second half of 1991, van den Broek was the greatest opponent of the German initiative for recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. Of course, historical animosities between the Netherlands and Germany played their role.⁴⁸

The Austrian government was cautious about Yugoslavia; its statements had to be in accord with those of the EC because the Austrian government was then concerned about not disturbing Austria’s application for EC membership. The Austrian standpoint towards the Yugoslav crisis was influenced also by the fact that Slovenes and Croats live in Austria as autochthonous minorities (Karel Smolle, an ethnic Slovene from Carinthia and former member of Austrian Parliament was named representative of Prime Minister Peterle’s government) and that there were already then many *Gastarbeiters* from Yugoslavia working in Austria. Also, the Austrian economy was affected by the crisis. Austria was especially afraid of a great influx of refugees.

There was an internal debate within Austrian government, as Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky followed the path of his fellow Socialists in support of a united Yugoslavia, while his foreign minister, Alois Mock, was a leading advocate of recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. Mock also wanted to convince Europe to act; he even tried to convince the international community to intervene militarily. Austrian Chancellor Vranitzky tried to convince Mock to limit his activities on behalf of Slovenia. However, Mock tried to convince the Austrian government to give Slovenia logistic and other help. Austria even gave Slovenia loans with which it could continue its import and export in June and July 1991. Vranitzky did not oppose that; later when the question of international recognition of Slovenia and Croatia was on the table he kept a low profile.⁴⁹

Austria contributed a great deal to recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. Already on 15 August 1990, together with members of the EC, it demanded—because of the brutal behavior of the Serb authorities towards the Albanians of Kosovo—discussion of this issue within the OSCE. On 10 October 1990 Vranitzky confirmed in a conversation with then Vice-president of the Presidency of SFRY Stipe Mesić that Austria preferred the non-interference of other states in Yugoslav internal affairs. In March 1991, on the occasion of a meeting with Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Marković, he emphasized that only the Yugoslav government

⁴⁸ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, 100; Compare also: *Die Niederlande und Deutschland. Nachbarn in Europa*. (Hannover: Niedersächsische Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1992).

⁴⁹ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 109.

was the official partner for Austria. In spite of that, the Austrian government already had contacts with the governments of the Republics of Slovenia and Croatia. On 12 March Vranitzky emphasized that Austria was ready to cooperate with the Yugoslav republics, although it would remain in contact with the federal government. In March 1991 Austria again tried to get the OSCE to intervene.

Public opinion was an important factor in the formation of the Austrian policy leaning in favor of Slovenian and Croatian demands for independence. On 9 July 1991 Austrian Chancellor Vranitzky invited some representatives of Western Social-Democratic parties to Vienna in order to exchange views on the Yugoslav crisis. The leader of the German Socialists, Bjoern Engholm, demanded recognition of Slovenia and Croatia as a result “of the end of the negotiations and not at the beginning of negotiations.” The leader of the Italian Socialists, Bettino Craxi, was afraid of a “chain reaction;” in spite of that he demanded a new order on the territory of Yugoslavia and he also demanded recognition of the republics. The president of PASOK (Greek Socialists), Carolos Papoulias, warned “against threatening of security in the Mediterranean;” in his words the situation was “very explosive.” In spite of the fact that Western European Social-Democratic parties came to a conclusion that they did not have a unified position towards the Yugoslav crisis, most of them still demanded the principles of self-determination for the Yugoslav nations. And that in spite of the fact that they still wanted somehow to keep Yugoslavia together. They all demanded a peaceful solution of the crisis on the basis of negotiations.⁵⁰

The Norwegian prime minister, a Socialist, Groo Brutland, also supported a united Yugoslavia.⁵¹ In fact, a majority of the members of the international community were convinced that a united Yugoslavia should be preserved in order to play a role in maintaining a military and geopolitical balance in Europe.⁵²

During that period, in spite of the reluctance of the U.S. administration, the U.S. Congress and the U.S. embassy in Yugoslavia continued to try to influence the Yugoslav scene. The Nickles Amendment, which threatened a cutoff of economic aid by 5 May 1991 if relations between Serbia and the Albanian population of Kosovo did not improve, was introduced in the U.S. Congress.⁵³

⁵⁰ Erklärung des Parteivorsitzendentreffens zu Jugoslawien vom 9. Juli 1991, published in: Presseservice SPD 251/91, 10 July 1991; Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 109.

⁵¹ Lojze Peterle: *Z nasmehom zgodovine*. (Celje, Celovec, Gorica: Mohorjeva družba, 2004), p. 183.

⁵² Pirjevec: *Jugoslovanske vojne 1991–2001 ...*, p. 41.

⁵³ Marc Weller, “The International Response to the Dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia,” *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 86 (July 1992), pp. 570–571; *New York Times*, 19 May 1991, p. A10.

During the next years the Yugoslav crisis—especially the crisis in Kosovo—brought quite a few debates in both chambers of the U.S. Congress.⁵⁴ Representatives and senators were active in introducing amendments to the foreign aid bills and special resolutions regarding critical conditions in Yugoslavia. Some of them wanted to force Milošević to solve the Kosovo question by giving democratic rights to both major ethnic groups. In the years 1985–1995, U.S. Congresswoman Helen Delich-Bentley (R–Maryland), of Serb descent, made an important contribution to lobbying for the “Serb Truth.”⁵⁵ Also, the support of other members of Congress from districts where large numbers of the electorate were of Serb descent was important. Those Congress members were almost always in a bind, however, since their constituencies usually included not only Serb-Americans, but also Croat-, Slovene-, and Albanian-Americans. Among those whom *American Srbobran*, an organ of Serb National Federation – the largest Serb ethnic fraternal organization in the U.S. - identified as “good friends of the Serbs” were Lee Hamilton (D-IN), Dante Fascell (D-FL), Jim Moody (D-WI), and Gus Yatron (D-PA, who as an Orthodox Greek-American was virtually predestined to be “pro-Serb”).⁵⁶ Hamilton, who was chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, was the one who received the largest re-election campaign contributions from the Serb- and Greek-American communities, followed by Delich-Bentley and others.⁵⁷ Representative Bentley, with the help of the others, succeeded in preventing passage of numerous resolutions and bills in Congress that would harm Serb interests. The U.S. Congress continued its support for Slovenia and Croatia, with an amendment to the Direct Aid to Democracies Act (the Dole Bill) offered by Rep. Dana Rohrbacher that sought to separate Slovenia and Croatia from Yugoslavia so that penalties for human rights violations in Kosovo would not apply to these republics and they could be sent aid, bypassing the Yugoslav government. In spite of the above-mentioned attempts of some members of the U.S. Congress, the Bush, Sr., Administration until 1992 tried to avoid playing any important role in solving the Yugoslav crisis. Bush, Sr., was afraid that any role his administration would play would influence the outcome of the U.S. presidential election in November. The U.S.A., therefore, opposed recognition of the Yugoslav republics. Also the U.S.A. was afraid that the Yugoslav crisis would influence the very complicated internal political situation in the Soviet Union. On the

⁵⁴ For example in June 1992 Senate adopted special resolution calling for U.S. involvement in Bosnia. See: *New York Times*, 11 June 1992, p. A6.

⁵⁵ Even James Baker remembered her numerous resolutions in the House of Representatives on behalf of the Serbs in interview with Matjaž Klemenčič on 2 February, 2005.

⁵⁶ *American Srbobran*, (15 August 1990), p. 3.

⁵⁷ Paul Hockenos: *Homeland Calling. Exile Patriotism and the Balkan Wars* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 145–146.

other hand, in the U.S.A., according to Zeitler, there was no special interest in the Yugoslav crisis, even in the regions where Serb and Croat immigrants and their descendants lived.⁵⁸ Klemenčič has written on this in another paper; there were many activities for and against recognition of Slovenia and Croatia by all ethnic groups from former Yugoslavia in the U.S.A.⁵⁹

The U.S.A. did not have special economic interests in Yugoslavia. Annual U.S. aid was \$5 million; there was almost no trade in weapons. The U.S.A. also did not have any mandate to intervene in this faraway region. And so at the OSCE conference in January 1991 they opposed any military intervention.⁶⁰

The U.S.A. supported democratic processes in Yugoslavia but not at the expense of unity. On 18 June 1991 Secretary of State James Baker, at the Berlin Aspen Institute, demanded that members of the OSCE and the U.S.A. do everything they could to preserve the unity of states of Eastern Europe. According to the New York Times Secretary Baker said: “A way has to be found to balance the increasing demands of individuals in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to express their long suppressed ethnic and national identities and the demands on increasingly economically interdependent world, which requires integration with multinational and supranational economic institutions.”⁶¹ After the conference of foreign ministers of OSCE, on 21 June—four days before the Croatian and Slovene declarations of independence—Baker visited Belgrade. At first Yugoslavia was not on his itinerary. He wanted to visit Albania and as high ranking Administration official said to a New York Times reporter secretary Baker added Yugoslavia to his itinerary just a few days before his departure from the USA, because a visit to Albania without a stop in Yugoslavia would be interpreted as a snub in Belgrade.⁶² Baker did not know too much about Yugoslavia.⁶³ Baker actually did not have any plan and had few ideas to offer on Yugoslavia except to suggest that the U.S. wanted a united Yugoslavia; but not only that: the U.S. wanted to see it democratic as well. He wanted to tell the leaders of Yugoslavia’s republics that they should continue to negotiate. He called for the devolution of additional authority, responsibility, and sovereignty

⁵⁸ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (19 December 1991), p.2.

⁵⁹ Klemenčič, “The Relationship of the Yugoslav Diaspora to the Dissolution of the Former Yugoslavia,” the immigrants in the USA sent many petitions to the US politicians in which they demanded the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. See for example Matjaž Klemenčič, Milica Trebše- Štolfa eds.: *Viri o demokratizaciji in osamosvojitvi Slovenije. IV. Del: Slovenci v zamejstvu in po svetu ter mednarodno priznanje Slovenije*, (=Sources on Democratization and Independence of Slovenia. Part IV: Slovenes in neighboring countries and International Recognition of Slovenia). Viri 20, in print.

⁶⁰ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (11 March 1991), p.3.

⁶¹ *New York Times*, (19 June 1991), p. A13

⁶² *New York Times*, (17 June 1991), p. A3

⁶³ Silber and Little: *Yugoslavia. A Death of a Nation...*, pp. 150-152: conversation with Lojze Peterle on June 13, 2004; Baker admitted that also in his interview with Matjaž Klemenčič on February 2, 2005.

to the republics of Yugoslavia,⁶⁴ at the same time he expressed continued US support for a united Yugoslavia by promising Milošević that the United States would not recognize the independence of either Slovenia or Croatia. Regardless of the outcome, Baker expressed the expectation that the crisis would be resolved peacefully, even though domestic political considerations prevented the Bush administration from backing this warning with the threat of force. Hence, when Milošević asked what the US would do if Belgrade resorted to a military solution, Baker merely stated that it would be ostracized by the international community.⁶⁵

Baker reported on his Yugoslavia visit to President Bush, Sr., as he wrote in his memories:

I argued strongly against unilateral steps that would preempt a negotiating process, and basically sought to introduce a heavy dose of reality into the unreal political climate in Yugoslavia. Marković was very pleased with this message and the thrust of the visit. Frankly I'm dubious the effect.' I felt that way because of the insane psychology of many meetings; the leaders seemed to be sleep-walking into a car wreck, and no matter how loud you yelled—or in the case of Milošević, practically slapped them in the face—they just kept on going.

I told the President that we'd need to work with the Europeans to maintain a collective non-recognition policy against any republic that unilaterally declared independence, as a lever to moderate behavior. 'It is the practical steps that begin to implement independence (e.g., setting up custom posts, etc.) that will quickly produce disintegration and warfare. (We'll also want to continue to persuade Marković to exercise restraint, particularly with regard to the use of the military in response to these declarations.)'

I concluded my report pessimistically: 'my gut feeling is that we won't produce a serious dialogue on the future of Yugoslavia until all parties have a greater sense of urgency and danger. We may not be able to impart that from the outside, but we and others should continue to push.'⁶⁶

Baker differed between independence proclamations of Slovenia and Croatia on the one hand and Bosnia and Macedonia on the other. Lawrence Eagleburger wrote later in his comments to a memo of Tom Niles, who was then the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, on options for recognition of post-Yugoslav republics: "... *How could we recognize Croatia and Slovenia, which had pursued independence unilaterally and in violation of Helsinki principles, and not recognize Skopje and Sarajevo, which had done so in a peaceful and democratic manner? Moreover, not recognizing Bosnia and Macedonia, he noted "could create real instability, which less than mature players in Serbia and Greece might decide to exploit."*⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Quoted in Robert L. Hutchings: *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War: An Insider's Account of US Policy in Europe 1989–1992* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 311.

⁶⁵ *New York Times*, (22 June 1991), p. A1, A4.

⁶⁶ James A. Baker III: *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace 1989–1992* (New York: G. Putnam's Sons, 1995), p. 483.

⁶⁷ Baker: *The Politics of Diplomacy* ..., p. 640.

While interpretations of Baker's visit have varied, Zdravko Tomac probably spoke for many Croats when he wrote that, in his view "*James Baker ... actively encouraged the federal government, Serbia and the Yugoslav Federal Army. By insisting on the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, he agreed with Milošević's policy and endorsed the JNA's threat to Slovenia.*"⁶⁸ Then Slovenian Prime Minister Lojze Peterle emphasized in his memoirs that Baker insisted that Yugoslavia ought to stay together, but not for any price; i.e. it should be democratic.⁶⁹

The JNA did, to be sure, favor the use of force to crush Slovenia's bid for independence, but Milošević had decided months earlier that "Slovenia should be left in peace."⁷⁰ Baker compared Slovenia and Croatia to "teenage girls whose hormones got wild."⁷¹ Slovene politicians tried to tell Baker that it was far too late to call off the transition to independence, but Baker did not even want to listen.⁷²

Baker then declared his open support for the compromise constitutional formula on asymmetric confederation within a federation, put forth June 6 at the sixth Summit of Six meeting outside Sarajevo by President Alija Izetbegović of BiH and President Kiro Gligorov of Macedonia.⁷³ This proposal failed because of a complete failure of the Yugoslav economic and political system. Some blame interethnic conflict,⁷⁴ while the others, according to our team member Marko Hoare, blame different national projects and state policies pursued by the leaders of the various Yugoslav republics and nationalities.

International organizations and their working bodies, like OSCE, EC, European Parliament, NATO, the UN, etc., also tried to deal with the Yugoslav crisis. The positions of individual members of these bodies differed. Often they mirrored the official policy of their states or their homeland political parties; individual members of these international organizations or their working bodies sometimes even represented their own opinions. In spite of all that, until the beginning of military clashes in Yugoslavia, the consensus of these international organizations and their working bodies was that Yugoslavia should keep its territorial integrity but it should become a democracy.

The EC foreign ministers on 18 December 1990 demanded respect of human rights and democratic principles in Yugoslavia. At the same time they demanded also the territorial

⁶⁸ Tomac: *The Struggle for the Croatian State ...*, p. 126.

⁶⁹ Peterle: *Z nasmehom zgodovine ...*, p. 167.

⁷⁰ Borislav Jović: *Poslednji dani SFRJ – izvodi iz dnevnika* (Beograd: Politika, 1995), p. 281

⁷¹ Baker: *The Politics of Diplomacy ...*, pp. 481–482.

⁷² Kučan, in interview with Sabrina P. Ramet, Ljubljana, 6 September 1999, quoted in the manuscript of the forthcoming book by Sabrina Ramet, "Three Yugoslavias."

⁷³ "Platform Concerning the Future of the Yugoslav Community," *Yugoslav Survey*, vol. 32, no. 2 (1991), pp. 39–44; Silber and Little: *Yugoslavia. A Death of a Nation ...*, p. 148.

⁷⁴ Božo Repe, "10 let samostojne Slovenije (4): Mučno in boleče ločevanje siamskih dvojčkov" *Delo* (23 June 2001), p. 12.

integrity and unity of Yugoslavia and also respect of the interests of the republics. Already on 14 February 1991, Slovene Prime Minister Peterle met with President of the European Parliament Enrique Baron and member of the European Commission Abel Juan Matutes and made them acquainted with Slovene attempts to achieve independence and with the Slovenian wish to become a full member of the EC.⁷⁵ On 4 April 1991 the EC “troika” foreign ministers of Luxembourg (Poos), Netherlands (van den Broek), and Italy (de Michelis) visited Belgrade, where they met Marković and Lončar and expressed the anxiety of the EC about the events in Yugoslavia; on this occasion they did not want to meet with representatives of Croatia and Slovenia.⁷⁶

At their 9 April 1991 meeting, presidents and prime ministers of EC member states again demanded that Yugoslav territorial integrity be preserved. This was the position of the EC for the next few months. Prime Minister of Luxembourg Jacques Santer even declared that if Yugoslavia preserved territorial integrity, it could hope for Associate Membership in the EC. EC Commission President Jacques Delors and Santer then even visited Belgrade to explain this standpoint to representatives of the federal government as well as all six republics.⁷⁷ Before departing for Belgrade they both emphasized that the EC did not want to interfere in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia and that it did not accept the role of intermediate between the opposing sides. Marković tried to calm down Santer and Delors by a statement that the situation in Yugoslavia is complicated but not dramatic. Santer stated also that Yugoslavia would not get the status of Associate Member of EC until it solved its internal problems.⁷⁸ During the visit of Santer and Delors to Belgrade, member states of the EC again declared their wish to keep a united Yugoslavia. Of course that unified support is not surprising because at that time eight foreign ministers of EC member states belonged to Socialists or Social-Democrats, i.e., the parties which traditionally supported the unity of Yugoslavia.

In addition to promises about Associated membership, EC tried to keep Yugoslav territorial integrity also by offering credits. EC President Jacques Delors and Luxembourg Prime Minister Jacques Santer visited Belgrade on 29–30 May 1991 in order to make a commitment to the territorial integrity and international borders of Yugoslavia. The week before, and the very day after Croats voted for independence, the EC had made the Yugoslav-EC association agreement contingent on the country remaining united. Delors also

⁷⁵ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (15 February 1991); Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle bei der völkerrechtlichen Anerkennung ...*, p. 124.

⁷⁶ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (5 April 1991); *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (15 April 1991); Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle bei der völkerrechtlichen Anerkennung ...*, p. 124.

⁷⁷ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (14 May 1991); Zeitler: *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Archiv der Gegenwart (Zeitschrift)*, 1. July 1991, p. 35795; Zeitler: *Ibid.*

promised to request \$4.5 billion in aid from the EC in support of the Yugoslav commitment to political reform.⁷⁹

A day before Slovenia and Croatia declared independence, on 24 June 1991, a third financial protocol was approved with which the EC gave Yugoslavia 1.5 billion German Marks in loans. At the same time the European Investment Bank also assured that it would give Yugoslavia another loan of 1.5 billion German Marks.⁸⁰ Twelve EC foreign ministers simultaneously declared that they did not support Slovenian and Croatian endeavors to become independent and that they anxiously awaited further development of events in Yugoslavia.

The West tried to resolve the Yugoslav crisis through a combination of economic and political pressure, while the Soviet Union gave Marković's government only oil and weapons. The West did not oppose when the Soviet Union sold arms to the JNA, i.e., twenty Mig-29 airplanes, rocket weapons, radar equipment, etc.⁸¹ Gorbachev and the Soviet generals were also determined to keep Yugoslavia united. They were aware that the Slovenian and Croatian "example" could be followed by numerous nations in the wide region from Central Europe to the Bering Sea. European and U.S. politicians, therefore, did not hide that they were worried about "the echoes" of the Yugoslav crisis in the Soviet Union.⁸²

The OSCE got actively involved in the Yugoslav crisis also. Only a few days before the Slovene and Croatian declarations of independence, a meeting of foreign ministers of OSCE took place on 19 and 20 June in Berlin. This meeting had been planned earlier, at a Paris meeting in November 1990. At the Berlin meeting, the foreign ministers accepted "mechanisms of fast interventions" in case critical circumstances developed that would endanger common security.⁸³ They devoted part of the meeting to the crisis in Yugoslavia. Yugoslav Foreign Minister Budimir Lončar warned members of the conference that dissolution of Yugoslavia would destabilize other parts of Europe also. Lončar warned that if Yugoslavia disintegrated, new states would be established "*... which will permanently fight each other and will be shaken by ethnic rivalries. All these states will not be able to survive in democratic Europe ... These states will represent a ticking bomb in the heart of Europe, if they would not cause a chain reaction in the continent, where there are 46 potential and dangerous ethnic conflicts possible in the waiting ... Therefore it would be necessary to keep*

⁷⁹ *Financial Times*, (23 May 1991), p. 1.

⁸⁰ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (15 April 1991); Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 125.

⁸¹ Hans-Joachim Hoppe, "Moscow and the Conflict in Former Yugoslavia," *Aussenpolitik*, vol. 43, no. 3 (1997), p. 269.

⁸² Zdravko Tomac: *The Struggle for the Croatian State: Through Hell to Diplomacy* (Zagreb: Profikon, 1993), p. 449

⁸³ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle bei der völkerrechtlichen Anerkennung ...*, p. 116; Jonathan Eyal: *Europe and Yugoslavia: Lessons from a Failure*. Whitehall Paper no. 19. (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1993), p. 15.

*the integrity of the state ...*⁸⁴ All participants in the conference expressed their interest in keeping Yugoslavia united, but democratic and federative.⁸⁵ This was mirrored in many drafts of a final statement on the Yugoslav situation. One such statement, prepared by then president of the EC Council of Foreign Ministers Jacques Poos, was not accepted at the end. The most interesting part of this statement was the opinion of Poos that “it is a misfortune of the Yugoslav nations that they are too small to gain independence.”⁸⁶ The most interesting fact regarding this part of his draft is the fact that the area of Luxembourg—from which Poos came—is eight times smaller than Slovenia and has one-fifth its population.

In a final statement, participants in the conference declared their support for unity and the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia while at the same time supporting democratic development of Yugoslav society, economic reforms, and observance of human rights in all parts of Yugoslavia, including minority rights. They demanded a peaceful solution of the Yugoslav crisis and asked all sides to continue the dialogue.⁸⁷

During the meeting OSCE also held intensive discussions among the foreign ministers of Germany (Genscher), the U.S.A. (Baker), the Soviet Union (Bessmertnych), and Yugoslavia (Lončar). In their separate statements they declared that it was up to the nations of Yugoslavia to decide on its future. Genscher also mentioned that the right of secession, included in the Yugoslav constitution of 1974, should be respected.⁸⁸

The European Parliament devoted much of its time to the Yugoslav crisis. The Greens in the European Parliament sharply criticized the situation in Yugoslavia and especially the war in Slovenia and expressed their criticisms in a letter to van den Broek and Delors.⁸⁹

At the beginning of July 1991, under the leadership of Belgian Prime Minister Wilfried Martens, a meeting of the presidency of the European People’s Party took place. At this meeting they passed a resolution on the situation in Yugoslavia and condemned the attack of the JNA on Slovenia. It is important that this resolution contained a statement “*that Slovenes and Croats ... when they declared independence of their states acted in accordance with their right of self-determination as well as with the wishes of their nation.*” At the same time they demanded that the international community recognize Slovenia and Croatia as independent

⁸⁴ Quoted in Ivanković Nenad: *Bonn. Die zweite kroatische Front*. (Gießen: Justus-Liebig-Universität, 1996), p. 33; Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle...*, p. 116.

⁸⁵ Hans-Dietrich Genscher: *Erinnerungen*. (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1995), p. 934; Zeitler: *Ibid*.

⁸⁶ Quoted in Ivanković: *Bonn. Die zweite kroatische Front ...*, p. 37.

⁸⁷ Auswärtiges Amt der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: *20 Jahre KSZE, 1973–1993. Eine Dokumentation*, 2. Aufgabe, Köln 1993, p. 237.

⁸⁸ Compare, Genscher: *Erinnerungen ...*, pp. 934–395; Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, pp. 116–117.

⁸⁹ Europäisches Parlament, Generaldirektion Information und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit. Zentrale Presseabteilung, No. PE 149.559/DE, p. 8, as well No. PE 149.560/DE, p. 2; Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 150.

states if there was not a peaceful solution to the problem within three months.⁹⁰ Already on 3 July 1991 a CDU/CSU faction in the European Parliament prepared a press release in which it expressed solidarity with the Slovene and Croatian nations and their freely elected governments and at the same time demanded recognition of their independence from the German government, the Council of Ministers of the EC, and from the European Commission.⁹¹

Special support to the Croatian and Slovene independence was also given by the Pan-European Union and especially the son of the last Austrian Emperor, Otto von Habsburg.⁹² He expressed his support for the right of self-determination for Slovenes, Croats, Kosovo Albanians, and other nations of Yugoslavia in different statements from 1988 onwards. He made it possible for Prof. Mate Meštrović of Farleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey, president of the Croatian National Congress to speak in the European Parliament in October 1988, where Meštrović, among other things, emphasized that “*Milošević will awake wild masses of Serbian people; therefore the Croatian National Congress is afraid that a catastrophe of such proportions is nearing, the like of which today’s generation in Europe has not seen.*”⁹³

Otto von Habsburg and Karl von Habsburg visited Zagreb for the first time on 21 June 1990, where they talked to Croatian President Franjo Tuđman. In a speech to the Croatian PEN Club, Otto von Habsburg demanded an independent Croatia in a politically unified Europe.⁹⁴

In November 1990 Otto von Habsburg enabled the president of the Slovene Parliament, France Bučar, and the president of the Croatian Parliament, Žarko Domjan, to speak to the European Parliament in Strasbourg. Bučar invited Otto von Habsburg to visit Slovenia. The media in Slovenia especially emphasized his statement that “*Slovenia has to return to the map of Europe,*” and also his warnings against possible threats of violence. Others who received Otto von Habsburg included the president of the Slovenian Presidency, Milan Kučan, and Archbishop Alojzij Šuštar.⁹⁵

In February 1991 came to a sharp discussion between Otto von Habsburg and the presiding head of the European Council of Foreign Ministers, Poos, who did not react

⁹⁰ Presseerklärung No. 61/91 vom 04. Juli 1991 der CDU/CSU, deutsche Gruppe in der Fraktion der europäischen Volkspartei (Christlich Demokratische Fraktion) des Europäische Parlaments.

⁹¹ Compare, Presseerklärung No. 60/91 vom 03. Juli 1991 der CDU/CSU, deutsche Gruppe in der Fraktion der europäischen Volkspartei (Christlich Demokratische Fraktion) des Europäische Parlaments.

⁹² Otto von Habsburg: *Zurück zur Mitte*. (Wien und München: Amalthea, 1991), p. 70.

⁹³ Stephan Baier and Eva Demmerle: *Otto von Habsburg. Die Biografie*. (Wien: Amalthea, 2002), p. 450.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

positively to the demands of the nations of Yugoslavia for self-determination. Otto von Habsburg stated:

*Representatives of the EC stated to the representatives of individual republics that they would cease any technical help if the republics declared independence. This was the standpoint of the Greeks, who practiced unconditional centralism in their country and who themselves oppressed minorities and who did not want at all to talk about self-determination of nations. It is normal that—with the exception of Italian social-democrats—all socialists supported centralism; but I think that we have to support self-determination of nations and we have to give that right also to Croats and Slovenes.*⁹⁶

NATO and the UN in this period did not give special attention to the crisis in Yugoslavia. Both organizations limited their reactions to following the situation in Yugoslavia and issuing statements that the crisis could destabilize the region.

We can easily say that the international community did not fully appreciate either the Slovenes' and Croats' fear of Serbian supremacy or their desire to embrace a European identity in place of the Balkan one that they had acquired with the creation of the first Yugoslavia (1918) and which had become for them a symbol of backwardness. Slovenia was still little known in 1991. Even those who were better acquainted with the situation agreed with U.S. Ambassador Zimmermann, who reproached Slovenia for displaying egoistic nationalism “à la Greta Garbo” and insensibility towards foreseen consequences.⁹⁷

The only states that knew the problems of Yugoslavia more deeply were Austria and Germany, because of their numerous researchers who studied regional history, geography, etc., and because of their historic relations with the Habsburg South Slavs. As a result, the media in those states reported favorably on Slovene and Croat plans for independence.⁹⁸ In the view of the international community, with Milošević and his army in power, Yugoslavia could retain unity, but it could not become a democratic state. As an excuse for retaining the “status quo,” it was enough to state that Croats and Slovenes, when they wanted independence, were sick with an “anarchistic ethno-national illness,” which meant that it had no democratic value.⁹⁹ This was the thinking of most of the diplomats stationed in Belgrade. Of them, Viktor Meier, correspondent of the German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine*

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 450–451.

⁹⁷ Pirjevec, *Jugoslovanske vojne 1991–2001* ..., p. 42; Warren Zimmermann, “The Last Ambassador: A Memoir of the Collapse of Yugoslavia,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 74, no. 2 (March–April 1995), pp. 7, 12.

⁹⁸ Gow: *Triumph of the Lack of Will* ..., p. 267; Beverly Crawford, “Explaining Defection from International Cooperation: Germany’s Unilateral Recognition of Croatia,” *World Politics*, vol. 48, no. 5 (July 1996), p. 493.

⁹⁹ Martin Rosenfeldt, “Deutschlands und Frankreichs Jugoslawienpolitik in Rahmen der Europäischen Gemeinschaft (1991–1993),” *Südoosteuropa*, vol. 42, no. 11–12 (1993), p. 624.

Zeitung said that “he never had seen such a mixture ... of false assessments, mental laziness, and superficiality.”¹⁰⁰

Ross A Johnson wrote in one of his RAND reports: “There should be no misunderstanding: Serbia – not Croatia, not Slovenia – was the primary arsonist of the Yugoslav conflagration. To be sure, the ensuing wars of Yugoslav succession involved excesses on all sides. But the proximate cause of the breakup of Yugoslavia was the effort of the Serbian regime under Milosevic to seize control of all-Yugoslav financial and economic assets, to utilize the YPA to defend exclusively Serbian interests, and (in the words of Dobrica Cosic) to expand Serbian rule to “wherever there are Serbian people, wherever there are Serbian homes and fields.”¹⁰¹

By mid-1990, when it had become clear to Milosevic that he could not control all of Yugoslavia, his lieutenants were openly disavowing the SFRY. As the Milosevic-appointed director of Radio Television Belgrade told his staff at that time, “Nothing will come of Yugoslavia ... Serbia does not need Yugoslavia.”¹⁰²

The Explosion of War (Summer 1991)

Slovene politicians negotiated with the federal government for peaceful separation from the rest of the Yugoslav republics, but without success. Four days after U.S. Secretary of State Baker’s visit (on June 25), Croatia and Slovenia carried through with their intent to declare independence. This act was followed by an attack of the JNA on Slovenia, with the goal to overthrow the Slovene pro-independence government and gain control over the territory, especially over the borders with Austria and Italy. The JNA was trapped at barricades that the Slovene Territorial Defense constructed out of buses and trucks. During the Slovenian “Ten-Day War,” the JNA lost the international public relations campaign. Hans Dietrich Genscher, Germany’s foreign minister, accused the JNA of “running amok” in Slovenia. Evidence of how much Germans were interested in solving the conflict is the visit of Genscher, who accepted the invitation of Slovene foreign minister Dimitrij Rupel to come to Slovenia. At 2 July he landed at Klagenfurt Airport in nearby Carinthia, with the intention of driving into Slovenia. But, because of the fighting he could not enter Slovenia. Instead Slovene President

¹⁰⁰ Pirjevec: *Jugoslavanske vojne 1991–2001* ..., p. 43.

¹⁰¹ Ivan Ivekovic, “State Development and the Political Economy of International Relations: The Asymmetrical Client-State in the Balkans and Transcaucasia,” in Stefano Bianchini and Robert Craig Nation, editors, *The Yugoslav Conflict and its Implications for International Relations*, Ravenna, Longo Editore, 1998), pp. 203.

¹⁰² Rade Veljanovski [former chief editor of Belgrade Radio and Television], “Turning the Electronic Media Around,” in Nebojsa Popov, *Srpska strana rata*, Belgrade, Republica, 1996, republished in English translation as *The Road to War in Serbia*, Budapest, Central European Press, 2000, p.573; A. Ross Johnson, “Security and Insecurity in the Balkans,”

Kučan and Minister Rupel discussed the issues with Genscher in Klagenfurt. The result was the ongoing support of Genscher for the Slovene cause throughout the conflict.¹⁰³

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd joined the fray. He told the British Parliament that the JNA had hastened the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Italy said it would “act in solidarity” (whatever that meant) with Croatia and Slovenia, unless the JNA respected the cease-fire. In the U.S.A., the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Claiborne Pell (D-RI), urged President Bush to support Slovene and Croatian independence if Yugoslavia’s “renegade army does not cease its wanton aggression.”¹⁰⁴

In spite of these calls, the Bush, Sr., administration limited itself only to criticizing the JNA’s actions. As the world’s sole remaining superpower, the U.S.A. frowned on secessionism as a threat to the hard-won status quo. Its leaders also retained the Wilsonian preference for following Balkan violence from as far away as possible. Hence, whereas there were discussions among different desks of the Departments of State and Defense, as there had been during the Wilson administration about different options for the region,¹⁰⁵ the conventional wisdom was that Europe—that is, the EC—should lead attempts to resolve the Yugoslav crisis. Ominously, some specialists in European affairs in the State Department were already expressing doubts about whether the EC could discharge this role successfully, fearful as they were that the EC was already too dependent on the U.S.¹⁰⁶

The EC, which tried for a long time to play a more significant and independent role from the U.S. in foreign policy in general, accepted the opportunity to mediate in the Yugoslav crisis. EC politicians did not care too much whether they were qualified to deal with so complicated a crisis.¹⁰⁷ Already on 27 June Genscher asked the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to start the procedures that its member states had accepted a week before in Berlin. The same demand was issued also at the meeting of the presidents of the governments and states of EC members in Vianden, Luxembourg. Austria, Italy, and Norway demanded the next day from Yugoslavia that it “explain the unusual operations of the JNA in Slovenia.” In accordance with the mechanisms designed for “extraordinary circumstances,” on Genscher’s demand the OSCE Committee of Senior Officials met on 3

¹⁰³ Hans-Dietrich Genscher: *Erinnerungen*, p. 939; Rupel: *Skrivnost države*., pp. 154–155.

¹⁰⁴ Silber and Little: *Yugoslavia. A Death of a Nation* ..., p. 164.

¹⁰⁵ Uroš Lipušček in his book *Ave Wilson: ZDA in prekranje Slovenije v Versaillesu 1919–1920*. (Ljubljana: Sophia, 2003) 395 pp. successfully proved that there was an option for smaller states in the region of former Yugoslavia on the table of U.S. Department of State analysts after World War I.

¹⁰⁶ Pirjevec: *Jugoslovanske vojne 1991–2001* ..., pp. 53–54.

¹⁰⁷ Rosalyn Higgins, “The New United Nations and Former Yugoslavia,” *International Affairs*, vol. 63, no. 3 (July 1993), p. 473.

and 4 July 1991 and asked the fighting sides in Yugoslavia to stop the fighting and offered to send a group of observers.¹⁰⁸

Yugoslav diplomacy tried to prevent internationalization of the problem, with the support of the Soviet Union. The most important of the documents accepted by the meeting was a suggestion for a negotiating mission of OSCE to Yugoslavia that would prepare an international conference on Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav delegation accepted the proposal but succeeded in inserting into it: "... if and when it is accepted by Yugoslavia." This was the "last" attempt of the OSCE to solve the Yugoslav crisis; its activities were hampered by the fact that it operated on consensus. The OSCE therefore left the EC to deal with the Yugoslav crisis. This decision was made especially in light of Soviet demands; the Soviet Union was afraid of any external intervention in the Baltic republics.¹⁰⁹

In July 1991, the EC sent mediators to Yugoslavia, the foreign ministers of the sitting EC "troika" (representing the state holding the presidency, his predecessor, and his successor). The EC troika made three visits to Yugoslavia, resulting in a cease-fire between the Slovene Territorial Defense Force and the JNA and, by 7 and 8 July, had convened a conference at Brioni for the purpose of resolving the crisis. The Brioni Accord, which was sponsored by the EC, prevented further air raids or other military activity by the JNA on Slovene territory. Mediators from the EC quickly negotiated the agreement between Slovenia and the JNA because the EC did not want war on its borders, and they still hoped to prevent the war. They also still hoped that Slovenia might act as a democratizing force in Yugoslavia, but they soon realized that this scenario was not possible. Thus Slovenia has these circumstances to thank for emerging victorious after the short war for its independence, and, economically speaking, it was fortunately not a completely ruined state, as is the case with Croatia and Bosnia.¹¹⁰ After its defeat, the JNA decided to retreat from Slovenia with all its equipment and machinery. The Brioni Accord, in effect, recognized the Slovene military victory and also made Slovenia and Croatia subject, de facto, to international law and cleared the way for the eventual recognition of their statehood.¹¹¹ With a mandate from the CSCE to deploy thirty to fifty observers, named the "ice-cream men" by Yugoslavs for the white uniforms they chose, the EC began its first-ever effort at peacekeeping.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Archiv der Gegenwart (Zeitschrift), 18 July 1991, 35855; Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, pp. 116–117.

¹⁰⁹ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle bei der völkerrechtlichen Anerkennung ...*, pp. 119–120

¹¹⁰ Rupel: *Skrivnost države ...*, pp. 158–182.

¹¹¹ Matjaž Klemenčič, "Slovenia at the Crossroads of the Nineties: From the First Multiparty Elections and the Declaration of Independence to Membership in the Council of Europe," *Slovene Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1 (1992 — published in 1994), p. 11.

¹¹² Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy ...*, p. 168.

Parallel to the withdrawal of the Yugoslav army from Slovenia, the armed conflict in Croatia—where most of the troops retreated from Slovenia—widened. While the war in Croatia intensified, the EC's General Council met in Brussels on 25 July 1991. Genscher, then German foreign minister, recalled later that the session "... *appealed to the Collective Presidency in Belgrade to encourage an immediate truce and to begin negotiations on the future of Yugoslavia's peoples ... (and) reaffirmed our earlier statement that any change of internal and external borders of the country achieved by force was unacceptable.*"¹¹³ The presidency was already then completely unable to function and could not do anything.

The August putsch in the Soviet Union was welcomed in Belgrade, for two reasons: (1) for the roughly 10 days that the putsch lasted, Western attention was almost totally diverted to Moscow – and hence, not on developments on the ground in Croatia, and (2) Milošević felt ideologically comfortable with the putschists, because, both were communists and because they were markedly less pro-Western and hence, he calculated, more likely to assist his campaign in Croatia. Once the putsch failed, the U.S. State Department signaled a reorientation in American policy by issuing a statement in mid-October supporting the principle of (national) self-determination,¹¹⁴ but it took some time before the U. S. policy of non-recognition changed. The fact that the attempted putsch in Moscow in August failed made the leadership in Belgrade even more determined to continue with their military operations. So in the second half of August, the JNA intensified its attacks on Croatia.

The foreign ministers of the EC, who were facing what they regarded as Serb aggression in Croatia, declared in an extraordinary meeting in Brussels on 27 and 28 August 1991 that they would not accept and recognize the border changes that were achieved through violence.¹¹⁵

The Changes in International Public Opinion on Independence of Slovenia and Croatia

After Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence, most of the world did not support the declarations and wanted Yugoslavia to stay in one piece. All of the great powers—U.S.A., the Soviet Union, China, Britain and France—remained united, as did EU members Sweden, Denmark, Italy and Greece, and former Communist bloc states Romania, Poland, and Hungary in their support for the idea of a united Yugoslavia.

¹¹³ Hans-Dietrich Genscher: *Erinnerungen...*, p. 945.

¹¹⁴ Lukic and Lynch, "U.S. Policy" ..., pp. 267–268.

¹¹⁵ Pirjevec: *Jugoslovanske vojne 1991–2001* ..., pp. 77–78.

The governments of neighboring Austria as well as Germany extended sympathies to the Croatian and Slovenian cause; however, they did not recognize Slovenia's and Croatia's move. Perhaps they were also influenced by their better knowledge of the situation as well as by their historic affinities with them. As we have already mentioned, during the summer of 1991, after the attacks of Serb paramilitary units and the JNA on Croatia strengthened, Germany started to consider the possibility of recognizing Slovenia and Croatia and also started to press the other EC member states. In debate of the German Parliament on recent events in Yugoslavia on 4 September 1991, both Chancellor Kohl and Foreign Minister Genscher used the occasion to emphatically warn the Serbs and the JNA about the consequences of continued aggression. Kohl argued that if engaging in dialogue and living together in peace were no longer possible, this would pose for Germany—particularly in the light of her understanding of the right to self-determination—the question of recognizing those republics that no longer wanted to be part of Yugoslavia. Genscher declared that there would be no premium for those who prevented negotiations by the use of force: *“If those peoples of Yugoslavia who desire independence cannot realize it through negotiations, we will recognize their unilateral declarations of independence.”* Addressing the JNA, he said: *“With every shot by your cannons and tanks, the hour of recognition moves closer. We shall not be able to look on further.”* Thus, Genscher more explicitly than previously made clear his view that the task of the negotiations would be to ensure a peaceful parting of the ways. It was a view soon to be adopted by Lord Peter Carrington, the former British foreign secretary and secretary general of NATO, himself.¹¹⁶ As the fighting continued through autumn of 1991, after a long struggle in the EU, Germany prevailed and the EU announced on December 1991 that it would recognize Slovenia and Croatia as independent states. Numerous states opposed this action of Germany. With the support of Great Britain and France, the U.S.A. even suggested at the beginning of December 1991 a special resolution of the UN Security Council (UNSC) demanding that Germany stop asking for recognition of Slovenia and Croatia by the international community. On the basis of evidence, Genscher succeeded in changing the opinion of his French colleague, Roland Dumas; so that France did not support the U.S. idea any more. At the same time Genscher warned the U.S.A. not to “torpedo” European activities for peace through the UN.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Libal: *Limits of Persuasion* ..., pp. 44–45.

¹¹⁷ Compare: Gabriele Brenke, “Die Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland,” in *Internationale Politik 1991–1992*, (München 1994), p. 130. She does not mention any relevant document or source.

The role of German Foreign Minister Genscher was important, especially for the Slovenes and later for the Croats.¹¹⁸ The Serbian press expressed misgivings about German intentions, referring to alleged dangers of a “Fourth Reich.”¹¹⁹

The role of Yugoslavia’s other neighbors also caused controversy. Hungary and Albania took precautions to defend their airspace.¹²⁰ Albania placed its army in a state of alert.¹²¹ Both countries had been interested in the destiny of their ethnic minorities in Yugoslavia, of course. All the neighbors guarded their borders with Yugoslavia. Because of its historical ties with Macedonia,¹²² Bulgaria hinted that it was prepared to recognize an independent Macedonian state—which it did on 15 January 1992.

In the summer of 1991, under the pressure of public opinion the policy of Austria and Italy towards Slovenia and Croatia started to change also. In Austria 62% of those asked in public opinion polls favored recognition of Slovenia and Croatia.¹²³ In Italy public opinion changed in favor of Slovenia and Croatia, after the media reported on the political games of the Serbian delegation at the Geneva conference on Yugoslavia. Italians started to believe that it would be a step forward in solving the Yugoslav crisis if Slovenia and Croatia were recognized as independent states. Therefore under pressure of its public opinion, Italian official policy started to change.¹²⁴

An attack by the JNA on the Croatian coastal city of Zadar, which had belonged to Italy between the World Wars, influenced Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis together with Genscher to demand withdrawal of the JNA from Croatia, which bettered the chances for international recognition of Slovenia and Croatia.¹²⁵

In the late summer of 1991 French views also changed. At a press conference on 12 September 1991 Mitterrand stated that “... *after the events of the last months, in the future it is possible to think about independence of Slovenia and Croatia.*”¹²⁶ A week later he said in Weimar, that it is clear to him “*that the republics [of former Yugoslavia] can not live together*

¹¹⁸ On the role of Germany see also Daniele Conversi: *German-Bashing and the Breakup of Yugoslavia ...*

¹¹⁹ *Politika ekspres* (Belgrade, 2 August 1991), as summarized in Tanjug (2 August 1991) in FBIS, *Daily Report* (Eastern Europe), 5 August 1991, p. 53.

¹²⁰ MTI (Budapest) 28 August 1991, in FBIS, *Daily Report* (Eastern Europe), 29 August 1991, p. 9.

¹²¹ AFP (Paris), 5 July 1991, in FBIS, *Daily Report* (Eastern Europe), 5 July 1991, p. 1.

¹²² Walter Lukan and Peter Jordan (eds.): *Makedonien: Geographie, ethnische Struktur, Geschichte, Sprache und Kultur, Politik, Wirtschaft, Recht.* (Wien [etc.]: P. Lang, 1998), 479 pp; Matjaž Klemenčič, “Pregled zgodovine Makedonije in Makedoncev od naselitve Slovanov v 6. stoletju do samostojne države s spornim imenom v 21. stoletju.” In Oto Luthar and Jurij Perovšek (eds.): *Zbornik Janka Pleterškega.* (Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, ZRC SAZU, 2003), pp. 91–105.

¹²³ *Parlamentarisch-Politischer Pressedienst*, vol. 42, no. 77, 10 July 1991, p. 1; Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 109.

¹²⁴ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 100; Genscher: *Erinnerungen*, p. 958.

¹²⁵ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 100.

¹²⁶ *Le Monde*, (13 September 1991), p. 2.

in one state anymore."¹²⁷ French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas said in front of the French Assembly that fulfilling the wishes of the two republics would really mean dividing Yugoslavia. France and the EC needed to help Yugoslav nations to freedom and independence within the limits of existing possibilities.¹²⁸

Most of the other states still wanted Yugoslavia to be preserved in any form but only as a democracy. The U.S. administration did not even notice what was happening in the Yugoslav lands in spite of the warnings of its diplomats.¹²⁹ President Bush visited Ukraine on 1 August 1991 and tried to discourage Ukrainians from declaring independence, warning them, "*Americans will not support those who seek independence in order to replace a far-off tyranny with a local despotism. They will not aid those who promote a suicidal nationalism based upon ethnic hatred.*"¹³⁰ This meant that the United States did not support the secessions in Eastern Europe in general. Then the U.S.A. retreated from attempts to solve the Yugoslav crisis and left it to the EC states to solve the problem, including the question of recognition. Baker did not want to involve the U.S.A. in the Yugoslav conflict. As he wrote in his memoirs, vital U.S. interests were not at stake in Yugoslavia. It is interesting to note how he reasoned inaction of the U.S.A. in this crisis:

*Most important, unlike in the Persian Gulf, our vital national interests were not at stake. The Yugoslav conflict had the potential to be intractable, but it was nonetheless a regional dispute. Milošević had Saddam's appetite, but Serbia didn't have Iraq's capabilities or ability to affect America's vital interests, such as access to energy supplies. The greater threat to American interests at the time lay in the increasingly dicey situation in Moscow, and we preferred to maintain our focus on that challenge, which had global ramifications for us, particularly with regard to nuclear weapons. Moreover, in the summer of 1991, we were already consumed by the Middle East peace process and close to getting the parties to the table.*¹³¹

So determined was Baker to keep the U.S.A. uninvolved that he flatly rejected a proposal from Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Niles to send an observer to the talks between the Yugoslav parties sponsored by the EC, fearing that even such a minor action might imply a possible American role.¹³² As Baker wrote in his memoirs:

After all, 'EC92' was less than a year away, the Soviet Union was in decline, and the talk in Brussels, Paris, Bonn, Rome, and other European capitals was of an emerging European superpower. By this line of reasoning, if Europe was going to

¹²⁷ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle* ..., p. 97.

¹²⁸ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle* ..., p. 97.

¹²⁹ Sell: *Slobodan Milošević and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* ..., p.44.

¹³⁰ Quoted in Reneo Lukic and Allen Lynch, "U.S. Policy Towards Yugoslavia: From Differentiation to Disintegration," in Taju G. C. Thomas and H. Richard Friman (eds.): *The South Slav Conflict: History, Religion, Ethnicity, and Nationalism* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1996), p. 266.

¹³¹ Baker III: *The Politics of Diplomacy* ..., p. 636.

¹³² Compare: Richard Holbrooke: *To End a War*. (New York: The Modern Library, 1998), p. 29.

assume its place as a great power, then the Europeans, not the Americans, should take the lead in managing the Yugoslav crisis, which after all was occurring on Europe's doorstep. The Europeans wanted the lead and welcomed the chance to deal with the problem through the EC."¹³³

Secretary Baker explains this decision: *"It was time to make the Europeans step up to the plate and show that they could act as a unified power. Yugoslavia was as good a first test as any."*¹³⁴ This statement implies that the Balkans would become a place to try the new mechanisms of the EC and OSCE. In his memoirs Holbrooke mentioned as one of the main reasons for the non-involvement of the U.S.A. in the Yugoslav crisis that this was an election year.¹³⁵

As stated earlier, Otto von Habsburg, a member of the European Parliament, fought vigorously for the international recognition of the independence of Slovenia and Croatia.. Within the European Parliament there were different political groups whose members were for or against recognition. Also "national interests" played a significant role. Those against recognition of Slovenia and Croatia were primarily the Greek and Spanish deputies to the European Parliament, who were afraid of the consequences of separatism within their own states.

On a suggestion of Otto von Habsburg, the European People's Party sent a mission to Slovenia and Croatia, after the idea to send a mission of the European Parliament failed due to the European Socialist Party's indecision. The four-member delegation mirrored the different views within the European People's Party. Greek Pavlos Sarlis and Dutch Arie Oostlander fought for maintaining Yugoslavia intact (Oostlander later changed his view). German Doris Pack and Otto von Habsburg wanted to reach recognition of Slovenia and Croatia as soon as possible. The above-mentioned members of the delegation met at the beginning of July 1991 with the political leaders of Slovenia and Croatia. In his monthly report of 20 July 1991, Otto von Habsburg wrote about his views on possibilities within the international community to recognize Slovenia and Croatia:

*"Public opinion is favorable; only the bureaucracy of the [European] Community is very much against, especially those within the presidency of the council, which is now under the leadership of Socialists ... Among other issues we could see ... how bad organization of foreign policy within the [European] Community is. The Council of foreign ministers of the [European] Community bears some of the guilt for the bloody events. If they would act more energetically and more clearly this tragedy would not occur."*¹³⁶

¹³³ Baker III: *The Politics of Diplomacy* ..., p. 636.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Holbrooke: *To End a War* ..., pp. 41–42.

¹³⁶ Baier and Demmerle: *Otto von Habsburg*..., pp. 470–472.

On 9 October 1991, when the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia as independent states was still uncertain, Otto von Habsburg emphasized in the European Parliament that Yugoslavia did not exist any more and that the legal rights belonged to the individual republics, which had freely elected parliaments. He condemned Serbia as guilty of the bloodshed, because Serbian volunteers and the JNA were involved in all the fighting in Croatia. He even condemned the Council of Foreign Ministers of the EC, saying they bore part of the responsibility. Otto von Habsburg was also convinced that the indecisive reactions of the Council of Foreign Ministers to the crisis had lasted until the beginning of 1992. After Portugal assumed the presidency of the EC on 1 January 1992, Portuguese Foreign Minister Joao de Deus Pinheiro changed the policy and more energetically condemned the Serb activities.¹³⁷

In the second half of 1991, Otto von Habsburg finished most of his speeches in the European Parliament by saying: “*Ceterum autem censeo Croatiam et Sloveniam esse reconoscendam*” (Otherwise, I think that Croatia and Slovenia ought to be recognized).¹³⁸ Otto von Habsburg did everything he could to get BiH recognized also. In April 1992 he visited Morocco and interceded on behalf of recognition of all three states with Islamic states. It is interesting to note that Moroccan King Hasan extended the time for conversation with von Habsburg, who explained the situation in former Yugoslavia to him and let Yassir Arafat wait. Von Habsburg was engaged in sharp discussion with Greek deputies to the European Parliament when they were united in opposing recognition of Macedonia as an independent state.¹³⁹

The Socialist faction of the European Parliament was the largest and until September 1991 it represented one of the main opponents to the diplomatic recognition of Croatia and Slovenia. In October 1991, the press representative of the Socialist faction, Jannis Sakellariou, declared that if Croatia were to be recognized as an independent state, then also the Serbs of Croatia would have to have the right of self-determination because Serbs in some parts of Croatia represent a majority of the population. Motives for such pro-Serbian standpoints of European Socialists could be explained by their inclination towards Yugoslav self-management as a “third way” between capitalism and communism. Especially German Social-Democratic leader Karsten Voigt had a special affection for the Yugoslav system of self-management. This could be explained by the tradition of special friendly relations

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Baier and Demmerle: *Otto von Habsburg...*, p. 473.

¹³⁹ Baier and Demmerle: *Otto von Habsburg...*, p. 474.

between Tito and the leader of German Socialists Willi Brandt and German Social democrats remembered those days.

These pro-Yugoslav views of the European Left transformed in the course of events to pro-Serbian positions. The views of the Socialist faction played a decisive role in the decision of the European Parliament not to support a proposal by the Christian-Democrats, who suggested to the governments of EC states that they should recognize Slovenia and Croatia if the Serbs violated the cease-fire and the UN would be forced to carry out its warning of military intervention.¹⁴⁰ Socialists thought that the main reason for the war in Croatia was self-defense of the Serb minority in Croatia against the Tadjman regime. Therefore the Socialists supported the right of the Serbs in the *Krajinas* to secede from Croatia. This would mean only “enforcement” of the already achieved “changes of borders.”¹⁴¹

In the second half of 1991 NATO also started to deal with the Yugoslav conflict, in spite of the fact that Secretary General of NATO Manfred Wörner asked at the beginning of November 1991 for a passive role for NATO.¹⁴² Already on 7 June 1991, the foreign ministers of NATO declared that the security of the NATO states depended on the security of all other states in Europe. NATO changed its views after the international recognition of Slovenia, Croatia, and BiH.¹⁴³ Member-states of NATO on 4 June 1992 accepted in the Oslo Declaration that NATO, on demand of the OSCE or UN, can militarily intervene also outside of its member-states.¹⁴⁴

Among international organizations that dealt with the Yugoslav crisis, we have to mention also the UN. From the beginning of the Yugoslav crisis it called for non-interference into Yugoslav internal affairs. Therefore, until Slovenia and Croatia were internationally recognized, the organization could not send peace-keeping missions into Yugoslavia until all the involved parties agreed.

UN Secretary General, Pérez de Cuéllar opposed recognition of Slovenia and Croatia and condemned the German intention to recognize their independence as an “insane step.” Because the Germans did not react to his statements, de Cuéllar on 12 December 1991 sent a letter to the presiding minister of the EC Council of Foreign Ministers, van den Broek, and asked him to send this letter also to other EC member-states. Genscher answered de Cuéllar

¹⁴⁰ Compare, Gemeinsamer Entschließungsantrag zur Lage in Jugoslawien vom 09. Oktober 1991, Europäisches Parlament, DOC-DE/RC/116975..

¹⁴¹ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 154.

¹⁴² *Die Welt*, (2/3 November 1991).

¹⁴³ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, pp. 155–157.

¹⁴⁴ Osloer Erklärung des Ministerrates des Nordatlantikrats der NATO vom 04. Juni 1992. *Bulletin No. 64*, 12 June 1992, p. 613.

the next day and wrote that de Cuéllar was with this letter to van den Broek “*encouraging those forces in Yugoslavia who were already then fighting against a successful end of the peace process in Yugoslavia.*”¹⁴⁵ Genscher also emphasized that the Serbian leadership and the JNA were the most responsible for violations of cease-fires and the fact that the peace conference was unsuccessful.

De Cuéllar then wrote to Genscher and expressed his concern over the “untimely selected and unvoted recognition.”¹⁴⁶ De Cuéllar also wrote that the presidents of BiH and Macedonia asked him not to act in favor of recognition of Slovenia and Croatia and that if Slovenia and Croatia were recognized, there would be danger of spreading the war into BiH and Macedonia. De Cuéllar also wrote to Genscher that, in its meeting in Rome on 8 November 1991, the EC decided that Slovenia and Croatia should be recognized as part of a “complex solution” of the Yugoslav crisis. According to de Cuéllar, the Yugoslav crisis would not be solved by recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. Genscher explained in an interview with German radio that de Cuéllar was against selected and un-coordinated recognition. This was in accordance with the views of the German government, which for some months tried to reach consensus on this issue within the EC.¹⁴⁷

De Cuéllar’s letter started new discussions. U.S. President George Bush, Sr., criticized again the plans for recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. He asked the U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Thomas Pickering, to ask the German government to reconsider its standpoint on recognition of both former Yugoslav republics. Also, the U.S. Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Zimmermann, declared that the U.S.A. was against recognition, especially in the case of Croatia.¹⁴⁸

*Europe Tried to Save What It Was Possible to Save: Yugoslavia à la Carte
(September 1991– October 1991)*

In spite of the fact that the fighting in Croatia ceased, the EC on 7 September called a peace conference that, on Genscher’s advice, was presided over by Lord Carrington.¹⁴⁹ Carrington picked up where the failed Izetbegović-Gligorov Plan had left off. He recognized

¹⁴⁵ Wortlautauszüge des Briefes von Genscher an Pérez de Cuéllar. DPA, 15 December 1991; Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle* ..., p. 168.

¹⁴⁶ Wortlautauszüge aus dem Briefe des UNO-Generalsekretärs an Genscher. DPA, 15 December 1991; Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle* ..., pp. 168–169.

¹⁴⁷ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle* ..., p. 169.

¹⁴⁸ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (16 December 1991).

¹⁴⁹ John Newhouse, “Bonn, der Westen und die Auflösung Jugoslawiens: der Versagen der Diplomatie. Chronik eines Skandals,” *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* 1992, no. 10, p. 1195.

six republics as the constituent units of the former federal state and produced a plan that would give each of them as much sovereignty as it wanted.¹⁵⁰

In spite of all the different views of the EC states on how to solve the Yugoslav crisis, Tudjman and Milošević on 12 September 1991 signed a statement that they would respect minority rights and renounce violence as a means of changing borders.¹⁵¹

On the proposal of Austria, Hungary and Canada, the UN Security Council (UNSC) on 25 September 1991 dealt with the Yugoslav crisis. In one of the discussions, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker condemned the Serb government and the JNA as guilty of bloodshed in Yugoslavia. As he stated, the aim of the Serb leadership and the JNA was “to form ‘little Yugoslavia’ or ‘great Serbia,’ which would oust Slovenia from this state and make Croatia smaller.”¹⁵² The same day, in a speech in front of the UN General Assembly, Genscher condemned JNA operations and demanded the introduction of economic sanctions against Yugoslavia.¹⁵³

Invoking Chapter 7 of the UN charter, that the Yugoslav conflict had become a “direct threat to international peace and security,” the UNSC, on 25 September 1991, passed the first of sixty-seven resolutions that would be passed by January 1995. Resolution 713/1991 imposed a general and complete embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Yugoslavia.¹⁵⁴ This resolution still dealt with the fights in Yugoslavia as if they were an internal affair of a UN member-state. The acceptance and fulfillment of the resolution did not have any serious consequences for the JNA, which had stocks of weaponry in its arsenals; but it had serious consequences for the Croatian side.¹⁵⁵

The weapons embargo on Yugoslav republics made it possible for Milošević to strengthen his own power in rump Yugoslavia; on the other hand it made it possible also to strengthen the offensive against Croatia. In the midst of the fights in Croatia, on 4 October Lord Carrington succeeded in gathering Tudjman, Milošević, and Federal Defense Secretary Veljko Kadijević to the negotiating table in The Hague. They agreed to divide the peace conference into two working groups: the first would work on the constitutional future of the

¹⁵⁰ Silber and Little: *Yugoslavia. The Death of a Nation ...*, p. 190.

¹⁵¹ Pirjevec: *Jugoslovenske vojne 1991–2001 ...*, p. 80.

¹⁵² Baker’s speech in New York. See, Europa Archiv 21/1991, S.D 552; and Archiv der Gegenwart, 8 November 1991, 36204.

¹⁵³ Rede der Bundesminister des Auswärtigen, Genscher, Hans-Dietrich am 25. September 1991, in *Außenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Dokumente von 1949 bis 1994*, p. 824. Edited by Auswärtiges Amt, Referat Öffentlichkeitsarbeit.

¹⁵⁴ UN Security Council-Resolution 713/1991. Europa Archiv 21/1991, S. D 550.

¹⁵⁵ Reneo Lukic, “Yugoslavie: Chronique d’une fin annoncée,” *Politique internationale* 53 (Fall 1991), p. 138.

country and the second would concentrate on bringing about an end to fighting in Croatia, which in early September had escalated dramatically.¹⁵⁶

The new JNA attacks in Croatia convinced the EC that it had to act more aggressively. On 6 October the EC foreign ministers condemned the JNA actions and demanded a cease-fire until midnight the next day. To those “who were responsible for these formidable acts of violence” they threatened economic sanctions and legal action in accordance with international rules. In spite of everything, the war in Croatia continued. According to Zdravko Tomac, Croatian intelligence services intercepted a communication originating at Supreme Headquarters in Belgrade. It was an order “... *for an all-out attack on Croatia, which was intended to break Croatia politically and economically, and compel it to capitulate and stay in Milošević’s Yugoslavia, (and which) outlined in detail attacks on industrial facilities, with the aim of causing an ecological catastrophe.*”¹⁵⁷ The Croatian cabinet considered the U.S., U.K., and France to be inflexibly attached to the illusion of Yugoslav territorial integrity, and therefore decided to appeal to the Russians to intercede with the Serbs. Late in the night of 6 October, the Croats contacted Soviet Consul-General in Zagreb Girenko in a state of high agitation, and Girenko in turn telephoned Gorbachev, waking him out of his slumber. Gorbachev in turn telephoned Kadijević, rousing him from his nocturnal respite, and advised the general against rash totalistic military moves. Gorbachev also made Washington acquainted with the events, which, according to Zdravko Tomac, convinced “drowsy Washington” to interfere in the diplomatic game and prevented the plans of JNA from being fulfilled.¹⁵⁸

*The Vance Plan—Defeat of the Peace Policy of the European Community
(October 1991–June 1992)*

At this point UN Secretary General Pérez de Cuéllar tried to intervene. In spite of the fact that he still considered the fighting in Yugoslavia as an internal affair which therefore did not deserve UN intervention, on 8 October 1991—after he consulted the U.S. Department of State—he decided to send Cyrus Vance, former Secretary of State in the Carter administration, to the Balkans as his personal envoy. De Cuéllar did this because in his view

¹⁵⁶ Silber and Little: *Yugoslavia. The Death of a Nation* ..., p. 191.

¹⁵⁷ Tomac: *The Struggle for the Croatian State* ..., p. 155

¹⁵⁸ Tomac: *The Struggle for the Croatian State* ..., pp. 156–157; I agree with Ross Johnson’s comments who wrote: “I I would not accept uncritically the Tomac version. Seems improbable that Gorbachev would have telephoned Kadijevic. Maybe some Soviet intervention, but not this one. Croatian paranoia?”

the EC could not be neutral in imposing peace just because some EC member-states had different historic and economic contacts with different sides in the Yugoslav conflict.¹⁵⁹

In cooperation with Lord Carrington, Vance was authorized to start a negotiating process that they hoped would be fruitful, under the auspices of the EC and the UN.¹⁶⁰ On 11 October, Vance began a series of missions to assess the situation that would soon involve him in full-scale efforts to negotiate a cease-fire, separately from—but in full consultation with—Lord Carrington and the EC.

A series of cease-fires in the war between Croatia and the JNA and some Serb insurgents, brokered by the EC, fell through. The eighth such cease-fire, negotiated on 9 October, was violated within a few hours, when the JNA and Croatian units resumed exchange of artillery fire. The following day, Germany's Martin Bangemann, vice president of the EC Commission, called for Bonn to extend diplomatic recognition to Slovenia and Croatia without any further delay. His initiative seemed to be ignored, but it reflected the increasingly frantic fears among some Western diplomats about the dangers that this war held.

At the same time, Dutch Foreign Minister van den Broek announced that after five hours of discussions with Presidents Milošević and Tudjman and Defense Minister Kadijević, all present had agreed that all units of the JNA would be withdrawn from Croatia within a month. The following day, however, the Defense Ministry indicated that it considered the agreement non-binding and null because it had not been officially signed. By then, the Yugoslav Army was building bunkers and digging trenches in Croatia, to defend areas they had captured (*Krajinas*)—specifically, the Knin littoral, Kordun, Banija, Baranja, and the Papuk Mountain. In response to the siege of the walled city of Dubrovnik, the U.S. State Department issued a protest on 24 October 1991.¹⁶¹ A statement by France's Mitterrand from the periods of Serb attacks on Dubrovnik is of interest: "*As far as I know, history of Serbia and Croatia is full of such dramas. Especially during the last World War in Croatian concentration camps many Serbs were murdered. As you know, Croatia and not Serbia was part of the Nazi-block. Since the death of Tito hatred must have erupted anew between Serbs and Croats.*"¹⁶² In spite of everything, French politics did not support the viewpoint put forth by Serbian propaganda that the war in Croatia was a continuation of the Serb fight against Nazi-Germany and the *Ustaša* of Ante Pavelić.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle...*, pp. 166–167.

¹⁶⁰ James A. Baker III: *The Politics of Diplomacy...*, p. 638.

¹⁶¹ Sabrina P. Ramet: *The Three Yugoslavias...*

¹⁶² *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 November 1991; Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 94.

¹⁶³ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, p. 94.

An offensive against Croatia was also a reminder for Bosnian president Alija Izetbegović, who until then tried to play the role of negotiator among the fighting sides in the Yugoslav crisis. On 15 October the republican assembly of BiH adopted a memorandum declaring the republic a sovereign and independent state within its existent borders. Seventy-three Serbian deputies had already left the Parliament building, and BiH found itself on the verge of war.

In the first half of October Mikhail Gorbachev also personally got involved in trying to solve the crisis. He was sure that the events in Yugoslavia only “mirrored the horrors” that would be possible in the Soviet Union, and so he invited Tudjman and Milošević to Moscow on 15 October 1991. During their visits to Moscow, both Tudjman and Milošević pleaded that they would, in the course of November and with the assistance of the Soviet Union, U.S.A., and EC, find an honest solution to end the fighting.¹⁶⁴ Very soon the international community found out that the promises were not kept.

On 18 October, the EC’s Hague conference proposed a draft for a general settlement, which was issued on 24 October 1991 and would have authorized the demilitarization of all ethnic enclaves and guaranteed autonomy for Kosovo and Vojvodina. The proposal also identified the “*new relations between the Republics as (1) sovereign and independent republics with an international status for those that wish it; (2) a free association of the Republics with an international status as envisaged in this Convention; and (3) comprehensive arrangements, including supervisory mechanisms for the protection of human rights and special status for certain groups and areas.*”¹⁶⁵ Milošević said the proposed changes would have “*opened the way to new instability and tension.*”¹⁶⁶

As an answer to the Carrington plan, the Serbs boycotted the conference in The Hague. Therefore on 4 November the EC prepared a new version of the plan that did not mention Vojvodina and Kosovo any more; it talked only about territories with special status, in general.¹⁶⁷ This proposal did not fulfill the wishes of the Serbian leadership either. They still wanted a Yugoslav federation that would remain the only heir of SFRY and that would unite “all those republics and peoples” that would wish.¹⁶⁸ This was, however, a fig leaf for a Greater Serbia desired by the Serb leadership. The Hague conference threatened sanctions against any party that did not accept the “Carrington plan” by 4 November. The basis for a new settlement was a legal opinion requested from the Arbitration (Badinter) Commission:

¹⁶⁴ Gow: *Triumph of the Lack of Will ...*, pp. 186, 193.

¹⁶⁵ “Treaty Provisions for the Convention,” *Review of International Affairs*, vol. 42, no. 995–97, p. 33

¹⁶⁶ Quoted in *New York Times* (26 October 1991), p. 5.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ Carsten Giersch and Daniel Eisermann, “Die westliche Politik und der Kroatien-Krieg 1991–1992,” *Südosteuropa*, vol. 43, no. 3–4 (1994), p. 110.

that since 8 October, Yugoslavia was a “state in the process of dissolution.” Nonetheless, the EC proceeded with its strategy, imposing trade sanctions on and threatening isolation of Yugoslavia on 8 November to press Serbia into accepting the plan and both Croatia and Serbia to sign a cease-fire.¹⁶⁹ Compensatory measures for “*parties which do cooperate in a peaceful way towards a comprehensive political solution on the basis of the EC proposals,*” such as BiH and Macedonia, were discussed.¹⁷⁰

In spite of the fact that the JNA did not reach the planned Karlobag-Karlovac-Virovitica line, Milošević decided to change tactics. A more careful analysis of Milošević’s policies suggests that he had already divorced himself from the notion of a “Greater Serbia” as outlined above (and suggested by Šešelj) and was focusing on Serb majority areas as part of a future Yugoslav federation.¹⁷¹ Milošević accepted a cease-fire on 23 November in Geneva under the auspices of the UN and welcomed the Vance proposal to station UN blue helmet units on occupied Croatian territories. The Croatian Government also agreed because it was aware of the fact that its armed forces would not be able to fight the Serbs on occupied territories while at the same time defending its compatriots in BiH. The Croatian Government demanded, however, that the UN troops be stationed at the border with Serbia (ex-republican border between Croatia and Serbia) and not at the front line, as Milošević demanded. The Croatian Government was afraid that if the UN troops were stationed at the front line, circumstances similar to those in Cyprus would occur.¹⁷² This Croatian demand provoked a lively quarrel with Belgrade.

While the EC member states got actively involved in the crises, the UN remained passive. German Foreign Minister Genscher talked about that in a speech he gave on the occasion of a German –Italian meeting in Venice on 22 and 23 November 1991. He stated that it was not a civil war that was going on in Yugoslavia but, “... *an attack on Croatia and therefore it does not concern only the EC and OSCE, but it should be above all the business of the UN Security Council to deal with the problem.*”¹⁷³ On the demand of the government of the SFRY, the Security Council finally discussed the situation in Yugoslavia on 27 November 1991. The UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution No. 721, proposed by the UK, France, and Belgium. This resolution empowered Vance to prepare the diplomatic terrain for UN peacekeeping

¹⁶⁹ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., p. 181.

¹⁷⁰ *Financial Times*, (9–10 November 1991), p. 24.

¹⁷¹ A. Ross Johnson wrote in his commentary: - It seems to me the Great Serbia project was not abandoned – realistically, it could not encompass every single Serb in all of SFRY, but the Serb majority areas in Croatia and B-H for sure. Had the war ended in 1994, the Great Serbia project would have been mostly achieved.

¹⁷² Elisabeth Roberts, “Next Balkan Flashpoint?” *The World Today*, vol. 54, no. 4 (April 1999), p. 402.

¹⁷³ Der Bundesminister des Auswärtigen, Mitteilung für die Presse No. 1248/91 (22 November 1991).

forces on the territory where the fighting had occurred, and asked all the parties to the conflict to observe a cease-fire and to fulfil UNSC Res. Nr. 713 of 25 September 1991.¹⁷⁴ This resolution sent an additional message, i.e., that the Soviet Union had unified its views on the use of UN peacekeeping forces with those of the Western powers, and that the EC accepted its “defeat” in its attempts to solve the Yugoslav crisis. In spite of all this, the UN asked Lord Carrington to keep trying to negotiate between Serbs and Croats, although it was clear from the very beginning that it was fruitless.¹⁷⁵ Especially the Germans were convinced about that as they decided to meddle directly in the Yugoslav crisis. On November 27, in an address to the *Bundestag*, German Chancellor Kohl set a date for German recognition of Slovenia and Croatia—24 December 1991.¹⁷⁶ This provoked many opposing views within the international community. An example for this are differing statements of Kohl and Mitterrand at a joint press conference on 15 November 1991 in Bonn. Mitterrand emphasized that this question could not be solved under the pressure of time and without due caution. He thought that it was first of all the question of guaranteeing minority rights as well as the question of frontiers. He was not worried about minority protection in Slovenia. He worried, however, about minority protection in Croatia, Kosovo, BiH, and Macedonia. He also emphasized that the EC would continue to be engaged on the territories of Yugoslavia and that it must find further solutions without time pressures and on the basis of consensus of all members of the EU.¹⁷⁷ In the view of the Maastricht conference, on 10 December France tried to delay recognition of Croatia. France suggested creation of a catalogue of criteria, and every land that tried to get recognition would have to accept those criteria. A special court would then decide whether this or that land had fulfilled the criteria.¹⁷⁸

The EC peace plan and EC policy, however, accepted the French position that recognition could only come after arrangements for human rights and common relations had been settled, as a reward. The JNA had begun the withdrawal from Croatia on 28 November, five days after a promising cease-fire negotiated by Vance had been signed at Geneva. On 2 December 1991 Genscher demanded that the UNSC meet and discuss a possible UN peacekeeping operation in Yugoslavia. The UNSC dealt with the crisis in Yugoslavia again on 15 December 1991 and adopted UNSC Resolution 724 to send a group of observers to

¹⁷⁴ UN Security Council-Resolution 721/1991. Archiv der Gegenwart, (23 December 1991), p. 36347.

¹⁷⁵ Pirjevec: *Jugoslovanske vojne 1991–2001* ..., pp. 98–99; *The Guardian*, 28 November 1991.

¹⁷⁶ Genscher: *Erinnerungen* ..., p. 958.

¹⁷⁷ Many observers have seen standpoints expressed by German government at this press conference as a sign of indulgence — i.e. German government ought to change its plan expressed in Rome a week before that it shall recognize Slovenia and Croatia already in 1991. Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle* ..., p. 96.

¹⁷⁸ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle* ..., p. 96.

Yugoslavia, to prepare the terrain for a peacekeeping mission and report on how UNSC Resolution 713 was fulfilled. All UNSC member states were asked to establish a body to ensure that the weapons embargo would be fulfilled. The UN Secretary General, together with the Red Cross, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and other humanitarian organizations were chosen to be responsible to coordinate activities in Yugoslavia.¹⁷⁹ It is important to mention that this resolution did not mention the question of recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. It did, however, demand from all the states and groups of states that they abstain from any activities that would further worsen or sharpen conditions in Yugoslavia. However, in his speech in Brussels on 16 December 1991, Genscher stated that this resolution gave enough maneuvering space for recognition of Slovenia and Croatia.¹⁸⁰

Although UN Resolution 724 said conditions were not yet ready for peacekeeping forces, Vance had by 15 December made enough progress that the Security Council agreed to send an advance team to prepare the way. So opposed to the German logic were the negotiators, Britain and the U.S.A., that they took the unusual diplomatic step of putting their protests into writing. In letters to van den Broek, as chair of the troika, and to Genscher, Lord Carrington, UN Secretary General Pérez de Cuéllar, Cyrus Vance, and the U.S. administration pleaded with Germans not to spoil the genuine progress toward a settlement. In Carrington's letter to van den Broek on 2 December 1991, he warned that premature recognition of Slovenia and Croatia by the EC "*would undoubtedly mean the break-up of the conference*" and "*might well be the spark that sets Bosnia-Herzegovina alight.*" Even President Izetbegović made an emotional appeal to Genscher in early December to not recognize Croatia prematurely, for it would mean war in his republic.

Despite all this, at the all-night EC meeting of foreign ministers in Brussels on 15–16 December, Chancellor Kohl refused to budge. Although accused of locking the door and using bullying tactics, Kohl in fact obtained the agreement of Britain, France, and Spain by a compromise to preserve unity among the twelve EC members on Yugoslavia: that all six republics of Yugoslavia were eligible for recognition. The conditions required that the republics request recognition formally by 23 December and meet the criteria established by the Badinter Commission, including a commitment to continue working toward an overall settlement by 15 January 1992, and UN, EC, and CSCE criteria on the rule of law, democracy, human rights, disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation, regional security, the inviolability of frontiers, and guarantees for the rights of ethnic and nationality groups and

¹⁷⁹ UN Security Council-Resolution 724/1991. Archiv der Gegenwart, 23 December 1991, 36349.

¹⁸⁰ Zeitler: *Deutschlands Rolle ...*, pp. 169–170.

minorities.¹⁸¹ Lord Carrington was unable to reconcile himself to this development, and he and others criticized Germany.¹⁸² Germany's success in its campaign for recognition of Croatia and Slovenia was, as Carrington warned in his letter to van den Broek, the death knell to the peace negotiations. This view is disputed by Marko Hoare in his comments, where he wrote:

"...In fact, it was precisely the "even-handed" approach of the European powers, their unwillingness to take sides or to intervene in force, that had encouraged the apparently stronger side—Serbia and the JNA—to exploit this vacillation and attack. There were many faults on the Croatian side – above all the demotion of the status of Serbs in Croatia from 'nation' to 'minority', something which could also be mentioned - but ultimately this war involved an attack by one side against the other. Withholding recognition from Croatia, the side that was attacked, 'as a reward for a peaceful settlement', could not have worked because it was not Croatia that was blocking a peaceful settlement. On the contrary, Western pressure on Croatia to desist from military actions against JNA forces had the unfortunate result of aiding the latter—the very force that was responsible for the war. Thus, as General Tus has stated in an interview, President Tudjman cancelled a Croatian offensive to relieve Vukovar because of Western pressure—the fall of Vukovar was therefore the result of Western 'peacemaking.' Furthermore, the Geneva Agreement of November, negotiated by Cyrus Vance, enabled the JNA to "withdraw" from Croatia into Bosnia, while Croatian forces were not to obstruct their withdrawal. This merely enabled Milošević and Blagoje Adžić to assemble their forces for the assault on Bosnia. In other words, Western diplomacy during the war in Croatia, based on the mistaken premise of arranging cease-fires and bringing about a "compromise," simply paved the way for the worse conflagration in Bosnia. Peace could only have come about if the Western powers had been prepared to deliver a genuine check to Milošević and the JNA. Kohl's insistence on recognition for Croatia was a diplomatically sensible effort to correct the balance in favor of the side that was attacked, as only by bolstering Croatia and Bosnia could Milošević's expansionist ambitions be contained. Insofar as Kohl's policy derailed Western diplomatic efforts, this was potentially beneficial to peace, as Western "peacemaking" was part of the problem. Following on from this, both Norman Cigar and Martin Špegelj have written about how the JNA was on the verge of military collapse in Croatia by late 1991. It was the cease-fire resulting from the diplomatic efforts of Vance and others that allowed the JNA to survive the war in Croatia, technically undefeated, and to regroup to attack Bosnia."

As Vance implored in his letter to Genscher in December 1991, recognition had to be held out as a reward for a peaceful settlement. To give up that weapon before such a settlement was reached would mean more war. The EC decision in December to recognize Croatia (and Slovenia) addressed neither the status of Serbs in Croatia nor the fate of the population in the remaining four republics. The internationalization of the crisis, most visibly manifested in the belated announcement by the EC member states in mid-December of the imminent recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, also affected Milošević's calculations. Milošević became convinced, due to unfavorable currents of events, that Serbia should look for help from the UN, where the idea of "Yugoslavia" was still alive. Therefore the federal

¹⁸¹ Zametica: *The Yugoslav Conflict ...*, p. 65; Genscher: *Erinnerungen ...*, p. 961.

¹⁸² For an effective rebuttal of Germanophobic myths in connection with Yugoslavia, see Daniele Conversi: *German-Bashing and the Breakup of Yugoslavia ...*

Government of Yugoslavia on 25 December 1991 demanded intervention of the UN blue helmets on occupied Croatian territories and asked de Cuéllar to personally intervene in favor of the peace process “because the EC is acting in favor of secessionists and violates international law.”¹⁸³ However, this was mainly propaganda because de Cuéllar already on 11 December had formally asked the UNSC to fulfill Vance’s proposal to station UN troops in Croatia. The plan accepted with Resolution 724 of 15 December was only finalized on 2 January 1992, signed at Sarajevo by military representatives of Croatia and Yugoslavia.

This so-called Vance Plan differed on many issues from EC plans, which tried in vain to keep Yugoslavia intact. The essence of the plan was to cease fighting on those territories of Croatia that were occupied by the Serbs, and to restore mutual respect and understanding between both quarreling nations as the cornerstone for peaceful resolution of the conflict. In addition to an arms embargo, the Vance plan called for the setting up of four areas to be known as United Nations Protected Areas (UNPA): East, West, North, and South. These would coincide roughly with the three chunks of territory held by Serb and/or JNA forces (the Krajina, western Posavina, and eastern Slavonia). Upwards of 10,000 UN troops would be deployed in the UNPAs, for the protection of the people there. In return, the JNA would withdraw entirely from Croatia, and the Serb paramilitaries would be disbanded and disarmed, surrendering their weapons either to the JNA before withdrawal, or, if they preferred, to the UN force, who would store them, intact, at locations inside the UNPAs.¹⁸⁴

The Vance plan also determined that in UNPA zones the peace would be controlled by police units composed in accordance with the ethnic structure that was in place before the fighting started. It also guaranteed the return of refugees to their homes. The Serb and Croat sides would agree to a cease-fire that would, in effect, freeze the existing frontlines. The UN Protection Force (or UNPROFOR, as it was to be known) would, therefore, form a thin blue line separating the Serb-held areas from the rest of Croatia. In spite of some deficiencies (e.g., no timetable for return of refugees to their homes was set), the Vance plan inspired optimism that UN troops would be able to calm the situation in Croatia.¹⁸⁵ Tudjman proclaimed the entrance of blue helmets into Croatian territory as an important victory for Croatia. He was ready to fulfill the Vance plan to please the international community, which demanded this to recognize Croatia as an independent state.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ Gustav Gustenau, “Die 'Neuordnung Jugoslawiens',” *Österreichische Milit. Zeitschrift* 1992, no. 2, p. 106.

¹⁸⁴ Roberto Bendini and Jakkie Potgieter: *Analysis Report: Former Yugoslavia, Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Project. Managing Arms in Peace Processes: Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina* (New York-Geneva: United Nations, 1996), pp. 21, 26, 195.

¹⁸⁵ Pirjevec: *Jugoslovenske vojne 1991–2001* ..., pp. 107–109.

¹⁸⁶ Branka Magaš and Ivo Žanić (eds.): *Rat u Hrvatskoj i Bosni i Hercegovini, 1991–1995* (Zagreb: Jesenski i Turk; Sarajevo: Dani, 1999), p. 89.

Milošević acted similarly to Tudjman, accepting blue helmets in Croatia. We presume that he believed that it meant the first step towards the plebiscite to annex ethnically Serb parts of Croatia to Serbia.¹⁸⁷ The other possibility is that he thought that coming in of blue helmets would freeze the existing lines of confrontation, which would, in time, transform themselves naturally into new, *de facto* international borders.¹⁸⁸ Not all of Serbia's leaders shared his optimism. This became clear on 7 January 1992, when two jet planes of the Yugoslav army shot down an EC helicopter above Varaždin, killing the French pilot and four Italian observers.¹⁸⁹

The leaders of the Krajina Serbs also opposed the peace plan. Milan Babić, the leader of the Krajina Serbs ("president" of the Republic of *Srpska Krajina*), was convinced that the withdrawal of the Yugoslav army, the disarmament of local armed forces, and the introduction of UN troops would lead to the eventual restoration of Croat control.¹⁹⁰ The Belgrade regime acted also against the leadership of the Serbs of Knin. Milošević and his collaborators believed that Vance and the new UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali from Egypt, were "realists," i.e. pro-Serb, and that it was worth engaging in polemics with the EC to support their policy. Vance and Boutros-Ghali still treated the Yugoslav wars as civil war and not as an international war that could threaten international peace. UN Resolution 727 of 8 January 1992 was also in accordance with this approach, authorizing sending 50 military liaison officers to promote maintenance of the cease-fire, as if this were a fight between two armed factions and the crisis stemming from it would not be problematic to solve.¹⁹¹ In general, the international community dealt with the conflict in the early stages of the war as if it were a civil war. On the other hand Slovenes and Croats considered the acts of the Yugoslav Army and Serb insurgents as acts of aggression on the newly established states of Slovenia and Croatia.¹⁹²

United Nations tended to be pro-Yugoslav or pro-Serb at the beginning of the war. Yugoslavia as a state and Tito as co-founder of non-aligned movement was after all one of the staunchest supporters of the United Nations and its' Secretary General Boutros Gali used to serve as Egyptian foreign minister during the period when non-aligned movement reached its'

¹⁸⁷ Pirjevec: *Jugoslavanske vojne 1991–2001* ..., p. 109–110.

¹⁸⁸ Silber and Little: *Yugoslavia. A Death of a Nation* ..., p. 198.

¹⁸⁹ Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With no Peace to Keep* ..., pp. 70–72.

¹⁹⁰ *Independent* (4 February 1992); *New York Times* (17 February 1992), p. A7.

¹⁹¹ Warren Zimmermann: *Origins of a Catastrophe* ..., pp. 159–160; Boutros Boutros-Ghali: *Unvanquished: A U.S.–U.N. Saga* (London and New York: I. B. Taurus Publishers, 1999), p. 38.

¹⁹² This problem was treated also in discussion at a Conference on Dissolution of Former Yugoslavia in London in in June 2004 where Prof. Paul Shoup of University of Virginia criticized U.S. Government for not doing everything it could to ensure territorial integrity of Croatia after Croatia was recognized by U.S. Government.

peak. Also Ghali was raised by a pro-Yugoslav Slovene girl from the Coastland region which suffered under Italians in the period between the two World Wars. Pro-Yugoslav sentiments are also expressed in general Mackenzie Memoires¹⁹³

The first days of January 1992 were quite interesting in the reactions of the international community towards the Yugoslav crisis (preparations for the international recognition of Slovenia and Croatia) as well as because Milošević's regime also declared its (war) aims. Milošević's (war) aims were to create a rump Yugoslavia that would also be the only lawful successor of the former SFRY, in which all those who wanted to keep their Yugoslav citizenship would live. It was an open call to arms to create Great Serbia and the introduction to new wars.

On 13 January 1992, the Vatican recognized Slovenia and Croatia, and the next day the Badinter Commission submitted its expected evaluation of the candidates for recognition. The commission recommended immediate recognition of Slovenia and Macedonia; recognition of Croatia conditioned on certain assurances concerning democratic principles, national minorities, and border protections; and a referendum for Bosnia, which, crucially, was to be valid only if all three communities (Serb, Croat, and Muslim) participated in significant numbers. (The application from Kosovo was considered invalid because it did not come from a recognized republic.) In the cases of Croatia and Macedonia, the EC chose to be influenced by political expediency rather than legal advice.¹⁹⁴

As it occurred later, the commission's opinion did not have great influence on decisions of the EC states that had demanded it. When they recognized Croatia and Slovenia on 15 January 1992, those states demanded that Croatia incorporate the necessary corrections into its constitution. Croatia gave them then only a written promise to do so (and the international community had to wait until the change of regime in Croatia in the year 2000 for full compliance with this demand). Macedonia had to wait for international recognition because the Greeks opposed it on the grounds that the international community should not recognize a state that had irredentist demands. This, in spite of the fact that the EC demanded from the Macedonian government that it ask for recognition and that the Badinter commission wordily excluded any connection between the name of "Macedonia" and irredentist demands towards neighboring lands.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ MacKenzie Lewis: *Peacekeeper. The Road to Sarajevo*. (Vancouver-Toronto: Douglas & Mc Intyre, 1993).

¹⁹⁴ Leo Tindemans et al.: *Unfinished Peace. Report of the International Commission on the Balkans* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Berlin: Aspen Institute, 1996), p. 39.

¹⁹⁵ Peter Carrington, "Turmoil in the Balkans: Developments and Prospects," *RUSI Journal*, vol. 137, no. 5 (October 1992), p. 4.

The problem of Macedonia

Macedonia had, however, to fight many problems in the international arena. Although it got a positive recommendation for international recognition from the Badinter Commission, it had to wait for international recognition for some more time. Greece was most opposed to the international recognition of Macedonia because the Greeks did not like the Macedonian state symbols (especially the flag) and the name “Macedonia.” Greece believed that the name of Macedonia is exclusive property of the Greeks, and that even the use of this name by a new state showed the irredentist plans of this former Yugoslav republic towards Aegean Macedonia. Because both states were not able to solve these problems, Greece (the only ally of the Serbs in the Balkans) in 1992 introduced economic sanctions against Macedonia and in fact stopped the formation of the EU policy towards Macedonia.¹⁹⁶

In 1992, the UN intervened, and the foreign ministers of Greece and Macedonia met in New York and signed an agreement (on September 13, 1992) with which Greece gave up economic sanctions, but Macedonia had to change its state flag because it contained Greek symbols. By 1993 they were able to some extent to solve disagreements on the name of the new state. Greece accepted a temporary name for Macedonia – the “Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,” and Macedonia became a member of the UN in April 1993 under this name.¹⁹⁷

There were also quite a few unsolved questions in the new Macedonian state’s relationship with the *FRY*. The question of the border of the new state was especially burdensome. At the request of the Macedonian government, because of the spread of the war in Croatia and BiH, the NATO peacekeeping forces of 1,000 American soldiers were stationed at the border of Macedonia with the *FRY* to prevent spreading of the war to Macedonian territories (UNSC *Resolution 795*, 9 December 1992). The USA and Western European countries were aware of the fact that the eruption of military fighting in Macedonia could provoke a wider crisis in Southeastern Europe, in which Serbia, Albania, Bulgaria, and the NATO members Turkey and Greece could get involved due to historic circumstances. Therefore, the international community could not allow destabilization of Macedonia.¹⁹⁸

The international community was also aware of the unrest and dissatisfaction of the Albanians of Macedonia, who were making the Macedonian government unstable and

¹⁹⁶ Loring M. Danforth: *The Macedonian Conflict. Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational World*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 273 pp.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 30–32.

¹⁹⁸ Allcock, John B.: “Macedonia.” - in: Turnock, David & Carter, Francis W., eds.: *The States of Eastern Europe. Volume II: South-Eastern Europe*. (Aldershot, Brookfield, Singapore, Sydney: Ashgate, 1999), pp 141–166.

unhappy with new demands that included primarily questions of the status of the Albanian language. The growing ethnic distance between the Macedonians and Albanians in the second half of the 1990s erupted later into a conflict.¹⁹⁹

International reaction to the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia

There were differing reactions to EC recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. The Russians were very skeptical, due to their own situation. Like the United States, Russia failed to play a positive role. The USSR and, after 1991 the Russian Federation, focused on its own internal transformation, was mostly absent from the Balkans during this period. A former Russian diplomat specializing in the region has argued persuasively that Russia failed to have much impact at all on Yugoslavia during these years because of its general weakness, its inconsistent policies, and its poor diplomacy.²⁰⁰

Russia declared that it would “respect the decision of the nations who decided on secession, but also the decision of the nations who wished to stay in Yugoslavia.”²⁰¹ The U.S.A., on the other hand, decided to wait with granting recognition until the UN peacekeeping force settled in Croatia. At the same time the U.S.A. hoped that this decision would turn Tadjman and Milošević away from attempts to partition BiH.²⁰²

When the first fifty UN monitors came to Croatia on 14 January 1992, it looked as though the worst was already behind, since “people did not die en masse, in spite of the fact that they continued to die every day.”²⁰³ All attention of the international community was then directed towards *Krajina*, where Milan Babić, supported by the Orthodox Church, still tried to oppose Milošević.

On 15 February 1992, UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, in spite of doubts about the use of UN troops in the Balkans, asked the Security Council to send 14,000 troops to Croatia (i.e., in Slavonia and *Krajina*).²⁰⁴ The UNSC discussed this on 21 February and with Resolution 743 determined the aims of the peacekeeping forces: to “create peace and security conditions necessary for global solution of the Yugoslav crisis.”²⁰⁵ On 13 March they decided to choose as the seat for command of UNPROFOR “neutral” Sarajevo. They hoped to

¹⁹⁹ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., p. 241–243.

²⁰⁰ Oleg Levitin, “Inside Moscow’s Kosovo Muddle,” *Survival* (Spring 2000), pp. 130–140.

²⁰¹ V. K. Volkov, “Tragedija Jugoslavii,” *Novaja i novejšaja istoria* (1994), no. 4–5, pp. 19–20.

²⁰² Baker: *The Politics of Diplomacy* ..., p. 639; Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With no Peace to Keep* ..., p. 150.

²⁰³ *Republika* (1 November 1991), p. 13.

²⁰⁴ Zametica: *The Yugoslav Conflict* ..., p. 38.

²⁰⁵ Adam E. Roberts, “Communal Conflict as a Challenge to International organization: The Case of Former Yugoslavia,” *Review of International Studies* 21 (1995), p. 401.

forestall the start of ethnic violence in BiH with this symbolic gesture.²⁰⁶ From mid-March until mid-June 1992, the UNPROFOR troops settled in the region. This did not change conditions on the ground. One of the members of UNPROFOR told Mark Tanner, a journalist from the London newspaper *Independent*, that violence still reigned in Krajina, “*from stoning to throat cutting. Serbs want to force a Croat to leave his home. If they do not succeed in this, they kill him.*”²⁰⁷

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and international community in 1992

Because of new international circumstances (the international recognition of Slovenia and Croatia), Milošević started to reconstruct the country. Already during the winter of 1991–92, federal bodies of what remained from rump Yugoslavia began to create documents for the establishment of the third Yugoslavia, which was set up by the end of April 1992. It came into being under the name of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).²⁰⁸ The *FRY* declared itself a legal successor to the *SFRY*. Also we should not neglect the fact that Serbia did not formally expand, but de facto it did extend its influence into Croatia and BiH—in military, intelligence, economic, and political terms—“... *to wherever there is a Serbian house, wherever there is Serbian land and where the Serbian language is spoken ...*”²⁰⁹ If the wars had ended in 1994 on Serb terms, most of the Greater Serbia project would have been realized. The newly established states and the international community opposed the *FRY*’s status as the only successor to the *SFRY*. Because the *FRY* was involved in the war in Croatia and BiH, the international community took the legal position, expressed in decisions of the Badinter Commission, that all successor states that came into being in the territories of the former *SFRY* were equal successors of the *SFRY*. The international community did not succeed in reaching an agreement with Milošević on a cease-fire, which should have been a condition for the search for a solution to other open questions. The UN introduced economic sanctions against the *FRY* with the Security Council *Resolution 757/1992*, which isolated the *FRY* from the rest of the world.²¹⁰ The “third Yugoslavia” soon got a new political leadership. The first president of the *FRY* was the “spiritual father of the Serbs,” Dobrica Ćosić; while an American businessman of Serb descent, Milan Panić, became the new Yugoslav prime

²⁰⁶ *The Independent* (3 April 1992); Bendini and Potgieter: *Analysis Report: Former Yugoslavia ...*, p. 2; Alexander Gorelik, “UNPROFOR: Working in the Name of Peace,” *International Affairs*, vol. 51, no. 3 (1991), p. 118. ; MacKenzie Lewis: *Peacekeeper. The Road to Sarajevo*. (Vancouver-Toronto: Douglas & Mc Intyre, 1993).

²⁰⁷ *The Independent* (27 September 1992).

²⁰⁸ Leslie Benson: *Yugoslavia: A Concise History*. (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 165.

²⁰⁹ As quoted in a speech of Dobrica Ćosić at Pale, 5 May 1993, where he was trying to convince Bosnian Serb Parliament to accept Vance-Owen Plan. Silber and Little: *Yugoslavia. Death of a Nation ...*, p. 286.

²¹⁰ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy ...*, 251, 289–294; *New York Times*, (17 June 1992), p. A7; *New York Times*, (15 July 1992), p. A6.

minister. Panić was a surprise for everyone. Milošević had chosen him because he thought he would be the right man to help to fight the international isolation of the *FRY*, and the U.S. Government counted on Panić to find a solution to the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. So the State Department gave permission for Panić, an American citizen, to head the government of the *FRY*, although it had not given a similar permission for the former governor of Minnesota, Rudolph G. Perpich, to become a foreign minister of Croatia.²¹¹ When Milan Panić became the president of the federal government, he supported the attempts of the international community to find a peaceful solution to the Yugoslav crisis at the Conference in London, held in the second half of 1992. Panić remained in office only until he lost elections for the President of the Republic of Serbia on 20 December 1992. A few days after elections he had to resign as president of the federal government.

Bosnian crisis - Bosnia and Herzegovina (February–April 1992)

None of the Yugoslav ethnic nations had an absolute majority in the population of BiH. Due to estranged interethnic relations among Muslims, Serbs, and Croats because of the deepening Yugoslav crisis, the president of the presidency of BiH, Alija Izetbegović, had already in July 1991 demanded that UN peacekeepers be stationed in BiH. Because of the philosophy of the UN, which did not use its troops to prevent the start of violence, but only to “stop” it once it had broken out, Izetbegović’s proposal did not succeed. Also, demands of some Western diplomats for an international protectorate over BiH remained unanswered. Only the international peacemakers still tried to reach a compromise with the leaders of all sides, i.e. Muslim Alija Izetbegović, Serb Radovan Karadžić, and Croat Mate Boban, in an effort to come to a peaceful solution. Although a comprehensive political settlement was necessary, the conference was kept as a framework for separate talks on Bosnia, beginning in early February 1992 under the auspices of the EC troika and its current chair, negotiator José Cutileiro from Portugal. Cutileiro’s basic point was the proposal of the Bosnian Serbs that BiH had to be divided into sovereign cantons based on the model of Switzerland to ensure that all three constitutive nations of BiH would have equal rights. Cutileiro’s plan had not foreseen division of BiH into three divided entities, but only “spheres of interest” of the three ethnic groups. This plan was, in principle, approved by Croats and Muslims as well as by the Serbs. The objective of the international community was to find a political settlement upon which the Muslim, Serb, and Croat leaderships could agree that would establish Bosnian

²¹¹ *Star Tribune* (22 September 1995), p. 1A.

stability and sovereignty. Thus, instead of establishing a constitution for BiH, or a constituent assembly to write one, the EC negotiators accepted the view that the internal conflict was ethnically based and that the power-sharing arrangement of the coalition should translate into a triune state in which the three main ethnic parties (Party for Democratic Action/*Stranka demokratske akcije* – SDA, Serbian Democratic Party/*Srpska demokratska stranka* – SDS, and Croatian Democratic Union/*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica* – HDZ) divided territorial control among themselves. By the time of the Lisbon Conference in March 1992, all three parties spoke of ethnic cantonization of the republic into three parts; a “Balkan Switzerland” in the words of SDS leader Radovan Karadžić.

At a meeting in Lisbon on 23 February, Cutileiro showed a map that divided BiH in a way that Croats and Muslims controlled about 56% of the territory and Serbs, 44%. It looked as if this would be an acceptable position for all three sides to continue negotiations. In reality, no one was happy with Cutileiro’s plan. The Serbs wanted 60% of the territory, Croats did not achieve what they wanted (because of their low numbers), and Muslims, who were settled primarily in the cities and therefore did not control adequate portions of the countryside, were affected badly by the territorial division.²¹²

At the third meeting convened by Cutileiro in Sarajevo, on 27 February, Izetbegović again talked about a “united multiethnic Bosnia” to be comprised of “citizens” and not “nations.” Therefore, the agreement on a confederated BiH—which representatives of Bosnian Serbs made a precondition for Bosnian-Serb participation at a referendum on independence of BiH—was not signed. In spite of this, Bosniaks, in cooperation with Bosnian Croats, issued writs for a referendum, which took place between 29 February and 1 March. Bosnian Serbs boycotted the referendum and so the participation was 63.4% of eligible voters. In spite of the fact that more than 99% of those who participated voted for independence of BiH, this percentage was still too small to cement a new state community.²¹³ When the government of BiH declared the results of the referendum and on its basis the independence of BiH (on 3 March), the first armed clashes occurred in Sarajevo. The Lisbon talks were forgotten. Almost 100% of the Serbs were sure that they wanted to stay in Yugoslavia. Almost 100% of the Croats and Muslims were sure that they wanted to leave. Armed clashes escalated soon in Posavina and southern Herzegovina.

During the period when the circumstances in BiH became complicated and relations among ethnic groups worsened, politicians in the world, especially in the U.S.A., dealt with

²¹² Pirjevec: *Jugoslavanske vojne 1991–2001* ..., p. 124.

²¹³ *Vjesnik*, (4 March 1992), p. 1; Magaš and Žanić (eds.): *Rat u Hrvatskoj i Bosni i Hercegovini, 1991–1995* ..., 385.

the problem of international recognition of BiH. They dealt primarily with the questions of how to do it and what would be the consequences of this decision. Then U.S. Secretary of State James Baker remembered that on 27 February, Undersecretary for European Affairs Tom Niles wrote a memo in which five possibilities were mentioned as to U.S. policy towards the newly established states that had come from the ruins of former Yugoslavia. Until then, 45 countries had acknowledged the independence of Slovenia and Croatia; only Bulgaria and Turkey also acknowledged the independence of Macedonia and BiH. All the options that Niles put on the table included U.S. recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. The real problem was what relations ought to be towards Macedonia and BiH and how to implement them so that they would be in concert with EC policy.

After discussion in the State Department, Baker sent a letter to the U.S.'s European allies in which he asked for united U.S.-European action to send a warning to the regime of Slobodan Milošević to behave. At last the opinion prevailed that BiH and Macedonia ought to be recognized as soon as possible. Otherwise, in the view of the U.S. Department of State, they might encourage "adventurism which could lead to open armed fights." Those proposals provoked a different reaction in Europe and in the UN. They thought that it would be too early to recognize Macedonia because of opposition by Greece. Germany and the U.K. looked favorably towards recognition of BiH, but under the condition that it would not harm negotiations taking place among Croats, Serbs, and Bosnians under the auspices of the EC. In the end, the foreign ministers of the EC countries and the U.S.A. resolved that the EC countries would recognize BiH on 6 April and that the U.S.A. would recognize Slovenia and Croatia.²¹⁴

At the same time, Lord Carrington and Cutileiro continued to try to find a peaceful solution to the crisis in BiH. In spite of an outbreak of armed clashes in BiH, the international community still thought that the Bosnian crisis could be solved by peaceful means. This can be confirmed by the fact that on 13 March, Sarajevo became the headquarters of the general staff of UNPROFOR, under the leadership of Canadian General Lewis MacKenzie.²¹⁵ Izetbegović, Karadžić, and Boban even succeeded in accepting a "declaration on constitutional principles for a republic," in Lisbon on 18 March 1992. According to the declaration, BiH should be comprised of three "constitutive entities which should be based on ethnic principles; the constitution of its geographic territories should also be based on economic, physical-geographical and other criteria." In spite of the fact that they wanted to

²¹⁴ Baker III: *The Politics of Diplomacy* ..., pp. 639–640.

²¹⁵ Lewis MacKenzie: *Peacekeeper. The Road to Sarajevo*. (Vancouver, Toronto: Douglas&McIntyre, 1993), pp. 106-107.

emphasize that cantons would not be ethnically pure, the borders of the cantons that a group of experts had drawn in Brussels at the end of March “were based on an ethnic map of BiH on the level of communes with an absolute or relative ethnic majority in each of the communes.”²¹⁶

The Lisbon agreement was signed on 18 March 1992.²¹⁷ Emboldened by the growing U.S. pressure on Europe for immediate recognition of Bosnian sovereignty and, as many argue, by promises of support from Middle Eastern leaders (or by the negative implications of the accord for Bosnia and the Muslim nation), President Izetbegović reneged on his commitment to the document within a week. He was followed by the Croat leader, Mate Boban, who saw the opportunity to gain more territory in a new round of negotiations. Izetbegović rejected Cutileiro’s plan because it would neglect Bosniaks interests, demanding cantonization of BiH as *conditio sine qua non* for international recognition of BiH.²¹⁸ Ambassador Zimmermann’s role in this is another controversy. Some scholars claim that Izetbegović changed his approval of this plan under the influence of Zimmermann, who sought to incite him to resist Serbian and European pressures.²¹⁹ In an interview published in 1994 in the Belgrade weekly *Vreme*, Zimmermann denied this, but said “... *that he asked Izetbegović why did he sign something that he did not agree to ...*”²²⁰ Zimmermann wrote in his memoirs that drawing on his instructions to support whatever could be worked out between the EC and the three Bosnian parties, he encouraged Izetbegović to stick by what he’d agreed to. But he wrote also that he said to Izetbegović: “*It wasn’t a final agreement and there would be future opportunities for him to argue his views.*”²²¹ In 1992 Zimmermann could not influence Izetbegović to stick by the agreement because Milošević tried to convince the international community that he was not interested in BiH; while Karadžić, with the help of Serbia; was getting ready for war.²²²

Under these circumstances the leaders of the international community kept discussing what to do with BiH. The hopes of Izetbegović and his collaborators that after recognition of BiH the West would defend it turned out to be only illusions. The discussions in the international community were limited on the question of whether to recognize BiH or not,

²¹⁶ Tindemans et al.: *Unfinished Peace* ..., p. 48; Carrington, “Turmoil in the Balkans ...,” p. 2.

²¹⁷ *New York Times*, (29 August 1993), p. A10.

²¹⁸ Jasminka Udovički and James Ridgeway (eds.): *Burn this House: The Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997), p. 206.

²¹⁹ Pirjevec, *jugoslovenske vojne 1991–2001*.....,131

²²⁰ *Vreme*, (27 June 1994), p. 18.

²²¹ Zimmermann: *Origins of a Catastrophe* ..., p. 190.

²²² *Erasmus* (1994), no. 9, p. 101; Cohen and Stamkovski (eds.): *With No Peace to Keep* ..., p. 152.

how to do it, and what political consequences it would have. From that period, Ambassador Zimmermann's thinking is of interest. He believed, as he wrote in his memoirs,

*... that early Western recognition, right after the expected referendum majority for independence, might present Milošević and Karadžić with a fait accompli difficult for them to overturn. Milošević wanted to avoid economic sanctions and to win recognition for Serbia and Montenegro as the successor to Yugoslavia; we could offer him that recognition in exchange for his recognition of the territorial integrity of the four other republics, including Bosnia. I [was] concerned [about] drawbacks to my proposal. In the understatement of the year, I said: 'I don't deny that there is some chance of violence if Bosnia wins recognition,' but added my belief that 'there is a much greater chance of violence if the Serbian game plan proceeds unimpeded.'*²²³

The conversations of Zimmermann with Izetbegović were one of the first signs of a partial American return to the scene. Having left the Yugoslav stage to the European audition-seekers, as well as having refrained from following their January lead in recognizing Slovenia and Croatia, the U.S. was now preparing to return. This was partially the result of criticism that it had not been providing leadership of the Western world, partly the result of intensive lobbying in Washington by Bosnian representatives (especially Haris Silajdžić and future ambassador to the UN Mohamed Šaćerbey (Šaćirbegović), which appeared to have convinced many in the American political elite of the need to act decisively to assist Bosnia. As a result, the U.S.A. was preparing to recognize BiH, along with Slovenia and Croatia.²²⁴

When the representatives of all three constituent nations of BiH met again in Brussels on 30 March, it was clear that the war could not be avoided, because the Serbian side was unwilling to talk any more. Armed clashes became even more numerous. Under these tense and complicated circumstances, the EC recognized the independence of BiH on 6 April 1992. The U.S.A. followed on 7 April 1992. The "Assembly of the Serb Nation in Bosnia-Herzegovina," soon declared the independence of the Serb Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina (later renamed *Republika srpska*/Serb Republic).

Recognition of Bosnian sovereignty was an attempt by the West to shut this Pandora's box. Perhaps because the distinction between ethnic and national rights was still lost on outsiders, the granting of independence led them to view the escalation of fighting as a civil war. In spring of 1992, one of the bloodiest wars in the history of Europe began in ethnically mixed BiH.

Endless Peace Initiatives (May 1992–Fall 1994)

²²³ Zimmermann: *Origins of a Catastrophe* ..., p. 192.

²²⁴ Gow: *Triumph of the Lack of Will* ..., p. 88.

From the very beginning of the war, the international community tried to stop the fighting and to find a peaceful solution to all questions, especially because of the many refugees. All the peace plans suggested by the UN and EU were based on the condition that Bosniaks would not be forced to leave their homes in those territories where they were a majority before the war. By May–June 1992, the issue of national sovereignty was beginning to confront Western governments with a dilemma between their assessment of the strategic non-significance of BiH and a growing humanitarian crisis that the world could see. People in all of the Western and Islamic countries engaged were becoming increasingly vocal about the flood of refugees, the massacres, and the attacks on civilian populations being reported in the press and on television.²²⁵ The so-called CNN effect, i.e., the impression on public opinion provoked by television reporting on the events in the Balkans, helped in acceptance of many decisions in attempts to reach peace. One such event, which shocked viewers all over the World, happened 27 May in Sarajevo. Ca. 200 people gathered in front of a bakery on Vasa Miskin Street to buy bread, convinced that they were protected by the cease-fire agreement that the Yugoslav army and the Serb Democratic Party of BiH had announced. Nonetheless, three explosions killed sixteen people and wounded dozens more. Snipers then shot at the rest of the people and those who helped them, so that the death toll rose to twenty. Serb media tried to convince the world that Muslims shot on their own people, trying to invoke the emotions of the West. Even General MacKenzie, who was in Belgrade at the time, believed those stories for awhile.²²⁶ [See next chapter of the book.]

By the next day, the EC had reacted by imposing sanctions against the FRY. President George Bush, Sr., ordered that all assets of the FRY in the U.S.A. be frozen. In spite of opposition from UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, the UNSC confirmed the economic sanctions the next day. Resolution 757 outlawed Serbia from the international community until the attacks stopped. This resolution also asked NATO—for the first time in its history—to organize supervision over the flow of traffic on the Adriatic Sea to ensure respect of economic sanctions against the FRY and also the arms embargo on weapons for all the regions of the former Yugoslavia.²²⁷

At the same time, conditions in Sarajevo under siege worsened. In the city everything was lacking, even material for coffins. UNPROFOR did not do anything, in spite of the fact that catastrophe was anticipated. The reason for this passive reaction is to be found in the

²²⁵ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., pp. 234–235.

²²⁶ MacKenzie: *Peacekeeper* ..., 194.

²²⁷ Dick A. Leurdijk: *The United Nations and NATO in the Former Yugoslavia: Limits to Diplomacy and Force* (The Hague: Netherlands Atlantic Commission and the Netherlands Institute of International Relations “Clingendael,” 1996), p. 24.

views of the UN Secretary General, who looked upon the war in the former Yugoslavia as “the war of the rich.” He didn’t want to spend the scarce instruments at the UN’s disposal on softening the consequences of the war. In directing the mid-May retreat of the UNPROFOR command from Sarajevo, due to threats towards the UN personnel, he even moved the troops to Belgrade. Only 100 blue helmets remained in Sarajevo.²²⁸ Also representatives of the UNHCR and the International Red Cross, as well as EC representatives, followed, once one of the EC’s directors was killed when he accompanied a food convoy.²²⁹

Confronting catastrophe, those in the West were also agitating that something had to be done as soon as possible. The Islamic world also reacted sharply to persecution of its fellow believers in BiH. Forty-seven member states of the Islamic Conference Organization cut diplomatic ties with the FRY. Saudi King Fahd asked President Bush in a special letter to do something for Bosnian Muslims.²³⁰

To calm down public opinion, the officers of UNPROFOR who remained in Sarajevo wanted to convince the Bosniak government in Sarajevo and the Bosnian Serbs to agree on security of the airport in Sarajevo for receiving humanitarian aid. Bosnian Serbs promised to withdraw their troops. This victory convinced Boutros-Ghali to suggest to UNSC on 6 June that it widen the UNPROFOR mandate in BiH and strengthen the forces of the UN with one battalion. So Resolution 759 was passed, in which the UNSC notes the agreement of all parties to the reopening of Sarajevo airport for humanitarian purposes under the executive authority of the UN and demands that all parties and others concerned create immediately the necessary conditions for unimpeded delivery of humanitarian supplies to Sarajevo and other destinations in BiH. The resolution also determined that the UN would send 60 military observers and 110 blue helmets to oversee withdrawal of Serb anti-aircraft weaponry in a radius of 19 kilometers from the Sarajevo international airport.²³¹ The resolution was important also because it included UNPROFOR in Bosnian activities, thus denying the determination of the UN not to interfere in Bosnia.

The problem of BiH was on the agenda at the annual meetings of the G-7, the Western European Union, and the CSCE, all being held in July 1992. President Izetbegović and his foreign minister, Haris Silajdžić, made in vain urgent personal appeals at the CSCE meeting at Helsinki for military aid and for the placement of troops along the border of BiH with FRY

²²⁸ Boutros-Ghali: *Unvanquished: A.U.S.–U.N. Saga ...*, p. 41.

²²⁹ Richard H. Ullman (ed.): *The World and Yugoslavia's Wars* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1996), p. 100.

²³⁰ Tom Gallagher, “Bosnian Brotherhood,” *Transition*, vol. 1, no. 3 (15 March 1995), p. 23.

²³¹ Bendini and Potgieter: *Analysis Report: Former Yugoslavia ...*, p. 66–83.

to impose a blockade on the Bosnian-Serbian border.²³² On 11 June, on *kuban bajram* (the most important Muslim holiday), under the leadership of General MacKenzie, a unit of UNPROFOR returned to Sarajevo to open the airport again.²³³ When the Serb army shelled Sarajevo again with grenades, the Bosnian government declared on 20 June a “state of war” against the Yugoslav army and the Serbs, and six days later signed a military alliance with Croatia. (Less than a week before the July meetings at Helsinki, Bosnian Croats declared the independence of their state of Herzeg-Bosnia/*Herceg-Bosna*).

The attacks of Serb forces convinced U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to start considering military intervention. With U.S. National Security Advisor Scowcroft, he discussed this option at the White House; but George Bush, Sr., would not accept American intervention in BiH; the Pentagon also opposed it. Therefore Baker tried to convince his colleagues in the administration to at least assure armed protection of humanitarian aid. He constructed “Game Plan: New Steps in Connection with Bosnia.” This would enable humanitarian aid to reach Sarajevo “with all possible means.” To stop any hindrance of the “Game Plan,” Baker turned directly to President Bush, who agreed with him.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney and General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint-Chiefs-of-Staff, were against the plan. Although Bush theoretically had the last word, “bureaucratic-military obstruction” made it impossible for a feasibility study of this plan. This was the last attempt of James Baker to influence the events in the Balkans. Later he was named leader of the campaign for the reelection of George Bush and could not influence Balkan politics anymore. His views did not please the rest of the U.S. leadership. Lawrence Eagleburger replaced him first as acting, and later as Secretary of State.²³⁴ This switch illustrates the low priority that the Bush administration placed on the Balkan crisis.

The attacks of Serb forces, in addition to Baker’s discussions, made it possible for European leaders to sharpen their views. On 27 June they gathered in Lisbon and accepted a German proposal for a resolution. They demanded opening the Sarajevo airport and declared that they would still try to resolve the crisis peacefully, but they did not put out of question the use of military means if the Serbs continued to block the flow of humanitarian aid.²³⁵

This was the most threatening decision that was ever accepted by the EC. French President Mitterrand annulled this decision. Out of fear of “Islamic fundamentalism” and convinced that “the Serbs were the only earnest Yugoslav nation,” Mitterrand, without

²³² Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., 289.

²³³ MacKenzie: *Peacekeeper* ..., p. 207.

²³⁴ Baker III: *The Politics of Diplomacy* ..., p. 648–650.

²³⁵ Mac Kenzie: *Peacekeeper* ..., p. 198–200; Leurdijk: *The United Nations and NATO in the Former Yugoslavia* ..., p. 23.

consulting either European or American partners, on 28 June (on Vidovdan) flew into Sarajevo. By doing this he wanted to strengthen the thesis that events in Bosnia should be viewed not as aggression but as civil war. This meant that the military intervention that Baker demanded was not necessary and that the international community should limit itself to peaceful humanitarian assistance.²³⁶

The international community had to deal with the question of whether wars in former Yugoslavia could be treated as wars of aggression or civil war. Were the wars in Croatia and Bosnia *civil wars* or *international conflicts* (for which small-FRY would be liable to the charge of aggression)? Academic and popular literature on the war in Bosnia, as Sumantra Bose wrote, still today remains deeply divided on a basic issue: was it primarily a case of internecine bloodletting *among* Bosnians, or was it an avoidable war caused primarily by the “aggression” of FRY—and secondarily, Croatia—*against* Bosnia and the failure of the “West” to confront the aggressors in good time? Supporters of the “external aggression” thesis are strong proponents of preserving and developing BiH as a single, united state, while those who believe the 1992–1995 conflict was primarily a “civil war” have a range of attitudes towards the post-1992 state, from cautiously neutral to actively hostile.²³⁷

It is also worth mentioning that the body that the Yugoslav Presidency named to conduct relations between Yugoslavia and UN was named “State Committee for Co-operation with the UN,” indicating that the Yugoslav Presidency thought that the SFRY was above the conflict between ethnic Serbs and Croats (and after 1992, ethnic Bosnian Muslims or Bosniaks), which was a civil war.²³⁸

The international community knew; like it or not already by the spring of 1991 that Tito’s Yugoslavia could no longer be saved. It had been thoroughly undermined by the constant Serbian attacks on its constitutional structure and the corresponding movement of the northwestern republics towards independence. It was doubtful that *any kind* of Yugoslavia could be preserved. The country was moving towards disintegration, quite independently of any policy pursued by Germany or any other foreign power.

The international community did not face a “civil war” in Yugoslavia, since it was not a case of political enemies fighting for power in the state as a whole or over ideological and social issues. Certainly, to the outside world, the war appeared as a conflict among neighbors,

²³⁶ Tindemans et al.: *Unfinished Peace ...*, p. 61; Rosefeldt, “Deutschlands und Frankreichs Jugoslawienpolitik ...,” p. 648–649; *New York Times*, (29 June 1992), p. 6; Mathieu Braunstein: *François Mitterrand à Sarajevo - 28 juin 1992 - le rendez-vous manqué* (Paris:L’Harmattan, 2001)

²³⁷ Sumantra Bose: *Bosnia after Dayton. Nationalist Partition and International Intervention*. (London: Hurst and Company, 2002), p. 18.

²³⁸ Jović: *Zadnji dnevi SFRJ ...*, p. 428–429 (entry for 19 February 1992).

sometimes in the same village or town, and presented the ugly traits usually associated with such a war; yet this should not distract attention from the fact that the rebellion of the Croatian and Bosnian Serbs could not have taken place, and above all could not have been successful in the beginning, without the decisive involvement of the Serbian-led Yugoslav army. The Bosnian Serb willingness to fight in Bosnia even without assistance from Serbia remain a controversy. To study the determination of the Bosnian Serbs to fight—even in a losing cause, we would have to further expand our research by reading Bosnian Serb materials, for example the SDS press, the ICTY sources and as complete as possible the memories from active participants. The controversy remains also whether the Bosnian Serbs wished to continue even after Milošević told them to accept the Vance Owen plan.

Among the EC member states, Germany saw all this very clearly and very early on, and she concluded that this kind of blatant aggression of one Yugoslav republic and one Yugoslav nation against another should not be tolerated by the international community. This did not reflect a naïve and one-sided “good versus evil” view that “demonized” or “satanized” the Serbs, as some critics of German policy like to pretend when trying to evade a discussion of the objective foundations of Germany’s views on the conflict. To tolerate Serbian aggression did not, in any case, enhance the chances for a political solution—on the contrary. A policy that, correctly or not, gave the impression of treating the issue primarily as one of illegitimate “secession” and of under-emphasizing the essential responsibility of the Milošević regime for the origins and the conduct of the war was bound to be counterproductive. For one, it could only heighten the fears of the non-Serb peoples of being left at the mercy of Serbian nationalism, and thereby increase their determination to break free completely. At the same time, it could only strengthen the conviction of those in power in Belgrade that, ultimately, the international community would accept a solution by force in the name of the defense of a fictional “Yugoslavia.” The neglect of all these developments in Yugoslavia itself, in particular of their cumulative effect over time by critics of German policy, has led to a thoroughly irrelevant discussion of the alternatives open to the international community in 1991. Beverly Crawford assumes that Yugoslavia could have been preserved merely by the EC choosing to do so! She further implies that Yugoslavia, like the rest of the post-communist states, was moving towards democracy²³⁹, when in reality the policies of Milošević and Serbian nationalism had set the country on a course quite different from the major tendencies in Central and Eastern Europe.

²³⁹ “German Foreign Policy and European Political Cooperation,” *German Politics and Society*, vol. 13, no. 2 (Summer 1995), pp. 3-5.

Nobody would have denied that the Serbs had legitimate grievances against some of the ways in which Tito's Yugoslavia had been constructed and that the Serbs living in Croatia would understandably feel threatened by the resurgence of a rather intolerant Croat nationalism. But in politics, however justifiable the cause, once one crosses a certain threshold in the means employed, the method itself becomes the central issue.²⁴⁰ The Serbs themselves ruined their cause by being the first to raise the standard of a disruptive and repressive nationalism, and finally by treating their real or perceived enemies in ways all too often reminiscent of certain practices of totalitarian movements before 1945..²⁴¹

Seen from this perspective, the conflict in former Yugoslavia has above all been a tragedy of the Serbian people, who, as the leading nation in Yugoslavia, had both the responsibility and the opportunity after the fall of communism of giving themselves and their South Slav brethren a better deal.²⁴²

International recognition of Slovenia and Croatia in January 1992 and later recognition of BiH in April 1992, and recognition of Macedonia in April 1993 was important also from the point of view of controversies because from then on in the former Yugoslavia one could talk only about international and not civil war.

Perhaps a Slovene historian from Italy, Jože Pirjevec, was right when he described the Bosnian war as a "... *strange mixture of contemporary war with technically developed arms and a peasants' war led by people trained—in the old way—in slaughtering of sheep.*"²⁴³ This "mixture" was above all successful in ethnic cleansing of countryside regions, which happened far from the eyes and cameras of foreign reporters. In September 1993 the vice-president of Republika Srpska, Nikola Koljević, also admitted that to a British reporter as he said: "*You were so worried about Sarajevo that you did not even notice as we did elsewhere in Bosnia whatever we were pleased to do.*"²⁴⁴

British researcher James Gow wrote:

... Whereas the U.S. initially shared both the U.K.'s view of the complex ethnic character of the conflict and France's proclivity for opposing Slovenian and Croatian independence in the first phase, it also shared the German analysis that the war was one of Belgrade-led aggression, especially when conflict came to BiH. It was reinforced there by the appreciation that, whereas Slovenia and Croatia brought suffering upon themselves through

²⁴⁰ This is not understood by all observers of the Yugoslav crisis. A good example is General Charles G. Boyd, who writes in "Making Peace with the Guilty," in the September–October 1995 issue of *Foreign Affairs* (vol. 74, no. 5) that "all factions in the former Yugoslavia have pursued the same objective—avoiding minority status in Yugoslavia or any successor state—and all have used the tools most readily available to achieve that end."

²⁴¹ This logically leads to the question of whether the specter of a Serbian determination and capacity to fight with all means and at all costs against an international intervention raised by the opponents of such an intervention was based on a realistic perception.

²⁴² Libal: *Limits of Persuasion* ..., pp. 124–127.

²⁴³ Pirjevec: *Jugoslovske vojne 1991–2001* ..., p. 145.

²⁴⁴ Vulliamy Ed: *Seasons in Hell: Understanding Bosnia's War*. (New York and London: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 96–97.

*irresponsible behaviour (in U.S. eyes), BiH was an innocent victim of circumstance and well-planned Serbian aggression. This was the view of the Bush administration, but remained tempered by other concerns. With the arrival of Bill Clinton in the White House, this element came to dominate the U.S. perception of the conflict. In the early days of the Clinton administration, the American analysis of the war in BiH was as a “conventional case of aggression by one state (Serbia) against other (Bosnia).” In the case of BiH, the perception of an act of aggression was compounded by the (generally accurate) judgement that the Serbian camp was wreaking violence on the largely undefended Bosnian population. This interpretation of the war in BiH had been prominent in the Clinton election campaign.*²⁴⁵

A change in US administrations after the 1992 elections on 20 January, 1993 was important step in formation of U.S. policy towards Bosnia. Presidential candidate Bill Clinton was sharply criticizing Bush’s senior administration’s policy in Bosnia. Until the Dayton Agreement was reached there was a debate within Clinton’s administration. Vice-president Gore, Anthony Lake, Gore’s National Security Advisor Leon Fuerth, and then U.S. Ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright pushed for the “lift and strike” approach (which meant sending of arms shipments to Sarajevo Bosniak government), while threatening air strikes. The rest of the administration, especially Warren Christopher, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense Leslie Aspin, Jr., and Collin Powell, chairman of the Joint-Chiefs-of-Staff, opposed this approach.²⁴⁶

In spite of the fact that the International Committee of Red Cross in Geneva described the war in BiH as a mixture of international conflict and civil war, in the summer of 1992 most of the Western diplomats still considered it as a civil war. From the Serb point of view, of course it was a civil war. Therefore Mitterrand’s statement of 28 June 1992, when he suddenly came to Sarajevo, that in BiH a civil war was going on that could be solved with negotiations and not with force did not surprise anyone.

International media supported Mitterrand’s bravery; diplomats, however, did not. In spite of the fact that Mitterrand’s gesture was in concert with British policy, English Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd’s sharp comment was, “*Brave gesture of the president who is getting old.*”²⁴⁷ The reactions in Belgrade and in Bosnian Republika Srpska were more positive. Five months later, General Momir Talić, commander of the First Corps of the Serbian Bosnian Army, in an interview for Paris *Le Monde*, declared that Karadžić successfully used Mitterrand’s *coup de théâtre*. Serb troops withdrew from the airport, as UNSC Resolution No. 761 from 29 June demanded. International public opinion was therefore convinced that

²⁴⁵ Gow: *Triumph of the Lack of Will ...*, p. 207.

²⁴⁶ Madeleine Albright: *Madam Secretary*. (New York: Maramax Books, 2003), p. 181.

²⁴⁷ Newhouse, “Bonn, die Westen und die Auflösung Jugoslawiens ...,” p. 1203.

military intervention was not necessary.²⁴⁸ Already on 29 June the first plane with humanitarian aid landed at Sarajevo airport. Operation “Provide Comfort” could begin because NATO gave the UN its planes to start this controversial cooperation.²⁴⁹

The airlift soon played a role—as one of the Bosniak journalists commented—of morphine with which the West provided aid to the victims of war. At the same time, the West prolonged the war by giving Boshniaks the possibility to survive but not to defend themselves. The West also supported the other sides involved, because it is estimated that Boshniaks were getting only 10% of the humanitarian aid that the international community sent to BiH.²⁵⁰

In July 1992 the Serb military successes on the battlefields of Northern Bosnia were accompanied by some defeats on the diplomatic front. At the OSCE meeting in Helsinki, Russian Foreign Minister Andrej V. Kozyrev joined the West in condemning Slobodan Milošević, since, after the defeat of the nationalist Bolsheviks in Russia in the previous year, the Russian government could not afford to support the same kind of political leaders who continued to be in power in Belgrade.²⁵¹ The Russian “treason” shocked Serb public opinion. Even greater alarm, all over the world, was provoked by *Newsday* correspondent Roy Gutman, who publicized his discovery of the Serb concentration camps in Northern and Western Bosnia.²⁵² Gutman’s articles on Muslim and Croatian Bosnian prisoners in concentration camps and photographs of living skeletons in a concentration camp in Omarska (north of Banja Luka) forced the international community to demand action at once. One day before Gutman’s article was published, the U.S. Department of State admitted knowing about the described horrors, but in a special statement also said that there was nothing the USA could do to prevent them.

Once the TV stations from all over the world started to transmit photographs from the concentration camps (there were 94 of them with 400,000 prisoners²⁵³), George Bush, Sr., called a press conference at Patterson Air Force Base in Colorado to condemn ethnic cleansing. At the same time he tried to explain the relatively passive approach of his administration towards the conflict, saying that the USA for some months led different strategies to try to extinguish the incendiary conflict and stem the “Baltic” (SIC!) conflict. He

²⁴⁸ Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With no Peace to Keep* ..., pp. 55, 183.

²⁴⁹ Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With no Peace to Keep* ..., pp. 23, 83.

²⁵⁰ *Ljiljan*, 3 August 1994, p. 21.

²⁵¹ Ullman (ed.): *The World and Yugoslavia's Wars* ..., p. 133; Gow: *Triumph of the Lack of Will* ..., p. 195.

²⁵² Roy Gutman: *A Witness to Genocide: The First Inside Account of the Horrors of "Ethnic Cleansing" in Bosnia* (Shaftesbury: Element Books, 1993), p. XII.

²⁵³ Radonjić: *Naš slučaj* ..., p. 140.

had forgotten, however, that only a week before, at the G-7 meeting, he described the Bosnian tragedy as simple “moaning.”²⁵⁴

The Balkan question also became a burning question in the US presidential campaign. It gave the then presidential candidate William J. Clinton many opportunities to criticize Bush’s Republican administration. Clinton thought that the USA could not allow massacres of peoples on the basis of ethnicity. Clinton said that he would use air power against the Serbs to protect basic human rights.²⁵⁵ Although many important political personalities supported the possibility of military intervention, it was clear that there would be no military intervention until the US presidential election.²⁵⁶

In spite of the cautious approach of the West towards the Bosnian crisis, two decisions were made during the summer of 1992 that were of decisive importance for further development of events. Influenced by a Serb attack on a British airplane when it descended on the Sarajevo airport, on 13 August 1992 the UNSC accepted Resolution 770, demanding that unimpeded and continuous access to all camps, prisons, and detention centers be granted immediately to the International Red Cross and that all detainees receive humane treatment. In addition to that, the UNSC also asked the member states and regional institutions to use all necessary means to enable the flow of humanitarian aid to BiH.²⁵⁷ Thus, the UNSC indirectly allowed for use of force. The same day, the UNSC also passed Resolution 771, which “strongly condemns violations of international humanitarian law, including those involved in the process of ethnic cleansing.” At the same time the UNSC threatened to evaluate every violation of this resolution as an individual and not a collective violation.²⁵⁸ This threat to war criminals was repeated by the UN Commission for Human Rights, which met in extraordinary session in Geneva on 13 and 14 August 1992. On this occasion the Commission also unanimously condemned ethnic cleansing and asked former Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki to collect all possible depositions on war crimes in the region of the former Yugoslavia.²⁵⁹

In mid-August 1992 the British government, which was then presiding over the EC, convened an extended conference on former Yugoslavia in order to be able to better

²⁵⁴ Pirjevec: *Jugoslavanske vojne 1991–2001 ...*, p. 174.

²⁵⁵ *New York Times*, (28 June 1992), p. A 17; *New York Times*, (28 July 1992), p. A1; *New York Times*, (28 July 1992), p. A10; *New York Times*, (29 July 1992), p. A1.

²⁵⁶ *Der Spiegel*, no. 33 (1992), p. 133; Lawrence Freedman, “Why the West Failed,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 97 (Winter 1994–95), pp. 61–62.

²⁵⁷ *The Economist*, (8 August 1992), p. 17; *Delo*, (20 August 1992), p. 1.

²⁵⁸ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy ...*, 406.

²⁵⁹ Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With no Peace to Keep ...*, p. 111; Daniel Bethlehem in Marc Weller (ed.): *The “Yugoslav” Crisis in International Law: General Issues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. XXXVII; Rosefeldt, “Deutschlands und Frankreichs Jugoslawienpolitik ...,” p. 638.

coordinate activities of international organizations and different states in peace-maintaining efforts. In reality we may search also for other less noble reasons for convening this conference: (1) John Major's wish to assure a diplomatic victory for himself and strengthen the role of Britain in European integration processes; (2) the need of the Bush, Sr., administration to answer to Congressional initiatives and the public's desire to have a more responsive policy in the Balkans; and (3) to bridge the differences between Lord Carrington and Boutros-Ghali (as on the occasion when Carrington signed a cease-fire agreement together with Karadžić, Boban, and Silajdžić and did not ask for Boutros-Ghali's opinion, in spite of the involvement of UN troops in implementing peace).²⁶⁰

At the conference, which started 26 August, Boutros-Ghali and John Major presided and started with a strong condemnation of the FRY. It soon became clear, however, that Western powers wanted to continue the policy of noninterference and that they did not plan to revoke the arms embargo on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. The conference ended on 27 August, when all the participants accepted a statement of *principles*. But these principles contained all the contradictions and equivocation on the problem of national self-determination and the collapse of a state that had characterized Western action during the previous fourteen months. Prime Minister Major emphasized three of the thirteen principles in his closing remarks: (1) to deliver humanitarian aid from the international community, using armed escorts where necessary; (2) to protect human rights by stopping all violations of humanitarian law, granting humanitarian agencies immediate access to and then closing detention camps, and warning leaders that they would be held personally responsible for the commission of war crimes; and (3) to establish a peace process based on two principles—*“that frontiers cannot be altered by force”* but only by mutual consent and negotiation, and *“that within those fixed frontiers minorities are entitled to full protection and respect of their civil rights ... whether in Bosnia, Croatia or Serbia.”*²⁶¹ Major then concluded:

*The different former Yugoslav delegation, and in particular I think those from Serbia and Montenegro, must ask themselves this question: Do you wish to be considered as part of Europe? Do you wish to belong to the world community? If so, good, but that does mean accepting the standards of the rest of Europe and of the world community.*²⁶²

To enforce the above-mentioned obligations, the international community did not threaten military intervention, as it did two years previously in the Iraq crisis. It only additionally enforced UNPROFOR units in BiH to further cement the cease-fire and to

²⁶⁰ Pirjevec: *Jugoslavanske vojne 1991–2001* ..., 181.

²⁶¹ Gustenau, "Die 'Neuordnung Jugoslawiens'," ..., p. 490; Brendan Simms: *Unfinest Hour. Britain and the Destruction of Bosnia*. (London: Penguin Books, 2002), p. 21.

²⁶² From the transcript of these speech in "Policy statement," 26 August 1992, British Information Services, New York, pp. 2–4.

control events in the war. At the same time it further strengthened its pressure on the regime of Milošević.²⁶³

After the London conference did not produce the wanted results, the international community started to coordinate its efforts. Cyrus Vance, as representative of the UN Secretary General, and David Owen, former UK Foreign Secretary, became co-chairs of the new International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia (ICFY). The Executive Council of ICFY included the European troika and the troika of OSCE, representatives of permanent member states of UNSC, of the Islamic Conference, and two representatives of neighboring countries. Also included was Lord Carrington, as an individual, who, on the eve of the beginning of the London Conference (25 August) resigned as chair of The Hague Conference, which ceased to exist. ICFY so joined the other international organizations that were operating to find a solution to the Yugoslav crisis: UNPROFOR, UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross, etc.²⁶⁴ It was a vast machinery, which did not exactly contribute to a solution to the crisis. Almost simultaneously in early August Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of State, finally secured the agreement of the British and the French to conduct NATO air strikes in Bosnia, but the strikes could occur only if both NATO and the UN approved them, the so-called dual key approach. Bill Clinton commented that he was afraid that the players in the game could never turn both keys, because Russia had a veto on the Security Council and was closely tied to the Serbs. The dual key would prove to be a frustrating impediment to protecting the Bosnians, but it marked another step in the long, tortuous process of moving Europe and the UN to a more aggressive posture.²⁶⁵ In mid-September Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance visited Sarajevo, Zagreb, and Belgrade and with the political leadership there agreed to new negotiations, which started in Geneva at the end of September. Izetbegović continued to defend a unified and centralized BiH, which Western diplomats looked on as an irrational option. At the same time Croatia's Tudjman and then President of the FRY Dobrica Ćosić on 30 September signed a Special Declaration with eight points. With it, the Serbs acknowledged the existing frontiers with Croatia, while Croatians obliged themselves to guarantee special status for Krajina Serbs. Both presidents also temporarily solved the problem of Prevlaka Peninsula (southeast of Dubrovnik), which controls the bay of Boka Kotorska. In accordance with UNSC Resolution 779 of 6 October, Prevlaka became a demilitarized zone controlled by UN forces until a final solution could be

²⁶³ Magaš and Žanić (eds.): *Rat u Hrvatskoj i Bosni i Hercegovini, 1991–1995* ..., p. 390.

²⁶⁴ Graham Messervy-Whiting: *Peace Conference on Former Yugoslavia: The Politico-Military Interface* (London, 1994), p. 22.

²⁶⁵ Clinton: *My Life* ..., p. 534.

found. It looked as if the fight between the Serbs and Croats had ended. Muslims or Bosniaks were to pay the toll.²⁶⁶

Soon afterwards the military alliance between the Bosnian government and Croatia began to break down and officially ended on 24 October. The consequences of this were clear by November: Bosnian Croat forces that controlled the main supply route to the Bosnian government were taking a cut of supplies (up to 70%) and blocking all arms deliveries. A Bosnian government offensive begun in earnest the same month made inroads against Bosnian Serbs in Sarajevo and eastern Bosnia, and also against Bosnian Croats in central Bosnia.

The new outbreak of hatred in BiH confirmed the thesis of those diplomats who tried to explain the Bosnian War as irrational tribal conflict, a *Herald Tribune* commentator wrote.²⁶⁷ It looked as if the work of the numerous international organizations that had tried to find a solution for the Yugoslav crisis was in vain. All their demands and suggestions did not have any meaning. Particularly active was the USA, where the Bush administration (which was contending for the presidential election with Bill Clinton) had to show the electorate that it was active.

On 6 October 1992 the UNSC unanimously passed Resolution 780, which requested the secretary-general to establish, as a matter of urgency, an impartial Commission of Experts with a view to providing him with its conclusions on the evidence of grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and other violations of humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.²⁶⁸ With Resolution 781, which was passed 9 October, the Security Council decided to establish a ban on military flights in the airspace of BiH and undertook to examine without delay all the information brought to its attention concerning the implementation of the ban, and, in the case of violations, to consider urgently the further measures necessary to enforce it. This decision was aimed primarily against the Serbs, who used airports in Banja Luka and the military airport Batajnica near Belgrade to attack enemies' territories. This resolution, as well as Resolution 786 (adopted on 10 November, which reconfirmed prohibition against the use of aircraft and helicopters), did not have any special effect, however, because UN Secretary General Butrous-Ghali and UNPROFOR commanders did not want to provoke the Serbs; so it was then accepted only as a warning.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ Bendini and Potgieter: *Analysis Report: Former Yugoslavia* ..., pp. 30–31.

²⁶⁷ *International Herald Tribune*, (12 December 1992).

²⁶⁸ Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With No Peace to Keep* ..., pp. 107, 152.

²⁶⁹ Francine Boidevaix: *Une diplomatie informelle pour l'Europe: Le Groupe de Contact Bosnie* (Paris: Fondation pour les Etudes de Défense, Librairie de la Documentation française, 1997), p. 34; Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., p. 296.

The Bosnian Serb army did not pay attention to all those resolutions. Because of numerous infringements, from 10 October onwards NATO started to use AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) airplanes. This support to UNSC began NATO's active involvement in the war in BiH. During this period, Owen, Vance, and their collaborators tried to find in Geneva a diplomatic solution to the land dispute that would be acceptable to all sides in the conflict, i.e. Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats. They tried to prevent the division of BiH into three parts and, in accordance with directives of the London Conference, tried to keep intact its ethnic structure.

On 27 October 1992, they introduced the first draft of a plan that foresaw the division of BiH into seven to ten provinces that would enjoy wide autonomy. They would remain ethnically mixed, and the leadership of each of them would be divided among the three ethnic groups. The central government would care for defense, foreign policy, and trade.²⁷⁰ At the same time the troops of the Serb commander, General Ratko Mladić, tried to occupy Sarajevo.²⁷¹

It gave new strength to discussion on possible American intervention into the crisis. By now both the White House and State Department were leaning towards diplomatic and military intervention against the Serbs. Due to the "Vietnam Syndrome," the Pentagon was still against it. Soldiers were afraid that this type of military operation would be too costly for the issue, which was not a matter of vital national interest of the USA²⁷² (which proves the low priority that the United States attached to the Balkans).

Due to numerous reports on minority rights violations in Kosovo, Vojvodina, and Sandžak, on 16 November the UNSC accepted Resolution 787, with which it strengthened UNPROFOR and additionally sharpened economic sanctions against the FRY.²⁷³ On 25 November the UNSC also reacted favorably to the demand of Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov, and with Resolution 795, decided to establish the presence of UNPROFOR in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to monitor its borders with Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and promote close coordination with the CSCE mission there.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ Nimet Beriker Atiyas, "Mediating Regional Conflicts and Negotiation Flexibility: Peace Efforts in Bosnia-Herzegovina," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* (November 1995), p. 193.

²⁷¹ *The Economist*, (7 November 1992), p. 33.

²⁷² *Die Zeit*, (7 May 1993), Collin Powell wrote about this in his Memories; see Colin Powell: *My American Journey*. (New York: Random House, 1995), pp. 291, 558

²⁷³ Leurdijk: *The United Nations and NATO in the Former Yugoslavia ...*, p. 25.

²⁷⁴ The idea for Blue Helmets, which would include American GI's resulted from pressures from Macedonian Patriotic organization, an organization of Macedonian immigrants to the USA, based in Indianapolis. See: Ivan A. Lebamoff to Richard G. Lugar, 16 June 1992, *Macedonian Tribune*, (25 June 1992), p. 3; Ivan A. Lebamoff to Kiro Gligorov, 16 June 1992, *Macedonian Tribune*, (25 June 1992), p. 3; Richard G. Lugar to Ivan A. Lebamoff, June 26, 1992, *Macedonian Tribune*, (8 October 8 1992), p. 9; Dante B. Fascell to Ivan Lebamoff, 24 September 1992, *Macedonian Tribune*, (8 October 1992), p. 9.

By the next week they had sent 900 blue helmets to Macedonia, including American GIs. In addition to the echoes of the presidential race (between Clinton and Bush, Sr.), also fear of widening the conflict to the whole Balkan Peninsula played a role. In Belgrade some were even seriously considering the possibility of civil war between the followers of Panić and Milošević.²⁷⁵ As a result President Bush allowed the International Republican Institute to start financially supporting opposition forces in the FRY.²⁷⁶

Due to the dangers of widening the conflict, US President Bush changed his views towards the Yugoslav crisis. The fact that he lost the election in November 1992 to Clinton also played a role. Bush, who stayed in office until 20 January 2003, called an ICFY meeting in Geneva in which 30 cabinet members of European and American governments participated. Lawrence Eagleburger surprised everyone by his condemnation of Serb war crimes and his demand to establish an International Court for War Crimes on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, where Milošević, Šešelj, Karadžić, Mladić, Ražnjatović-Arkan, and others should be tried.²⁷⁷ This change in American policy and also the threat of air strikes against the Serbs raised doubts with the UN Secretary General, with Vance, Owen, and British and French diplomats and did not make them happy because it would endanger UNPROFOR troops. The Pentagon was not happy about this change in policy either.²⁷⁸

Already on 2 January 1993, a new meeting of ICFY was called. All important representatives of the Serbs, Croats, and Bosnians but Slobodan Milošević attended. At this historic moment, Vance and Owen showed their peace plan for BiH. According to Susan L. Woodward, the so-called *Vance-Owen Plan* for BiH made a heroic effort to move away from the presumption of ethnic partition in the Lisbon Accord and to reconstitute the idea of Bosnian sovereignty.²⁷⁹ The territory of the republic was divided into ten provinces (three for every ethnic group plus the neutral region of Sarajevo), drawn on the basis of geographic and historical criteria as well as the ethnic mix of the local population. The constitution established a power-sharing agreement among the nations of local and central governments, and a weak, decentralized state. Nonetheless, the negotiators' mandate was still to obtain a cease-fire as rapidly as possible. This meant negotiating with those who commanded armies and who were fighting for national rights, the same three party leaders.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁵ Boutros-Ghali: *Unvanquished: A.U.S.–U.N. Saga* ..., p. 50.

²⁷⁶ Ullman (ed.): *The World and Yugoslavia's Wars* ..., p. 137.

²⁷⁷ Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With No Peace to Keep* ..., p. 152.

²⁷⁸ John Major: *The Autobiography* (New York: Harper and Collins, 1999), p. 538; Gow: *Triumph of the Lack of Will* ..., pp. 114, 211.

²⁷⁹ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., 304.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.; Pirjevec: *Jugoslovske vojne 1991–2001* ..., 210–214.

Vance and Owen tried with this complicated compromise to harmonize the territorial integrity of BiH with its multiethnic character in a way to give it a constitutional order that would provide as much autonomy as possible to each of its constituent nations. The plan was in reality written by the British Foreign Office. The proposal was not accepted by the parties concerned. Only the Croats agreed with the plan, because it promised them 25% of the territory of BiH. The Serbs were disappointed because the plan promised them only 42% of the BiH territory. They would have to give up 24% of already-occupied land. The Vance-Owen plan was criticized also by the Bosniaks. They thought that the fulfillment of this plan would sooner or later mean a division of BiH between the Serbs and Croats, while it would at the same time encircle Bosniaks into a ghetto in which only the traces of religious and cultural autonomy would be maintained.²⁸¹

In spite of the fact that the fighting intensified again, Vance and Owen renewed negotiations in Geneva on 10 January 1993. This time they changed tactics and bet everything on Milošević. They did not care much about Eagleburger's statement of 16 December 1992 that Milošević ought to be held accountable before a military court tribunal for crimes against humanity. Milošević at first did not want to cooperate, but in the end he came to Geneva accompanied by President of the FRY Dobrica Ćosić.²⁸² Milošević was forced to cooperate out of fear of NATO intervention, which seemed more and more likely, but also to save the FRY from international isolation. During that time, the Bush, Sr., administration sent to the Adriatic the aircraft carrier J. F. Kennedy with accompanying ships of the Sixth US Fleet.²⁸³

Under the above-mentioned threats and due to the worsened economic situation in which the FRY found itself, Milošević was forced to fundamentally change his foreign policy. After he succeeded in occupying 27% of Croatia and 70% of BiH in the period 1991–1993, he thought that it would be worth it to lose some of these territories in exchange for better international public opinion of the FRY. In order to achieve this goal he, together with Dobrica Ćosić, tried to convince Karadžić to sign at least the constitutional part of the Vance-Owen plan.²⁸⁴

The Vance-Owen plan was criticized vehemently by many. The critics emphasized that the fulfillment of this plan would actually sanction the results of ethnic cleansing and that it did not foresee any force to implement it. In spite of the criticisms, the EC supported the plan

²⁸¹ Ejup Ganić: *Bosanska otrovna jabuka*. (Sarajevo: Bosanska knjiga, 1995), p. 263; *Ljiljan* (18 January 1993), p. 7.

²⁸² *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (12 January 1993 and 16 January 1993); Hearing before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, One Hundred Third Congress, First Session: "Crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina," February 4, 1993 (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1993), p. 24.

²⁸³ Ed Vulliamy: *Seasons in Hell: Understanding Bosnia's War* (New York and London: Simon and Schuster, 1994), p. 251.

²⁸⁴ Radonjić: *Naš slučaj - Second Part ...*, pp. 290–292.

and gave the Serbs six days to accept the agreement and sign it. The conference in Geneva continued until 23 January. It did not bring any significant results. Only the Croats supported this plan, while Serbs and Muslims continued to oppose most of its demands.²⁸⁵

During the course of negotiations in Geneva, on 20 January 1993 George Bush, Sr., was replaced by the newly elected U.S. President, Bill Clinton. The sympathies towards the Bosniaks expressed by the new president and his advisers during the presidential campaign were confirmed after he entered the White House by important members of the new administration, i.e., Defense Secretary Les Aspin, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and National Security Adviser Anthony Lake. The new administration at first criticized the talks in Geneva because there the attackers were put on an equal footing with those whom they attacked. The Clinton administration also emphasized that the fulfillment of the Vance-Owen plan would mean that the world community would for the first time in the 20th century give a prize for an aggressive policy.²⁸⁶ Among the policymakers in the White House, those who thought that the USA should take the initiative and solve the Bosnian question based on moral values prevailed.²⁸⁷

Governments of the countries that had their troops stationed in BiH accepted this policy of the Clinton administration with open discomfort. Therefore they tried to convince the USA to support the Vance-Owen peace plan. The Americans were not ready to do that, and also were not ready to send their troops to BiH to operate under UNPROFOR until fighting broke out between the warring sides on the ground. On the other hand, the Clinton administration did not want to continue to criticize peace-seeking efforts without looking for solutions. For the Clinton administration, however, it was totally unacceptable to move populations as Turkey and Greece did after World War I.²⁸⁸ Therefore the USA started to search for a possible solution that would include lifting the embargo on buying weaponry for the Muslims and having NATO airplanes enforce no-fly zones in BiH. If this could be done, the Serbs would lose at least a little bit of their military superiority. This solution would fulfill the moral duty of the superpower to aid the victims of attack; at the same time it would keep the number of possible GI casualties to a minimum.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁵ "Dokumente zum Zeitgeschehen: Der Vance/Owen-Friedensplan für Bosnien-Herzegowina vom 30. Jänner 1993," *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* 4 (1993), pp. 502–511.

²⁸⁶ Ali Rabia and Lawrence Lifschultz (eds.): *Writings on the Balkan War: Why Bosnia?* (New York: The Pamphleteers Press, 1993), p. 389.

²⁸⁷ Hearing before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, ... p. 23.

²⁸⁸ Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With No Peace to Keep ...*, p. 152; Maynard Glitman, "US Policy in Bosnia: Rethinking a Flawed Approach," *Survival* 38 (Winter 1996–97), no. 4, p. 72.

²⁸⁹ Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With No Peace to Keep ...*, p. 81; *Frankfurter Rundschau* (17 March 1993).

This plan of the U.S. administration was met by great resistance from both the European allies and the Pentagon. It is interesting to note that the resistance of the Pentagon was also supported by the Russian government. The Russian government was then already under pressure from army representatives, nationalist opposition, and the church because of its cooperation with the West in general, which brought only meager results in improvements of the Russian economy. The Russians had special relations with the Serbs by blood and religion²⁹⁰ (both were Slav and Orthodox), and critics of the Russian government from nationalistic circles used “the treason against their Slavic brothers” committed by Yeltsin and Kozyrev to criticize the Russian government. They stated that military intervention against the Serbs would be only a rehearsal for the attack of the West against Russia. To calm down those voices, Yeltsin and Kozyrev asked the West to take into account Russian interests in the Balkans.²⁹¹

Clinton knew that he had to placate America’s allies and support Yeltsin in his fight with the Russian nationalists, and he changed his policy towards Bosnia to a little bit more moderate stance and started to support the course of the peace process as it has been before. The question arises: What if Clinton had stayed on his course then. Would the war in Bosnia have stopped two years before it actually did? But, on advice of his National Security advisers, Clinton interceded on behalf of the continuation of negotiations and named Reginald Bartholomew his special representative at ICFY.²⁹² Bartholomew traveled first to Moscow to search for a just and satisfying solution to end the fighting in BiH and to start negotiations over again. Moscow diplomacy started to play an important role in attempts to solve the Balkan crisis. Now Russian President Yeltsin named Vitalij Curkin to be his special representative at ICFY.²⁹³

It looked as if the U.S.A. would at least fulfill its duty to foster peace in BiH. President Clinton in numerous diplomatic actions and in U.S. Congress pleaded for stationing of U.S. troops in Bosnia. On the other hand he was under pressure from military leaders in the Pentagon, who doubted that the above-mentioned bombing of Bosnian Serb positions would be successful, and he was on the verge of not executing the “lift and strike” idea.²⁹⁴ The U.S.

²⁹⁰ Marko Hoare commented that the claim that “The Russians had special relations with the Serbs by blood and religion” is misleading; the Russians’ ‘blood ties’ with the Muslims and Croats were just as strong, while the ties of religion were no stronger than, say, French ties with the Italians. If Russians sympathized with Serbs for ideological reasons, this is something that has to be explained. Let me add that I do believe that it was special ties also by blood and religion ... Their support of the Serbs for ideological reasons was in my opinion of the secondary importance.

²⁹¹ Freedman, “Why the West Failed,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 97 (Winter 1994–95), pp. 63–64; David Owen: *Balkan Odyssey* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1995), p. 116.

²⁹² Butrous-Ghali: *Unvanquished: A.U.S.–U.N. Saga ...*, pp. 70–71.

²⁹³ Owen: *Balkan Odyssey ...*, p. 116.

²⁹⁴ Pirjevec: *Jugoslovanske vojne 1991–2001 ...*, p. 225.

position was a bit more complicated, as the government was split between the Clinton administration, which went along with the British and French position on the former Yugoslavia, and the U.S. Congress, which was pro-Bosnian and ultimately favored a policy of “lift and strike.” Thus, to explain the outcome of the Dayton Agreement it is necessary to trace the triangular interplay among the three sides to Western policy: the British and French (broadly pro-Belgrade), the U.S. Congress (broadly pro-Bosnian), and the Clinton administration (vacillating between the two).

In spite of the diplomatic efforts, fighting and ethnic cleansing in BiH continued. To protect its credibility and to calm down international public opinion pressures, the UNSC tried to convince the Boshniaks to accept the Vance-Owen plan. However, it also promised that crimes against humanity committed by Serbs and Croats against Boshniaks would not remain unpunished. So the UNSC, on a proposal by France, passed UNSC Resolution 808 on 22 February, in which it decided to establish the Hague tribunal. The next day, President Clinton also proclaimed, after clearing it with UN Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, that the West would airlift supplies to the Boshniaks, who were cut off from their supply lines. In spite of quiet opposition from the Pentagon leadership, the French and the British operation “Provide Comfort” began on the night of 28 February.²⁹⁵

It is interesting to note that the international community hesitated and spent a large amount of time before deciding on any action, and even more before it actually acted. There are many reasons for such an attitude. Among the most important is the fact that the international community, including the United States, did not have any strategy on what to do with the former Yugoslavia, which was shaken by armed fights. The problem was complicated even more because some states had their own strategic interests, which depended on different historical sympathies (e.g., between Serbia and Russia) or historical animosities (e.g., between Serbia and Germany). There were too many organizations and bureaucrats who dealt with the Yugoslav crisis in general. Also, the neutrality of UNPROFOR, which was demanded by UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, had its impact—to slow down any action. Also states that had their soldiers in UNPROFOR were against any serious action, especially against any military intervention against the Serbs, because blue helmets, who carried only light arms, would not be able to resist any Serbian attacks.

By the end of February, Russia also published its views on the Bosnian conflict in a document divided into eight points. In it Russia asked all sides involved to agree to a cease-fire, emphasized its support for the Vance-Owen plan, and expressed its support for a

²⁹⁵ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (24 February 1993).

formation of military forces of the United Nations in which Russian forces and NATO would cooperate.

Negotiations over the Vance-Oven plan continued during March, April, and May 1993, but they stalled repeatedly over the same problem as in Lisbon: the lines of the map. Breaking the plan down into its parts—the constitutional principles, a peace agreement to cease hostilities, the delineation of provincial boundaries, and an interim constitution—the cochairmen obtained signatures from all three parties on only the constitutional principles. All other parts obtained no more than two signatures, in shifting combinations over the course of three months.²⁹⁶ But by 25 March, the Bosnian government and Bosnian Croats had signed all four documents, while the Bosnian Serbs refused to sign the map and the interim constitution.

The solution was to put pressure on the Bosnian Serbs by turning again to President Milošević: if Bosnian Serbs did not sign by 26 April, the sanctions on the FRY would be substantially extended and tightened.²⁹⁷ Because the Bosnian Serbs resisted, the UNSC accepted Resolution 816, in which it decided on March 31 to strengthen its enforcement of a no-fly zone over BiH. NATO planes began over-flights—Operation Deny Flight—on 12 April. The operation had important political implications. In addition to the USA, Great Britain, and the Netherlands, also France, which since 1968 had not been part of the NATO military structure, was involved. It was an important sign of new relations between the USA and Europe.²⁹⁸

Karadžić's reaction was threats of new violence; and only fifteen minutes after the operation began, Bosnian Serbs answered with a new attack on Srebrenica, which caused the UNSC Resolution 819 of 16 April.²⁹⁹ When this resolution was passed, the UNSC also threatened the FRY with new economic sanctions under UNSC Resolution 820, which was to be abolished only after FRY accepted all UN demands. The leaders of the Bosnian Serbs were indifferent, however, and fighting erupted all over Bosnia in the next days. It became clear that in the Bosnian Serb camp, the radicals were gaining, in spite of the demands of Milošević and Čosić to start a more peaceful policy. Because of the new eruption of violence, the UN decided to punish the FRY with economic sanctions.³⁰⁰

New sanctions meant a real economic catastrophe for the FRY. Slobodan Milošević became aware of the fact that he could not fight against the whole world, therefore he

²⁹⁶ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., 307.

²⁹⁷ Gustenau, "Die 'Neuordnung Jugoslawiens'," ..., p. 233.

²⁹⁸ Cohen and Stankovski (eds.): *With No Peace to Keep* ..., p. 152.

²⁹⁹ Bendini and Potgieter: *Analysis Report: Former Yugoslavia* ..., pp. 122–123.

³⁰⁰ Freedman, "Why the West Failed," *Foreign Policy*, no. 97 (Winter 1994–95), p. 66.

pressured even more for a compromise in BiH. In terms of their purely economic effect, the trade and other sanctions imposed against the FRY from 1992 to 1995 were highly damaging. During this period, the combined gross domestic product of FRY fell by half, and their combined foreign trade declined by two thirds. Politically, however, the sanctions induced disaster as, at first, they paradoxically strengthened the position of the Yugoslav government. The result of the sanctions for common people in FRY was a sharp decline in their standard of living.³⁰¹

Whereas sanctions had no immediate effect on Milošević's policy, they were perhaps the most important factor in his break with the Bosnian Serbs in 1994 and surely complemented military developments in enlisting support for the conclusion of peace at Dayton in order to expedite the lifting of sanctions against the FRY.

Milošević became more careful also because of the new debates in the White House, where the president and his advisers discussed the possibility of ending the arms embargo for the Bosniaks and also bombing Serb military targets.³⁰² The possibility of military intervention was so likely that the international community started to discuss an after-war scenario.³⁰³ This convinced Milošević to put pressure on the Bosnian Serbs to accept the Vance-Owen plan. With the assistance of Greek Prime Minister Konstantin Mitsotakis, Milošević convened a meeting at Vouliagmeni, near Athens, on 1–2 May of the cochairmen and Yugoslav, Croatian, and Bosnian leaders: Ćosić, Bulatović, Tudjman, Izetbegović, and Karadžić. After heated discussions the meeting ended with the promise of Karadžić to support the Vance-Owen plan if it were accepted also by the Parliament of Republika Srpska.³⁰⁴ This Parliament met on 5 May, but it did not accept the final decision. The majority of its delegates decided on holding a referendum to let people decide whether to accept the Vance-Owen plan or not.³⁰⁵ On 15 and 16 May 1993, 96% of all Bosnian Serbs who came to vote rejected the plan. After this political defeat, Milošević introduced economic sanctions against the Bosnian Serbs and closed the border on the Drina. In retrospect it seems clear that Milosevic never “closed the border on the Drina.” FRY resources continued to pour into the RS. The team in general concludes that too many observers took Milosevic too seriously when he was acting for his various publics,

³⁰¹ Also Serb economist, Miroslav Prokopjević agreed with those data (Miroslav Prokopjević to Matjaž Klemenčič, 8 August 2004).

³⁰² Gow: *Triumph of the Lack of Will* ..., p. 246.

³⁰³ Boutros-Ghali: *Unvanquished: A U.S.–U.N. Saga* ..., p. 84.

³⁰⁴ Gow: *Triumph of the Lack of Will* ..., p. 247.

³⁰⁵ Ivo H. Daalder: *Getting Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p. 114.

The Bosnian Serb refusal of the Vance-Owen agreement surprised the Clinton administration, which of course supported more moderate wing in Republika Srpska led by Biljana Plavšić, who supported Vance-Owen agreement. This did not bring here any points at the Hague.

A meeting of the UNSC was called. Because the Bosnian Serb actions were condemned even in Moscow, it was possible to find a compromise with which to solve this very complicated situation.³⁰⁶ On 6 May the UNSC, with Resolution 824, declared that Sarajevo, Tuzla, Žepa, Goražde, Bihać, and Srebrenica and their surroundings should be treated as safe areas. The issue of “safe havens” is dealt with by Team 4 of Scholars’ Initiative. During that period even greater chaos reigned in BiH. In April 1993 fighting also began to divide territories between the Croats and Boshniaks. During this period, fights between the Croats and Serbs nearly stopped, because Croats and Serbs were both preoccupied with fighting the Muslim army.³⁰⁷

After rejection of the Vance-Owen plan and start of an open war between Boshniaks and Croats, it became clear that the plan was null and void. Vance resigned as special envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and nonaligned nations started to search for a solution. The Pakistani representative to the United Nations sent a memorandum to the UNSC in the second half of May of 1993 in which UNSC Resolution 824 was criticized. The non-aligned viewed the safe haven concept to be null and void if the inhabitants of those zones did not get help and would be “just condemned to be passive serfs.” The international community should act, providing everything from humanitarian aid to military actions, the non-aligned nations pressured.³⁰⁸

Although arms embargo for former Yugoslavia was still in place, Clinton administration because Bosnia’s survival was at stake had not tightly enforced it. As a result both the Croats and the Bosnians were able to get some arms, which helped them survive. U.S. government also authorized a private company to use retired U.S. military personal to improve and train the Croatian army.³⁰⁹

The Vance-Owen plan failed after the Clinton administration criticized it for sanctioning ethnic cleansing and legitimizing *de facto* partitioning of Bosnia along ethnic lines.³¹⁰ The Vance-Owen plan was rejected also by the fighting sides in BiH (although Croatian and

³⁰⁶ Freedman, “Why the West Failed ...,” p. 66; *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, (7 May 1993).

³⁰⁷ Benson: *Yugoslavia: A Concise History* ..., 167; Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., 312.

³⁰⁸ Kofi Anan, “Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 53/35: The Fall of Srebrenica,” at <http://www.domovina.net/un.srebrenica/un.serb1.html>.

³⁰⁹ Clinton: *My Life* ..., 667.

³¹⁰ Wayne Bert: *The Reluctant Superpower. United States Policy in Bosnia, 1991–1995*. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), p. 195.

Muslim sides accepted it at first). Sumantra Bose wrote the following on the reasons for Vance-Owen plan to fail:

*... at that point in the war simply because it was already too late; too much had happened in the preceding year of fighting, mass expulsions and atrocities and BiH's political geography had changed beyond recognition, very rapidly. Vance-Owen's basic premise—BiH's population lives 'inextricably intermingled; thus there appears to be no viable way to create three territorially distinct states based on ethnic or confessional principles'—had been overtaken by events and was no longer fully valid ...*³¹¹

By the third week of May, conference cochairman Owen had acknowledged the failure of the Vance-Owen plan, and he and Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorwald Stoltenberg (who replaced Cyrus Vance) set about negotiating a new plan. The attempt to preserve a sovereign BiH had failed in all but name only.

After much discussion, the so-called “Action Plan” of French foreign minister, Alain Juppé was put forward, with its primary aim “*to put an end to horrible war and ... [to find a] solid and just solution.*”³¹² In spite of the protests of Islamic and non-aligned countries, the plan was presented to the UN and accepted by UNSC Res. 836. With this resolution, which was accepted at the beginning of July 1993, UNSC added to its rulings on BiH two important points. It allowed blue helmets to use force and NATO airplanes to intervene on demand by UNPROFOR.³¹³

Discussion on Bosnia occurred also when president Clinton hosted twelve presidents and prime ministers at the White House who had come to Washington for the dedication of the Holocaust Museum on 22 April. Some of the visiting leaders were pressuring the U.S.A. to get more involved in the UN effort to stop the slaughter in Bosnia. The most eloquent messenger of this viewpoint was Elie Wiesel, who delivered an impassioned speech about Bosnia at the museum dedication. Wiesel, a Nazi death camp survivor and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, turned to President Clinton and said: “*Mr. President ... I have been in the former Yugoslavia ... I cannot sleep since what I have seen. As a Jew I am saying that. We must do something to stop the bloodshed in that country ...*” In her memoirs Hillary Clinton wrote that she agreed with Elie Wiesel’s words, because she was convinced that the only way to stop the genocide in Bosnia was through selective air strikes against Serbian targets, but explained that President Clinton was frustrated by Europe’s failure to act after it had insisted that Bosnia was in its own backyard and was its own problem to solve. President Clinton met

³¹¹ Bose: *Bosnia after Dayton* ..., p. 169.

³¹² Daalder: *Getting to Dayton* ..., p. 19

³¹³ Leurdijk: *The United Nations and NATO in the Former Yugoslavia* ..., p. 100.

with his advisers to consider American involvement in the peacekeeping effort and other options to end the conflict. The situation became more agonizing as the death toll mounted.³¹⁴

When we ask the question of “guilt” for the continuation of the war in BiH in the first half of 1993, we could say that in addition to the three warring sides, also world politics and the great powers could be considered “guilty.” The West did not intervene for a long time. Russia, because of its historic ties with the Serbs, hesitated (it had its own economic troubles), The EU was divided in its views on the Yugoslav crisis, and the U.S.A. hesitated—there were long and exhausting discussions going on among the principals in the U.S. government. Chairman of the Joint-Chiefs-of-Staff Colin Powell was defending his ultimately discredited view that military intervention would be too costly. In her memoirs, Madeleine Albright for example, wrote that in answer to her question at a meeting at the White House, “*What would it take to free Sarajevo airport from the surrounding Serb artillery?*”:

... he [Powell] replied consistent with his commitment to the doctrine of overwhelming force, saying it would take tens of thousands of troops, cost billions of dollars, probably result in numerous casualties, and require a long and open-ended commitment of U.S. forces. Time and again he led us up the hill of possibilities and dropped us off on the other side with the practical equivalent of “No can do.” After hearing this for the umpteenth time, I asked in exasperation, “What are you saving this superb military for, Colin, if we can’t use it?” Powell wrote in his memoirs that my question nearly gave him an “aneurysm” and that he had to explain “patiently” to me the role of America’s military.³¹⁵

In his memoirs, Powell continued the story, as he wrote:

... American GIs were not toy soldiers to be moved around on some sort of global game board. I patiently explained that we had used our armed forces more than two dozen times in the preceding three years for war, peacekeeping, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance. But in every one of those cases we had a clear goal and had matched our military commitment to the goal. As a result, we had been successful in every case. I told Ambassador Albright that the U.S. military would carry out any mission it was handed, but my advice would always be that the tough political goals had to be set first. Then we would accomplish the mission. Tony Lake, who had served on the NSC during the Vietnam War, supported my position. “You know, Madeleine,” he said, “the kinds of questions Colin is asking about goals are exactly the ones the military never asked during Vietnam...”³¹⁶

Bill Clinton agreed with Richard Holbrooke who described Bosnian situation as “the greatest collective security failure of the West since the 1930s.” In his book *To End a War*, Holbrooke ascribes the failure to five factors: (1) a misreading of Balkan history, holding that the ethnic strife was too ancient and ingrained to be prevented by outsiders; (2) the apparent loss of Yugoslavia’s strategic importance after the end of the Cold War; (3) the triumph of nationalism over democracy as the dominant ideology of post-Communist Yugoslavia; (4) the reluctance of the Bush administration to undertake another military commitment so soon after

³¹⁴ Hillary Rodham Clinton: *Living History*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), pp. 169–170; Clinton: *My Life* ..., p. 512.

³¹⁵ Albright: *Madam Secretary* ..., p. 181–182.

³¹⁶ Powell: *My American Journey* ..., pp. 576–577.

the 1991 Iraq war; and (5) the decision of the United States to turn the issue over to Europe instead of NATO and the confused and passive European response. To Holbrooke's list Bill Clinton added a sixth factor: some European leaders were not eager to have a Muslim state in the heart of the Balkans, fearing it might become a base for exporting extremism, a result that their neglect made more, not less, likely.³¹⁷ This brings us to the ideology of pre-emptive war strategy, which worked in Kosovo, and was then applied to Iraq. The issue would certainly require careful analysis. Let us remember that intervention, when it did come, put pressure on the US and Europe to end the conflict as soon as possible, that is, to seek a political solution to the conflict. But what kind of political solution? In the case of Bosnia, it meant concessions to the Serb side at Dayton; in the case of the Vance Owen plan, the outcome would have been the same. A thoughtful analysis of this preemptive strategy should consider all aspects of such a move, including the pressure to end intervention quickly, if at all possible, by making political concessions to end the fighting.

Because of political and military changes that occurred in spring 1993 in BiH (e.g., the outbreak of fights between Bosniaks and Croats, defeat of Milan Panić in elections in Serbia) as well as in the international community (Cyrus Vance's resignation) the EC foreign ministers decided to start a new cycle of peace negotiations among the warring Bosnian sides. Between June and September 1993 a new peace plan was formulated (called the Owen-Stoltenberg plan, after the cochairmen) that returned to the ethnic principles of Lisbon and divided Bosnia into a confederation of three ethnic states. By using wordplay, Owen and Stoltenberg introduced the name "Union of Republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina," by which they emphasized its international recognition and at the same time its division along ethnic lines.³¹⁸ The plan was based on a draft written by Croatian president Tudjman and approved by Serbian president Milošević. It reflected the military gains of Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats and appeared to confirm the victory of the alternative scenario for BiH looming in the background since the Tudjman-Milošević discussions of July 1990–March 1991, to partition the republic.³¹⁹

In spite of the fact that a solution on division into three parts was in place, there were many questions left unsolved. The most burning question was how much territory Bosniaks would get, since they controlled only 10% of BiH but demanded 40%-45% of its territory.³²⁰ The Bosnian Bosniak government focused during the summer of 1993 on securing access to

³¹⁷ Holbrooke: *To End a War* ..., pp. 22–31; Clinton: *My Life* ..., 512–513.

³¹⁸ Atiyas, "Mediating Regional Conflicts and Negotiation Flexibility ...," p. 195.

³¹⁹ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., p. 310.

³²⁰ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 19 July 1993; *International Herald Tribune*, 19 July 1993.

the Adriatic and to the Sava River in the north, through what would become Croatian territory, and on the recovery of (prewar) Muslim-majority towns held by Serbs; but it appeared to have lost hope for a sovereign Bosnia. President Izetbegović finally gave up on his dual role on 31 July. In a radio broadcast of the meeting to the Bosnian population, he announced that the Muslims would now have to fight for territory to ensure their survival as a nation.³²¹

In this unsettled climate, Owen and Stoltenberg on August 18 presented in Geneva their plan for the future of BiH. It included maps according to which Serbs would control 52%, Croats 19%, and Bosniaks 30% of the territory. On 20 August, the Bosnian government rejected the plan and brought negotiations to a standstill. Despite strong evidence that public opinion favored an end to the war, the Izetbegović-Silajdžić leadership insisted it had no choice but to shift from diplomatic to military means and to continue the campaign to reclaim territory lost to Serbs and Croats. It looked as if the only language all the parties involved in the conflict understood was the language of violence. With the failure of negotiations during 1993 and simultaneous military gains by the Bosnian government and Muslim militia forces, Muslim politicians gave up on their Bosnian identity and began to create a Muslim state, expelling non-Muslims from villages and towns. Muslim schools sprang up to give children religious training (financed by Arab Muslim states), and circles within the government demonstrated increasing radicalism.

In autumn of 1993 the war intensified. The violence reached one of its peaks on 9 November 1993, when Croats continued their merciless siege of Mostar, willfully destroying in sixteenth-century bridge, a symbol of Bosnian unity and culture.³²² This action shocked the world. The Zagreb newspaper *Vjesnik* wrote on this occasion: “... *that once this bridge was destroyed ... any thought of survival of multicultural Bosnia seems as nonsense. The mortally wounded bridge is a tombstone on two shores of the river, which is widening ...*”³²³

At the same time, Western officials were congratulating themselves for success in keeping the Bosnian war contained. Efforts by the ICFY co-chairmen to raise the idea again of a global conference for all representatives of the former Yugoslavia and the major Western powers directly engaged in the conflict fell on deaf ears. During November the Clinton administration officials declared their policy in Bosnia a success because the media battle had been won: the war was fading from the airwaves.

³²¹ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., pp. 310–311.

³²² Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., p. 312.

³²³ Pirjevec: *Jugoslovske vojne 1991–2001* ..., p. 287.

During November and December 1993, however, two essential elements of the Western approach to the Bosnian war began to unravel. Under increasing pressure from front-line states, particularly Hungary, to relieve the costs of the sanctions to their economies and political stability, the EC began to discuss terms under which sanctions on FRY might be gradually lifted. With no end to the war and to the UN operation in sight and facing rising attacks on their UNPROFOR soldiers and a seriously deteriorating military situation in BiH, the French and Britain began threatening to withdraw their troops from Bosnia altogether.³²⁴

Although the EU backed down when the U.S.A. refused to budge on the sanctions, France began a more consistent campaign to obtain a substantial change on the ground. It pressured the U.S.A. to help obtain signatures on a peace agreement to counter the opposition of the Bosnian government; but the U.S.A. refused to help, objecting to a plan that the Muslims found unacceptable. French initiatives included a joint French-German proposal for revision in the current peace plan, put forward by German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel and his counterpart from France, Allain Juppé. Like the previous Owen-Stoltenberg peace plan, the proposal of Kinkel and Juppé also accepted an internal partition of Bosnia along ethnic lines. However, it proposed that 3% more of Bosnian territory be allocated to the Bosniaks, that a modus vivendi be established between the government of Croatia and the Bosnian Serbs, and that sanctions on the FRY consequently be eased.³²⁵ The Bosnian government and the Clinton administration opposed the plan, which never made further progress. Like its predecessors, that plan failed because the parties to the conflict were unable to reach agreement and the main external actors were unable or unwilling to bring sufficient pressure to bear on them.³²⁶

Because of different strategic interests, the international community once more denied “help” to BiH. It is interesting to note that the Clinton administration did not change its Bosnian policy at once, in spite of the fact that during his election campaign Clinton promised decisive action in BiH. Although, as Samantha Power wrote, the Clinton administration deplored the suffering of Bosnians far more than had the Bush administration, a number of factors caused Clinton to back off from using force. First, the U.S. military advised against intervention. Clinton and his senior political advisers had little personal experience with military matters. The Democrats had not occupied the White House since 1980. General Powell was still guided by a deep hostility to humanitarian missions that—in his view—

³²⁴ Pirjevec: *Jugoslavanske vojne 1991–2001* ..., p. 287.

³²⁵ Boidevaix: *Une diplomatie informelle pour l'Europe* ..., pp. 147–151; *Chicago Tribune*, (21 November 1993), p. 9.

³²⁶ Tindemans: *Unfinished Peace* ..., p. 52.

implicated no vital U.S. interests. Clinton was particularly deferential to Powell because the president had been publicly derided as a “draft dodger” in the campaign and because he had bungled an early effort to allow gay soldiers to serve in the U.S. armed forces.

Second, Clinton’s foreign policy architects were committed multilateralists. They would act only with the consent and active participation of their European partners. France and Britain had deployed a combined 5,000 peacekeepers to Bosnia to aid the UN delivery of humanitarian aid, and they feared Serb retaliation against the troops. They also trusted that the negotiation process would eventually pay dividends. With the Serbs controlling some 70% of the country by 1993, many European leaders privately urged ethnic partition.

Third, Clinton was worried about American public opinion. As the Bush team had done, the Clinton administration kept one eye on the ground in Bosnia and one eye fixed on the polls. Although a plurality in the American public supported U.S. intervention, the percentages tended to vary with slight shifts in the questions asked. And U.S. officials did not trust that public support would withstand U.S. casualties. Americans have historically opposed military campaigns abroad except in cases where the U.S.A. or its citizens have been attacked or in instances where the U.S.A. has intervened and then appealed to the public afterward, when it has benefited from the “rally-around-the-flag” effect. In the absence of American leadership, the public is usually ambivalent at best. Instead of leading the American people to support humanitarian intervention, Clinton adopted a policy of non-confrontation.³²⁷

UNPROFOR, with its complicated ways, also hindered any determined action in BiH. UNPROFOR—unlike IFOR/SFOR—never had any serious war-fighting capabilities. As such, it was never meant as or perceived as a peace-imposing force. It was a peacekeeping force inserted into regions where there was no peace. It was mostly irrelevant in Croatia (where the JA/local Serb forces had already achieved their goal of de facto separating from Croatia the ethnic Serb areas and never planned to conquer the rest of Croatia) and it was sometimes irrelevant but often itself a hostage to the warring parties in Bosnia. As such its introduction was one of the more irresponsible actions of the international community throughout this period.

The conditions in BiH deteriorated at the end of 1993. This period, however, brought numerous changes in the field of world politics. The first sign was the increased interest of the Clinton administration in the Bosnian war. The reason for that was the victory of the (nationalist) opposition at elections for the Russian *Duma*, which demanded renewal of the Russian (Soviet) Empire. Its most important messenger was Vladimir Zhirinovsky, who

³²⁷ Samantha Power: *A Problem from Hell. America and the Age of Genocide*. (New York: Perennial, 2002), pp. 304–306.

attacked the foreign policy of Yeltsin and Kozyrev and at the same time promised “Serb brothers, traditional allies of Russia” all the help they needed.³²⁸ The Clinton administration was aware of the fact that the Bosnian question was a salient issue of Russian internal politics and it had to consider how to prevent tensions between Russia and the U.S.A. because of the Balkan crisis. With the help of the Vatican and Bonn, the U.S.A. started to plan an intervention that would lead to peace between the Croats and the Boshniaks, isolate the Serbs, and strengthen Macedonian independence.³²⁹

Those diplomatic moves also caused changes among individual UN representatives in the former Yugoslavia. In December 1993 Thorvald Stoltenberg resigned from the post of special representative of Boutros-Ghali. Stoltenberg got into verbal fights with General Jean Cot. Cot wanted to have the right to answer to the Serb attacks immediately without having to wait for “*long procedures among civilians in the UN hierarchy.*”³³⁰ Stoltenberg was replaced by a Japanese diplomat, Yasushi Akashi, in January 1994. Before Akashi was named, by mid-January 1994, the blue berets commander in BiH, General Francis Briquemont, and General Cot were replaced for criticizing the non-activities of the UN and Secretary General.³³¹ The UN in general lived in the past, when Yugoslavia was the leader of the non-aligned movement and, as such, also a staunch supporter of the UN.

We should take into account also the negative side of UN intervention, with UN forces complicit in the assassination of Bosnian Prime Minister Hakija Turajlić; UN forces complicit in upholding the siege of Sarajevo; UN commanders like Generals Mackenzie and Rose deeply hostile to the Bosnians; UN sources making false claims about the Bosnians shelling themselves.

All the above-mentioned events would not be worth mentioning if they did not demonstrate serious crises inside the UN mission in BiH. One of the main reasons for these crises was the policy of an equidistant stance among the warring sides, which many criticized as fruitless passivity. By opposing air strikes on Serbian targets and his determination to keep calm and keep talking objectively, Boutros-Ghali was supporting the Bosnian Serbs, who were happy with his policy. Boshniaks accused Boutros-Ghali of being too friendly with Milošević and at an international conference in Kuala Lumpur, Izetbegovic said that among

³²⁸ Lenard J. Cohen, “Russia and the Balkans: pan-Slavism, Partnership and Power,” *International Journal, Canadian Institute of International Affairs* no. 49, vol. 4 (Fall 1994), p. 835.

³²⁹ Hans Koschnik, “Ethnisch gesäubert!?! – Bosnien Herzegowina, Kroatien und Serbien nach dem Dayton Abkommen,” *Zeitgeschichte* 25 (March–April 1998), p. 114.

³³⁰ Fiona M. Watson and Tom Dodd, “Bosnia, the UN and the NATO Ultimatum,” *Research paper 94/33*, House of Commons Library, 17 February 1994.

³³¹ Ghali: *Unvanquished: A.U.S.–U.N. Saga* ..., p. 142; Michael Rose: *Fighting for Peace: Bosnia 1994*. (London: The Harvill Press, 1998), p. 16; Owen: *Balkan Odyssey* ..., pp. 246–247.

thirty UNSC resolutions on BiH, only the one that forbade Bosniaks to be armed was passed and implemented.³³² Boutros-Ghali was trying to find excuses for his policy by saying that NATO's attacks would be more dangerous for UN troops on the ground than for the Serbs. Boutros-Ghali, as former Egyptian foreign minister during the Tito period, suffered from "Yugo-nostalgia" and still recognized the existence of Yugoslavia. UN troop commandants opposed his policy because they knew the situation on the ground. They could not bear the fact that they could not intervene in spite of many war crimes. Therefore it is not surprising that there were many quarrels inside the UN mission in BiH, especially between "civilians" and "soldiers."³³³

The Clinton administration wanted to make good on its promises in the election campaign of 1992 to do something in Bosnia. In spite of ongoing discussion within the administration on whether the limited action would bear fruit (then chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff Powell was in particular against it)³³⁴ President Clinton tried to end the period of inactivity of the international community in Bosnia. The unease over the in-effectiveness of the international community showed also in Brussels at a NATO summit on 10–11 January 1994 that U.S. President Bill Clinton attended. The main reason for this meeting was to launch the initiative "Partnership for Peace," which would include members of the former Warsaw Pact to connect them with NATO. The discussion was also on BiH.³³⁵

At the end of the meeting a communiqué for the public was issued in which NATO threatened the Bosnian Serbs again with air strikes if they did not stop the siege of Sarajevo, permit a rotation of UN troops in Srebrenica (from Canadian to Dutch) that the Bosnian Serb Army was blocking, and permit the use of the Tuzla airport for UN humanitarian aid.³³⁶ At that meeting they did not decide when these air strikes would occur if the Serbs did not fulfill the demands. The British and Canadian governments were worried about the destiny of their soldiers in Srebrenica, so they did not push for decisive answers. The French response (in reverse of their position from before) was to mobilize the UN Secretary-General, Boutros-Ghali, persuading him to reverse his position of mid-January and agree by 26 January if those demands were not met. The French did that under pressure of public opinion in their land.³³⁷

³³² *Delo*, (24 January 1994), p.1

³³³ Lewis MacKenzie: *Peacekeeper*.

³³⁴ Colin Powell: *My American Journey*. (New York: Random House, 1995), pp. 291, 558.

³³⁵ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (10 January 1994)

³³⁶ Hearing before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, One Hundred Third Congress, First Session: "Bosnia's Second Winter under Siege," 8 February 1994. (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1994).

³³⁷ Hearing before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, One Hundred Third Congress, First Session: "Bosnia's Second Winter under Siege," 4 February 1993. (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1994); Boidevaix: *Une diplomatie informelle pour l'Europe*, p. 59.

In spite of this French viewpoint, Clinton still doubted the readiness of the European Allies to act. At the end of the summit, he told them not to threaten air strikes if they didn't think they would fulfil the threat. He said: "*At stake is not only the security of the Sarajevo townspeople and the possibility to end this horrible war, but also the credibility of the alliance.*"³³⁸

Contrary to the insistence of the international community that the borders of the former country's constituent republics were internationally sacred and that each state was sovereign, the US officials argued that the limits to negotiations within these borders had been reached and instead sought to gain a way out of the deadlocks over some intractable issues by negotiating between republics' leaders, such as to provide access to the sea in Croatia for the Bosnian government.

This new ICFY tactic yielded an area of wide cease-fire among all three parties in BiH, and also between the Croatian government and *Krajina* Serbs—a "Christmas truce"—from 23 December 1993 to 15 January 1994. By mid-January, the cochairmen appeared to have resolved disagreements on all but about 5% of the contested territory in BiH. A joint declaration between presidents Tudjman and Milošević on 19 January to normalize relations between Croatia and Serbia, negotiated also at Geneva in November, appeared to return the diplomatic task to the hopeful status quo ante of January 1992 in relations between Croatia and *krajina* Serbs. Also in January, a new UNPROFOR commander for BiH, British Lieutenant-General Michael Rose, committed himself to build on the diplomatic progress of his predecessor in Sarajevo, Belgian Lieutenant-General Francis Briquemont, with a "robust" approach to implementing its mandate.

And then the tragedy of 6 February 1994 came. A 120-millimeter mortar fired into a Markale market in Sarajevo killed at least 68 people and wounded 197, providing the psychological shock necessary to mobilize diplomatic efforts from many sides.³³⁹ The contemporary observers as well as historians are still considering a possibility that this incident was one of the efforts of all the participants (but especially the Muslims, as the underdogs) to create incidents (including the killing of one's own people) to shock the international community and bring it in on one side or another. The legitimate question is whether the international community was willing to go along with this strategy because it facilitated intervention to end the war?³⁴⁰

³³⁸ Leurdijk: *The United Nations and NATO in the Former Yugoslavia* ..., p. 50.

³³⁹ David Binder, "Anatomy of Massacre," *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1994–95), pp. 70–78.

³⁴⁰ More on Markale massacre see: Benjamin Rusek and Charles Ingrao, "The 'Mortar Massacres': A Controversy Revisited," *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (December 2004), pp. 836–846

After the Markale market tragedy, the civilian and military leaders of UNPROFOR in Zagreb—Yasushi Akashi and General Jean Cot, together with General Rose in Sarajevo—began to negotiate a cease-fire for Sarajevo. Aided by a NATO ultimatum to the Bosnian Serb army issued by the North Atlantic Council on 9 February to “end the siege of Sarajevo” by withdrawing, or regrouping under UNPROFOR control, all heavy weapons from an exclusion zone around Sarajevo of twenty kilometers within ten days or be subjected immediately to air strikes, the first of three negotiated cease-fires over the next six weeks appeared to create a momentum for peace “from the bottom up.”³⁴¹ NATO’s ultimatum to the Bosnian Serbs was one of the decisive factors in the quest for a solution to the Bosnian crisis because the West turned from peacekeeping to peacemaking.³⁴²

Once NATO addressed this ultimatum to the Bosnian Serbs—without informing Moscow about it—Zhirinovskiy announced that air strikes on Serb positions in BiH would mean the “*declaration of war with Russia ... and the beginning of World War III.*”³⁴³ Russian foreign minister Kozyrev also wrote a letter to Boutros-Ghali that “*any type of air raids ... could provoke the worst consequences ...*”³⁴⁴ Part of the international community worked toward an agreement between the Croats and Bosnians, to be negotiated and implemented as soon as possible.³⁴⁵ The impulse for agreement was initiated by Pope John Paul II, the Croatian Catholic Church, and Bosnian Franciscans. It was supported also by Turkish, German, and especially U.S. diplomats.³⁴⁶ President Clinton’s special representative, Charles Redman, and U.S. Ambassador to Croatia, Peter W. Galbraith, presented to Croatian President Franjo Tudjman plans for a Muslim-Croatian federation in BiH. With different threats (e.g., economic sanctions) they convinced Tudjman to give up, at least temporarily, the idea of division of BiH,³⁴⁷ and persuaded the warring Bosnian Croats and Bosnians to stop fighting each other.³⁴⁸

For perhaps the first time, the U.S.A. and other members of the international community appeared to mean business. With the help of Russian diplomats and threats of air strikes, they convinced the Bosnian Serbs to withdraw some of their heavy weaponry from the hills

³⁴¹ *Die Zeit* (11 February 1994).

³⁴² *International Herald Tribune*, (11 February 1994); Leurdijk: *The United Nations and NATO in the Former Yugoslavia* ..., p. 54.

³⁴³ Gregory L. Schulte, “Bringing Peace to Bosnia and Change to the Alliance,” *NATO Review*, vol. 45, no. (2 March 1997), p. 24; *The Times*, (11 February 1994).

³⁴⁴ Andrej Kozirev: *Preobraženije*. (Moskva: Međunarodnije otnošenija, 1995), p. 123.

³⁴⁵ *Ljiljan* (9 March 1994), p. 23.

³⁴⁶ “Croats and the War in Bosnia,” *Strategic Comments of International Institute for Strategic Studies* 17, (17 January 1995), pp. 1–4.

³⁴⁷ Marko Hoare is right when he claims that Tudjman never gave up the idea of division of BiH.

³⁴⁸ Gustenau, “Die ‘Neuordnung Jugoslawiens’,” ..., pp. 278, 280.

surrounding Sarajevo.³⁴⁹ In the first armed action ever by NATO, two F-16 fighter jets shot down four Yugoslav planes that had violated the no-fly zone over BiH. This time, even the Russians thought that the action was justified.³⁵⁰

The actions of the international community brought results. On 2 March 1994 the international mediators practically forced the Muslims and Bosnian Croats to sign the Washington Framework Agreement, which unified the territories under their control into the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. After some days of Croat-Bosniak negotiations in Vienna, Austria, they formally signed the so-called Washington Agreement in the U.S. capital on 16 March 1994; in addition to Tudjman and Izetbegović, U.S. President Clinton also attended.³⁵¹ With the Federation, the Bosnian Croats would permit supplies to flow again to the Bosnian government (including weapons and materiel for the army) along routes they controlled, and joint operations could be encouraged between the Croatian Defense Council (*Hrvatsko vijeće odbrane* — HVO) and government forces. The agreement also supported the Bosnian government goal of recreating a unified BiH.³⁵²

The members of EU were not particularly happy about the Washington Agreement. If anything, Moscow was more supportive because they were convinced that it created a good starting point for future discussions with the Serbs. In Vladivostok on 14 March 1994 U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev met to discuss Bosnia. The results of this meeting were seen quite soon.³⁵³

While providing a welcome cease-fire and the revival of commerce through the opening of routes in areas controlled by the federation, the Washington Agreement also encouraged an intensification of the Bosnian government military offensive during the spring, confirmed General Mladić's interpretation of the discussion of August 1993 that Serbs were at war with NATO, and returned negotiations on a peace agreement to the situation that existed before May 1993. Now the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian government favored peace, while the Bosnian Serbs were again in the opposition. To ward off what appeared to be a death blow to ICFY from U.S. initiatives and to avoid the fate of the Hague conference in December 1991 and the Lisbon negotiations in March 1992, the co-chairmen proposed to set up a negotiating group of the major powers. This Contact Group, composed of representatives from the United States (Charles Redman), Britain (David Manning), France (Jacques-Alain de Sedouy),

³⁴⁹ Bendini and Potgieter: *Analysis Report: Former Yugoslavia* ..., p. 143; Owen: *Balkan Odyssey* ..., p. 358.

³⁵⁰ *The Times*, (1 March 1994).

³⁵¹ Owen: *Balkan Odyssey* ..., p. 268; Daalder: *Getting to Dayton* ..., p. 27.

³⁵² Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., p. 315.;

³⁵³ Bendini and Potgieter: *Analysis Report: Former Yugoslavia* ..., p. 143; Roland Schönfeld, "Auf dem Weg nach Dayton," *Südosteuropa Mitteilungen*, vol. 36, no. 2 (1996), p. 106.

Germany (Michael Steiner), and Russia (Vitalii Churkin) was to work out the missing ingredient to a general peace, an agreement between the new Bosnian–Croat federation and the Bosnian Serbs. The EU and the UN were excluded from the negotiating process in hopes of making it easier to negotiate.³⁵⁴ In summer of 1994, the group emerged with its peace plan, which recognized the existing borders of BiH as a whole, but more importantly allocated 51% of the territory to the Muslim-Croat federation and 49% to the Bosnian Serbs, effectively reducing the latter's previous gains by one-third.

The plan was issued to all sides with a fortnight's deadline to reply.³⁵⁵ After the Bosnian Serbs rejected the Contact Group Plan—despite the intercession of the Russian government and Slobodan Milošević—FRY closed its borders with those parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina under Serb control and broke off ties with Karadžić.³⁵⁶ On 23 September the UNSC adopted two resolutions. Res. 942 introduced economic sanctions against Bosnian Serbs and prohibited any diplomatic contacts with their leaders. Res. 943 decided to suspend the restrictions on travel and sports imposed by its resolutions on the FRY for an initial period of 100 days from the receipt by the Council of a report from the Secretary-General that the authorities of the FRY has effectively closed its international border with the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina with respect to all goods except foodstuffs, medical supplies, and clothing for essential humanitarian needs.³⁵⁷

In the U.S.A., the attacks by Serbs on Bihać triggered yet another assault on the administration's policy and the Europeans, particularly the British. The attack on Clinton administration policy was led by incoming Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole and by Newt Gingrich, the incoming House majority leader. Both demanded UN withdrawal, U.S. air strikes, and the arming and training of the Sarajevo government. In order to stave off Congressional demands for more concrete action, the U.S. Government unilaterally withdrew from the policing of the arms embargo in mid-November 1994.

At first it seemed as if the whole blockade would collapse. Although the Pentagon denied any intention of supplying U.S. arms to the Bosnians, it confirmed that arms for the Bosnian Serbs would be confiscated, whereas those bound for the Sarajevo government would be escorted by U.S. naval vessels to their destination to ensure they were not diverted elsewhere. The Pentagon also announced that it would not pass intelligence reports of weapons

³⁵⁴ Helen-Leigh-Phippard, "The Contact Group on (and in) Bosnia: An Exercise in Conflict Mediation?" *International Journal* vol. 53, no. 2 (spring 1998), p. 307.

³⁵⁵ "Vreme International", (20 June 1994), pp. 8–10.

³⁵⁶ Woodward: *Balkan Tragedy* ..., 307–312; Benson: *Yugoslavia: A Concise History* ..., 168.

³⁵⁷ Hans Stark, "Embargo mit begrenzter Wirkung: Die Sanktionen gegen Serbien und Montenegro," *Internationale Politik*, vol. 43, no. 7 (August 1997), p. 44.

shipments to the Europeans, unless these involved weapons of mass destruction or missiles likely to endanger allied aircraft. It made little practical difference: very few of the weapons reaching the Bosnians came by sea; only three of the 40,000-odd merchantmen stopped had been carrying arms; and, in any case, the Europeans could maintain the patrols themselves. Operation Sharp Guard in the Adriatic, and the embargo itself, would continue.³⁵⁸

This, however, did not stop the war. More territory changed hands in the period from fall 1994 to spring 1995 than at any time since the beginning of the war.

Year 1995: Peace in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina

Despite seventy-seven cease-fires from March 1992 until May 1994 and numerous diplomatic missions, in particular by Richard Holbrooke, U.S. assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs, ethnic cleansing continued in Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, the sequence of events, which was to change fundamentally the dynamic of the conflict, and immensely enhance the prospects for peace, began with the fall of Western Slavonia in Croatia. On 1–2 May 1995, Croatian armed forces mounted a surprise attack known as Operation Flash, which successfully reclaimed for Croatian government control UN Sector West (western Slavonia)—part of the Serb-controlled Krajina.³⁵⁹

The fall of Western Slavonia showed that the fanfare about union between the Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia was a hollow boast. But the Knin authorities ignored the lesson. After four years of rejecting any compromise, and expunging all traces of Croat history in their domain, they would not alter course. The Europeans, the U.S.A. and the Russia did not ignore the lesson. Keen to forestall another Croat incursion, the diplomatic representatives of the U.S.A., UK, EU, and UN stationed in Zagreb drew up a special peace plan for Croatia, which was intended to rectify the loopholes in the Vance plan. The “Z4 Plan,” as it was known, attempted to reconcile Croatia’s insistence on preserving the integrity of its frontiers with Serb insistence on self-determination.³⁶⁰ Tudjman agreed gingerly, through only as a starting point for discussions, Milošević supported the agreement. But Krajina leaders (Milan Martić and Milan Babić) rejected it outright.

After the Serbs in Croatia were defeated, Bosnian Serbs captured Srebrenica and Žepa, where they killed almost 8,000 Bosnian Muslims.³⁶¹ Consequently, NATO intervened with air raids on the Serb positions, and the Serbs agreed to start peace negotiations in August 1995.

³⁵⁸ Simms: *Unfinest Hour* ..., pp. 129–130.

³⁵⁹ *Vreme International*, (8 May 1995), pp. 8–11.

³⁶⁰ Peter W. Galbraith (ed.): *The United States and Croatia: A Documentary History 1992–1997*. (Washington: U.S. Printing Office, 1998), pp. 142–180.

³⁶¹ *Delo*, (13 July 1995), p.1; *Delo*, (23 November 1995), p.5.

During the summer of 1995, Milošević's dream of Great Serbia was totally crushed in Croatia. On 4 August 1995, Croat formations estimated at 150,000 men launched a coordinated series of around 30 attacks into the former UN Sectors North and South along a 300-kilometer front.³⁶²

European and some American military and intelligence officials had recommended against the action of the Croats in the belief that Milošević would intervene to save the Krajina Serbs. U.S. President Clinton and German Chancellor Kohl supported the offensive because they knew that diplomacy could not succeed until the Serbs had sustained some serious losses on the ground.³⁶³

With Operation Storm, the Croatian army regained control over most of the territories of the RSK. Croatia was again unified, with the exception of Baranja and Eastern Slavonia (Croatian *Podunavlje*) – BUT WITHOUT 250,000 *KRAJINA* SERBS WHO HAD FLED UPON THE APPROACH OF THE CROATIAN ARMY.

The operation, known as Operation Storm, lasted only five days. The capital of the Krajina, Knin, fell on the second day. With Operation Storm, the Croatian army regained control over most of the territories of the RSK.³⁶⁴ Croatia was again unified, with the exception of Baranja and Eastern Slavonia (Croatian *Podunavlje*)- but without more than 200,000 Krajina Serbs who had fled upon the approach of the Croatian Army. An offensive of united Croat-Bosniak forces against Bosnian Serbs continued into the region of BiH.

On 8 September 1995, the foreign ministers of BiH, Croatia, and the FRY, meeting in Geneva, agreed that BiH would remain a country divided into two entities, a Croatian-Muslim entity and a Serbian one. In October of the same year the cease-fire started. On 1 November 1995 peace negotiations started at an American Air Force base near Dayton, Ohio. Those peace negotiations ended with the signing of a peace agreement in December 1995 in Paris.³⁶⁵

Slobodan Milošević was right when, during a visit of Holbrooke's delegation to Belgrade just before the Dayton Agreement was signed, he engaged in the following conversation with General Wesley Clark: "*Well, General Clark, you must be pleased that NATO won this war*" (in Bosnia). Clark responded: "*NATO did not even fight this war. You lost it to the Croats and Muslims.*" Milošević answered: "*It was your NATO, your bombs and missiles, your high*

³⁶² *Vreme International*, (14 August 1995), pp. 6–8.

³⁶³ Clinton: *My Life* ..., 667.

³⁶⁴ *Vreme International*, (14 August 1995), pp. 4–8; Tanner: *Croatia: A Nation Forged in War* ..., 296–298.

³⁶⁵ Holbrooke: *To End a War* ..., pp. 79–288.

technology that defeated us. We Serbs never had a chance against you.”³⁶⁶ It is obvious that Milošević did not learn from this lesson, as future events of 1999 showed.

The signatories of this agreement were Alija Izetbegović of BiH, Slobodan Milošević of Serbia, and Franjo Tuđman of Croatia.³⁶⁷

After three years of war, peace came to BiH again. The reactions to the signing of the Dayton Agreement were the most euphoric in Belgrade, where the people honored Milošević as a visionary,³⁶⁸ and in Zagreb, where Tuđman evaluated it as a “victory of Croatian diplomacy” because the Croats lost the least of all the belligerents in the conflict. In BiH there were many who had doubts about the peace.³⁶⁹ Historian Ivo Banac criticized the Dayton Peace Agreement, saying it did not fulfill expectations for a lasting peace. Dayton did not make it possible for the return of refugees and for prosecution of war criminals. According to our team member Albert Bing, this peace agreement did not divide BiH but also did not abolish the possible reasons for its further fragmentation.

As mentioned, the Dayton Agreement foresaw stationing of 60,000 peacekeepers who, under the NATO command, would also protect internationally recognized frontiers of BiH. In accordance with a special agreement between NATO and Russia, 2,000 Russian soldiers were stationed in Tuzla.

Conclusion:

The breakup of multinational empires of the 19th century resulted in a proliferation of sovereign states. The breakup of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s resulted in a further proliferation of states. The Powers (international community) should have tried much sooner to foster a peaceful dissolution of the SFRY. It should also insist on meaningful rights for Serbs in Croatia before international recognition. All this may well have failed, but it would have been the “right thing to do.”

There are states and states. Only Slovenia and now Croatia can qualify as fully sovereign. More than half of the population of Montenegro and the vast majority of Kosovars dispute the sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which they see as an (illegitimate) extension of Serbia. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and perhaps Macedonia are based on such a degree of international authority and external security that we lack an adequate descriptive

³⁶⁶ Wesley K. Clark: *Waging Modern War. Bosnia, Kosovo and the Future of Combat*. (New York: Public Affairs, 2002), pp. 67–68.

³⁶⁷ *Delo*, (15 December 1995), p.7.

³⁶⁸ *Delo*, (23 November 1995), p5.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

term – they are neither states, nor trusteeships, nor protectorates, but rather would-be states that are a mixture of all three; so the international community decides on everything.