

YUGO NEWS



8 Nov 93

A report by **Doctors Without Borders** accused the UN of foot-dragging, bungling and recklessness in Yugoslavia and Somalia. It blamed the U.N. for tolerating and even contributing to human suffering around the world.

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Serbs held three Swedish peacekeepers **hostage** after shooting broke out while the Swedes were trying to rescue Croats trapped in a village. During the standoff, NATO jets flew low over the village in a show of strength.

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In **Sarajevo**, life for now is miserable but not desperate. Convoys carrying food and medicine are getting through, but Serbian forces continue to block deliveries of heating fuel and building materials - an increasingly serious problem with winter setting in.

"The Serbs know exactly what they can get away with, and they keep going up to that brink," said a senior U.S. official.

Farther away from the TV cameras, in **central Bosnia**, conditions are much worse. Fierce fighting between Muslims and Croats have cut critical supply routes. Relief workers warn that "a major humanitarian **disaster**" this winter for the region's 750,000 residents if new routes aren't found soon.

A January NATO summit also could increase pressure on the U.S. and its allies to do more for Bosnia. "The last thing any of us wants to see is pictures of starving children on TV at **Christmas** time (*The same season and circumstances which caused the U.S. to prematurely enter Somalia*), or even worse, just when the NATO summit is starting to remind us of our failure," said a European official.

9 Nov 93

Greece's relations with **Albania** have rarely been worse. The conservative government that lost the election last month was talking about autonomy for the Greek minority in southern Albania. Ugly incidents on the border are now more frequent.

The new Socialist government is more intransigent over **Macedonia**. Papandreou, Greece's once and present prime minister, says he will break off talks to agree upon a name for the relevant part of what used to be Yugoslavia, arguing that the name may not contain the word "Macedonia" (a contiguous part of which is a Greek province). Adding threatened injury to insult, the Greeks hinted that landlocked Macedonia could not survive if it loses access to Greek ports.

It is this Greece that

holds the presidency of the EC for the first six months of 1994. The EC will want the Greeks to be impartial regarding the Balkans. That seems unlikely over Macedonia. It may also be difficult with Serbia (Greece's foreign minister pledged to "**intervene**" on Serbia's behalf.)

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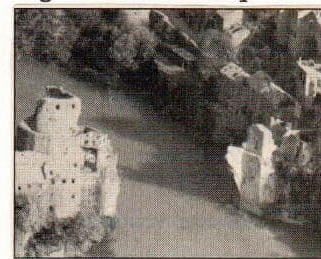
The first major evacuation convoy in six months left Sarajevo.

10 Nov 93

A Serb mortar attack caused dozens of casualties at a school in Sarajevo.

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In Mostar, another Serb shelling destroyed the historic 16th-century bridge that gave the city its name.



11 Nov 93

Civilian parts of Sarajevo were shelled by the Serbs for the second straight day.

12 Nov 93

Albanians have proclaimed their own **Republic of Kosovo**, elected a president, and declared their aims to be first independence then eventual union with Albania. (*Remember that this is the same process that preceded*

each of the other conflicts in Yugoslavia.) They say they want **unity** with the motherland - just as the Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia do.

Zeljko Raznatovic is the Serb pointman in Kosovo. Under the pseudonym "**Arkan**" he won a reputation in Bosnia and Croatia for **burning non-Serb villages**. He also holds the Kosovan seat in Serbia's parliament.

Serbia goes to the polls on 12/19 to elect a new parliament (see the 21 Oct 93 item in the November edition of *Yugo News*), and Arkan says that if his own party wins more than 10% of the seats he expects a cabinet post: Minister of the Interior would do nicely.

Serbs in Kosovo say their policemen are under methodical attacks by terrorists, while Kosovo's Albanians say the police constantly harass them and shake them down for Deutsch Marks.

Most Albanians and Serbs think the only solution lies in violence. But they agree that war is not imminent. The outnumbered Albanians will not start a fight. Meanwhile, Serb **ethnic cleansers** are itching to have a go, but Milosevic's government in Belgrade would prefer that they wait until after the world lifts its sanctions on Serbia.

Even when Yugoslavia's other wars are over, **this one will bubble on.**

13 Nov 93

Yugoslavia devalued the dinar by 98.65%, the tenth devaluation in 18 months.

16 Nov 93

Bosnia threatened to sue Britain in the World Court for violating a **1948 genocide convention** by opposing the lifting of the U.N. arms embargo on Bosnia. Britain and France, meanwhile, suggested that territorial concessions by Serbs should be rewarded a gradual lifting of sanctions.

18 Nov 93

Bosnia's three rival factions signed an agreement to guarantee U.N. aid convoys **unhindered passage** across the former Yugoslav republic this winter.

20 Nov 93

The UN **War Crimes Tribunal**, set up to try abusers of human rights in ex-Yugoslavia, began its first session in The Hague. It will draft rules of procedure and evidence and then adjourn until next year.

21 Nov 93

Body count: The UN has suffered 850 casualties in ex-Yugoslavia.

22 Nov 93

Following the lead of Britain and France, the EC will also will also **suspend international sanctions** if the Serbs cede more land to Bosnia's Muslims.

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Aid convoys remained stalled in Bosnia despite a four day-old agreement to the contrary.

23 Nov 93

Macedonia's interior ministry seized **300 rifles** and thousands of rounds of ammo from ethnic Albanians. **Macedonia** claimed the rifles were manufactured in Albania

itself, hinting that **Albania's** government had smuggled them across the border. The interior ministry also says it picked up a list of 20,000 potential supporters of the conspirators.

The interior ministry is controlled by Slav Macedonians. Many of the country's Albanians believe that the current accusation is a **set-up**, designed to justify a crackdown on the Albanian minority.

The ministry has also recently bought a new computer system, and is believed by many to be planning to use it to introduce a sort of **apartheid**.

Macedonian nationalist hardliners have called for the **exclusion** of all Albanians from the government. A week ago they came close to pushing a no-confidence vote through parliament.

24 Nov 93

U.N. aid convoys finally began moving again in Bosnia, though their arrival at their intended destination is still dependent on the grace of local warlords.

Travel Agent

In Serb-conquered regions - where the war is thought to be won - the carving out of ethnically pure states is being completed largely by **briefcase-carrying bureaucrats** rather than soldiers.

While some Serbs act like thugs, pressuring the Muslims to leave, others arrange bus, train and plane tickets and handle the paperwork to get them out of town. All for a fee, of course.

For the equivalent of \$60, the Serb-run Inlingua agency provides a bus ticket and documents to cross through Croatia. The UNHCR says the Serbs also charge "exit taxes" and other fees that bring the cost of departure to as much as \$200 per person.

Before the war 1.3 million people lived in northern Bosnia, 500,000 of them non-Serbs. Today, fewer than 100,000 non-Serbs remain. Of 350,000 Muslims, fewer than 40,000 are left.

Lacking any means to stop the ethnic cleansing, the UNHCR has been twisted into abetting it - many of the Muslims are referred to Inlingua by the UNHCR and Red Cross.

25 Nov 93

UN mediator Stoltenberg believes the warring parties are within inches of a peace deal, but the government of Bosnia is far from signing anything.

In the past few weeks Izetbegovic has cracked down on local gangsters and warlords in Sarajevo, and installed a more Muslim government with fewer Serbs and Croats. He is also talking of switching from a defensive war to a liberation of occupied territories - gambling that, while his soldiers get on with the fighting, the UN will somehow manage to feed his civilians.

In Mostar, the Serbs are selling arms and ammo to the Muslims, and may even be giving them artillery support. If Sarajevo has been relatively quiet lately, it is because the Serbs have

let Bosnian troops out of the city to fight Croats to the west.

In other places, the Serbs are helping the Croats against the Muslims (the Croats abandoned Vares only after the Serbs broke a promise to intervene on the Croats behalf).

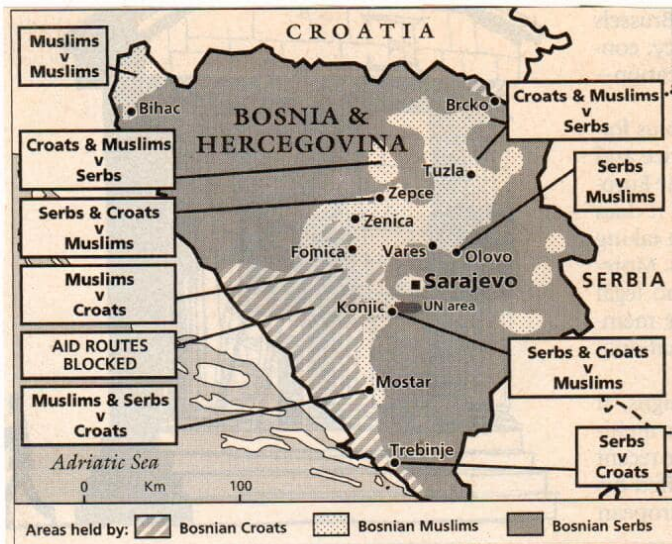
The Serb logic is plain: divide and conquer.

Meanwhile, in northern Bosnia the Croats are fighting alongside the Muslims against the Serbs, and the intra-Muslim fighting continues in Bihac.

The UN has saved many lives, but it may thus have prolonged the agony. (See the Ecology of War article in the September issue of Yugo News). Lord Owen, the other UN mediator, said last week: "Let us not forget we are feeding the warriors, we are interfering with the dynamics of the war ... This is becoming more and more unjustified as it becomes a battle for smaller elements of territory, smaller elements of principle. There will come a moment when the world will have decide how long we can sustain intervention."

27 Nov 93

Fighting some people to get help to others is a new UN concept that has yet to prove itself. Attempted modestly in Bosnia, it works only in a fashion; more aggressive intervention in Somalia has come messily to grief.



Doctors Without Frontiers, with Yugoslavia and Somalia in mind, this week released a report blasting the UN for doing either too much or too little: sending troops in to protect relief convoys, to mask the fact that the UN is not prepared to accept the pain of political decisions. "Humanitarian aid," says the report, "permits intervention by armed forces yet gives them no precise political program."

Doctors claims that life for an aid agency grows more, not less perilous, when the UN sets out to protect it. Armed intervention complicates a situation and, after a bit of calm, heightens the danger to aid givers. On the whole, it argues, it is safer and more effective for a relief agency to swallow its disgust and pay tribute to a local faction.

Humanitarian aid will not be seen as impartial - essential for the UN's credibility and aid-givers' safety - when it is part of an integrated operation in which the UN's own soldiers have become actively involved in the conflict.

1 Dec 93

The U.S. announced that it will double the number relief flights to Bosnia and provide **\$150 million** in aid this winter.

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Peace talks hit an impasse as the Bosnians accused mediators of siding with the Serbs. What is really on offer in Bosnia, and has been for months, is peace without justice for Bosnia's Muslims, or else war without end for all. What the West is seeking is the **least bad end** to an even worse war.

11 Dec 93

These are Serbia's Weimar days. The official **inflation** rate for November was **20,190%**; it may by now have surpassed the record set in Germany in 1923 of **32,000%** in a month (a *major factor in Hitler's rise to power*. To put this in perspective, imagine a loaf of bread that cost \$1 last month and \$200 or \$300 today).

Serbia will continue subsidizing the Serb states in Bosnia and Croatia for years, but has no money to do so. Output stands at one-third of its prewar rate. the parts of the economy that still work rub on D-marks; the parts that don't, barter (admission to the zoo is not in money, but in animal feed).

The government has caused **hyperinflation** by printing money. The tax system has collapsed, the government has no income worth counting; public spending is financed by note-printing. Serb economists say the budget should be slashed, but the ruling Socialists believe that "the only way

to survive is by continuing to print money ... This can go on for a long time." (!)

12 Dec 93

Milosevic's decision to hold an election was taken when **Seselj**, leader of the Radicals, made it clear that he had political ambitions of his own and was no longer prepared to support **Milosevic**, who had previously been considered about as nationalist as a Serb could get. **Seselj** calls **Milosevic** a "profiteer", while **Milosevic** brands his former ally a "war criminal."

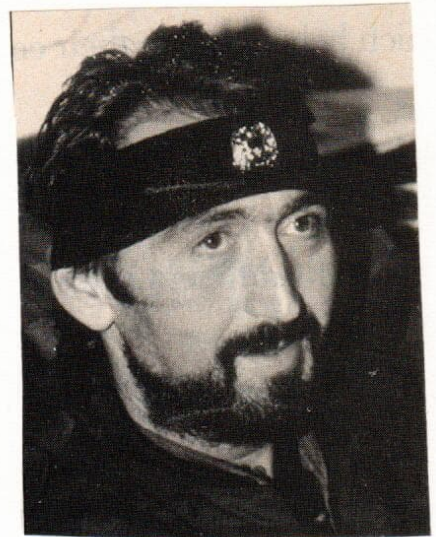
State television (controlled by the Socialists) now denounces **Seselj** and his militia, while giving **Arkan** sympathetic coverage. **Arkan** is the leader of the Unity Party, the most active militia, and is an accused **war criminal**.

It appears that **Arkan's** party is being promoted in the hope of draining votes from the Radicals (*much as Perot did from Bush*). As a result, **Arkan** could end up controlling up to **8% of parliamentary seats**.

The campaign is revealing Serb leaders own words that, first, Serbs from Serbia have indeed committed war crimes in Croatia and Bosnia and, second, that the goal of Serbia all along has been the creation of Greater Serbia. In fact, all the major parties, whether left or right, nationalist or pacifist are campaigning in favor of unifying Serb lands.

15 Dec 93

The Croats released 800 Muslim prisoners from a camp near Mostar.



Arkan

16 Dec 93

The Serbs have been backing the secessionist Muslims in Bihac.

17 Dec 93

An Islamic group claimed responsibility for slaying 12 Christian Croat and Bosnian technicians in Algeria. (*The first instance of the civil war spilling out of the Balkans*).

20 Dec 93

Germany, France, Britain, Holland and Denmark all established **diplomatic relations** with Macedonia.

21 Dec 93

Although **Milosevic's** Socialists appear to have gained in plurality in the elections, they suffered a setback when **Krajina** rejected **Milosevic** henchman **Milan Martić** (chief of the secret police) in favor of former **Krajina** president **Milan Babić**. **Babić's** election does not represent a reduction in nationalist settlement, but rather a **distrust of Milosevic** himself.

Danube Dominoes

The creation of Greater Serbia and Greater Croatia has provoked Albanian demands, particularly in Kosovo, for a similar union. And if Kosovo ignites, so too would the rest of the Balkans.

Greater Albania would include 85% of Kosovo population, 30% of Macedonia's, and 200,000 Albanians in Greece. Some Serb nationalists have floated the idea of divvying-up Kosovo with the Albanians, and as Serb harassment of Kosovans has increased, desire for union with Albania has grown.

A Greater Albania, however, would mean the **end of Macedonia**. In addition to the large Albanian minority, Macedonia is home to 40,000 Serbs, 100,000 Turks, and 20,000 Greeks. An Albanian uprising would thus **engulf Greece**. And if conflict in the Balkans were to pit Muslim Albania against Orthodox Greece, it would be hard for **Turkey** to stay on the sidelines.

Vojvodina is another area of concern. There are **15 million Hungars** in Europe, but only 10 million in Hungary. The rest reside in Transylvania in **Rumania**, Transcarpathia in the western **Ukraine**, and **Vojvodina**. Should Serb ethnic cleansing spread to the latter, Hungary's government would be under extreme pressure to act.

If national boundaries continue to be redrawn in the Balkans, then just about every state farther north has a territorial claim it can dust off from history: Romania, Poland and Hungary



against the Ukraine, the Baltic States against Russia, Hungary against Rumania, and so on.

Sorting out this tangle will not be easy. Merely raising the issue of national minorities encourages claims and counter-claims that cannot be easily reconciled. Even without an eruption of violence, politics in Eastern Europe will be **poisoned by national grievance** - and thus economic development held back - for years to come.

26 Dec 93

The tally of Serbia's elections: Socialists 37%, economic liberal Depos 16% and ultra-nationalist Radicals 13%. This would enable Milosevic to form a coalition government. The only big loser was the party of Arkan, the ethnic

cleanser. All parties were nationalist to some degree.

28 Dec 93

A Christmas ceasefire in Bosnia was to run from 12/23 to 1/15 but was ignored from the start.

31 Dec 93

Gen. Briquemont, the outgoing U.N. commander in Bosnia, said the U.N. should spend less time passing resolutions and focus instead on sending enough peacekeeping troops. Citing the 4/93 resolution that established 'safe havens', he said there has never been enough troops to implement it.

1 Jan 94

Canada may withdraw its troops from Bosnia after some of them were subjected

to a 'mock execution' last month.

6 Jan 94

Sarajevo suffered it's worst bombardment in months.

† ✖ ©

British Lt. Gen. Rose was announced as the new U.N. commander in Bosnia.

Basically the last two months have been of the same. It appears that - a Balkan implosion notwithstanding - the war in Bosnia has moved into a third, and possibly final, phase.

The first phase of open warfare began almost four years ago, when the then Yugoslavia invaded the newly independent Slovenia and Croatia. That period was followed by the one of unconventional warfare and ethnic cleansing. The third period started this last fall. It has been marked by frequent shellings, harassment of U.N. troops and 'will they, or won't they?' negotiations.

Sources

Wall Street Journal, USA Today, The Economist, FBIS Daily Reports