



YUGO NEWS



This Issue: *Bosnian June Offensive, 'Contact Group' Peace Plan*

26 June 94

Bosnian Serb president Karadzic said that he would not sign a peace agreement if it does not mean the **automatic lifting of the sanctions** introduced against Yugoslavia. "If they want to enlarge their territory around Sarajevo, the Muslims must make concessions to us in eastern Bosnia," Karadzic said, and explained that he was implying the Muslim enclaves of Gorazde, Srebrenica, and Zepa.

30 June 94

Macedonia imposed a 7.5% tariff on Slovenian goods, depriving Slovenia of its preferential trade status. Macedonia said it was imposing the tariffs because of the trade deficit between the two countries.

Note: Tariff's always reduce imports. It's hard to understand why Macedonia would do this if it is as affected by the sanctions on Yugoslavia as it claims.

2 July 94

The UN recorded **24,420 trucks** crossing the Yugoslavia-Macedonia border, in both directions, in the 2nd quarter of this year. That is double the traffic of the 1st quarter. The figure does not include rail traffic or small-time sanctions-busters in buses and cars. A large part of the trade entering Serbia consists of oil, steel and nitrates (used in the manufacture of fertilizers and explosives). Serbia has threatened to cut off Macedonia's supply of electricity, coal and phosphates if Macedonia halts the smugglers.

Note: The monitors cannot hope to be effective, and thus neither can the embargo be effective, as long as their function remains solely monitoring. (They then report the smuggling to the

country of origin, which is supposed to investigate and prosecute the smugglers.)

4 July 94

Last week the Bosnian Assembly created a **new government**. Haris Siladzic was chosen to lead the federation government, which is expected to function during a six-month transition period. The assembly also agreed on a cabinet that includes 14 Muslims, 13 Croats and one Serb. (The cabinet nominees include a number of extremists and former battlefield foes from each side.)

† ✖ ☾
Armed Croats forcibly recently **evicted 80 Muslims** from Mostar under often brutal circumstances. The evictions were blamed on "rogue units." (*Remember, peace and/or cooperation is entirely dependent on the whims of local militia.*)

Fighting in Central Bosnia

Bosnian government troops have been attacking a mountainous Serb-held salient south of Doboj for weeks. Doboj is an important railroad town. Most of the area is part of Mt. Ozren. Besides being a strategic piece of terrain, Mt. Ozren holds great religious significance for the Serbs -- it is also the sight of a 13th century Orthodox monastery and historic churches.

The Bosnian objective is to secure the Zenica-Tuzla road, giving Bosnia a secure, all-weather supply line from the Adriatic coast into north-central Bosnia. Gen. Rasim Delic, Bosnian Army commander, said his army was strong enough to "embark on the liberation phase of armed struggle."

Heavy artillery fire continued

throughout central Bosnia in the last week of June, with the Serb-held positions of Doboj, Mt. Ozren and Zavidovici and the Bosnian-held positions of Bihac and Gracanica being particularly hard hit. Sarajevo was also hit by several dozen RPG's (which aren't covered by the UN's heavy weapon ban).

On June 24th, the Serbs retook some territory around Mt. Ozren. Heavy fighting also occurred in central Bosnia around Bugojno and Travnik. Tensions began increasing around the capital, Sarajevo, Visoko and Gorazde, with Visoko (15 miles northeast of Sarajevo) seeing "a remarkable increase of military activities".

"We've seen a major hike in their [Bosnian] fortunes with the recent formation of the federation," said LTG Rose, UNPROFOR commander in Bosnia. "It has given the Bosnian government combat power. This increase in fighting power might persuade them that they can take the war to the Bosnian Serb side."

On June 25th, the Bosnian Army continued to make significant gains in the Doboj-Maglaj-Tesanj triangle, capturing a major supply route near Maglaj. Heavy infantry and artillery fighting also occurred between Zavidovici and Ribnica. The Bosnian Serb military admitted that their troops had suffered "large losses" in the fighting, and requested UN assistance in an ongoing evacuation of Serb civilians from the area.

The Serbs began pressing non-Serbs around Prijedor into forced labor on the front lines, indicating "something big going on." Serb troops began preparing for a major armored offensive.

On June 30th, the Bosnians and

Serbs fought "with a high level of artillery fire" near Mount Ozren and the town of Zavidovici. Artillery fire also fell further north on Doboj and Gracanica. The Bosnian advance reached its peak, nearly cutting the Mt. Ozren salient in two and gaining about 4km near Zavidovici.

Three days later, Bosnian Serb forces broke the Muslim pressure in north-central Bosnia, taking territory near Zavidovici, and shored up the Serbia-Krajina supply corridor. The Muslims suffered heavy casualties. In other action, Serb troops also moved into a position to cut Sarajevo's newly-acquired road link to the Adriatic and Serb troops were building up in the Sava valley near Bosanski Samac (just west of Brcko).

The fighting around Doboj may be a prelude to the real showdown: a battle for the Posavina corridor (the narrow land linking Serb territories in western Bosnia and Croatia with Serbia).

5 July 94

The **US embassy** was opened in Sarajevo. The opening is a clear sign of support for Bosnia.

☙ ✕ ☙
The **UNHCR ops** are in jeopardy because of a money shortage. UNHCR says it may cease ops after July unless it gets a \$50 million infusion. (So far, donations are only 20% of last year's).

☙ ✕ ☙
The **Sarajevo airlift** marked its 2nd anniversary. It is the longest airlift in history. Twenty nations have participated in almost 10,000 flights bringing more than 116,000 tons of food and 14,000 tons of medical and other assistance to Sarajevo.

Macedonian Census Extended

The deadline for the Macedonian census has been extended for five days until July 10th. The census began on June 21st. So far only about 60% of the population has registered. It is likely that a large part of the Serbian and ethnic

Albanian population failed or refused to register. Most Albanians also boycotted the last census in 1991. This time Macedonian authorities have assured them that their claims to citizenship would be recognized, but the Albanians are wary because they are barely represented on the committees that will tally the results. The Albanians need an impressive showing in the census to back up their demands for increased political clout. Albanian leaders are divided on whether their people should register.

Krajina Flare-Up?

Is a new war in the offing in Croatia?

Croatian President Tudjman repeatedly has said Croatia will not extend the **UN peacekeeping mandate** beyond its Sept. 30 expiration. "Tudjman needs a mobilizing factor that will once again unify not only the ruling party, but also the whole nation," said a Zagreb military analyst assessing the situation and potential developments in Croatia. "To do this, he only needs to pull out the sword."

Croatia has been **expanding military** ties with Iran since March, with arms shipments increasing dramatically since then. It has acquired 16 MiG-21 jet fighters, plus tanks and anti-aircraft weapons, on the black market. It has reorganized its military, and moved 15 brigades to face the Serbs in northern Bosnia.

Croatian Foreign Minister Granic said Croatia would use diplomacy to secure the reincorporation of **Krajina**. For their part, Krajina Serb leaders have not deviated from their position that the RSK's de facto independence is nonnegotiable.

Croatia and the Balkans stand on the brink of a major conflict that could go beyond the scope of the previous clashes in the **Wars of the Yugoslav Succession**. It could well break out in the Serb-held areas of Croatia, since, as one diplomat put it, the Serbs "simply are not interested in negotiations."

US Ambassador to Croatia Peter Galbraith noted that he considers "war a **very real danger**. If there is another Serb-Croat war, it is going to be unlike what we've seen so far. It could escalate to air raids on cities, rocket attacks, and large-scale tank and artillery assaults. Such a war could lead to the direct involvement of the Yugoslav army."

EU envoy Lord Owen, trying to keep the negotiations separate from those over Bosnia, is attempting to get talks between separatist Croatian Serbs and the Croatian government back on track.

6 July 94

A **UN helicopter** was hit by ground fire north of Sarajevo.

☙ ✕ ☙
Protesting last month's jailing of ten Albanians on weapons charges (*see the 27 June 94 article in the July/94 Yugo News*), a coalition of Albanian political parties withdrew from Macedonia's ruling coalition. That leaves the coalition without a parliamentary majority. A vote of confidence has been scheduled for July 14th.

☙ ✕ ☙
Macedonia and Croatia agreed to establish diplomatic relations. Croatia said it recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name, along with its flag and present borders.

☙ ✕ ☙
Yugoslavia cracked down on **Ham radio** operators to harmonize "amateur radio frequencies with the needs of the army" and thus deny "logistical support to the enemies of the Serb people."

7 July 94

South-African judge Richard Goldstone, who conducted high-profile investigations into violence and covert operations in his country, will likely be named prosecutor of the UN tribunal on war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. The probes earned Judge Goldstone respect among both blacks and whites and were credited in keeping on track the fragile negotiations that led to free elections earlier this year.

☙ ✕ ☙

The Sarajevo exclusion zone was violated by Serb troops who moved a mounted 75 mm gun through city suburbs. The UN sent Russian peacekeepers "to follow the gun and apprehend it if possible".

8 July 94

Canadian Prime Minister Chretien said **Canada's peacekeepers** would be withdrawn from ex-Yugoslavia if the arms embargo is lifted.

Rebel Muslim soldiers staged a company-sized raid on the city of **Bihac** itself.

Serb ultranationalist **Seselj** and four of his underlings have been charged with attempting to incite a brawl. A key piece of evidence, a video recording of the incident, disappeared without a trace. In related news, ultranationalist paramilitary leader, and accused war criminal, **Arkan** filed a slander suit against **Seselj**.

Peace Plan

Under the current peace plan, Bosnian Serbs would have to surrender about a third of their conquests and remain a part of Bosnia (not Greater Serbia). Sarajevo would be divided into Serb and Muslim-Croat sections; it would be under UN administration for two years.

Sanctions against the Serbs would be gradually lifted if they withdrew to their designated areas, otherwise



sanctions would be tightened, the embargo on the Bosnians lifted and air strikes possibly launched. The plan also returns much of the Posavina corridor, though not Brcko itself, to the Bosnians.

The Bosnian-Croat federation would get aid to rebuild the country and NATO military support to enforce the peace settlement. If Bosnia balks, and Serbia cooperates, the sanctions could be lifted only from Serbia.

UN peace envoy Stoltenberg briefed the Security Council on the plan: "I think this is the only realistic proposal ... what is the alternative?"

Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic said he would "consider all implications of what's been offered."

UN Yugoslavia envoy Akashi was pleased with the Serbs' "constructiveness" during the peace talks.

Bosnian President Izetbegovic and Prime Minister Siladzic said they endorse it. "If we evaluate that the Serbs will say no, then we will say yes. So, I emphasize that we will be saying yes, since the Serbs will be rejecting it," said

Izetbegovic. "By refusing the plan, we would be doing Karadzic and Milosevic a big favor, so they could continue the war ... putting the blame on us ..."

Secretary of State Christopher told Siladzic that the US would send troops to keep the peace if an accord is signed.

Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev told Serbian President Milosevic that there is no alternative to a positive response to the plan.

Croats are enthused about the plan, which assures their position in the Posavina region, central Bosnia, and western Herzegovina.

If neither side can maneuver the other into rejecting the plan, both may sign a peace treaty in bad faith. The deadline for acceptance is July 19th.

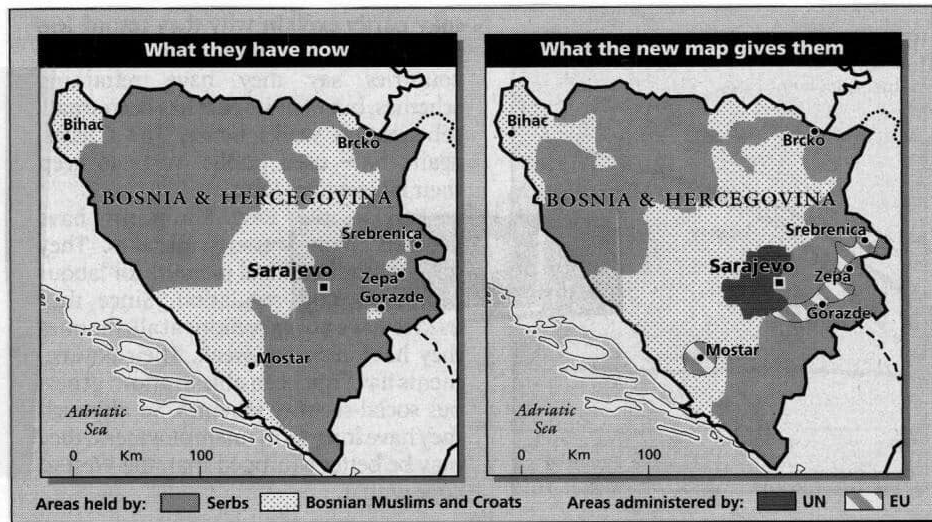
12 July 94

Macedonia's State Census Committee reported irregularities in the census. In addition to a number of census regulations being violated, documents have been forged, dead people registered, living people registered twice, etc.

A Serb platoon, which had occupied a **disputed peak** 250m inside Macedonia, withdrew to Yugoslavia. UNPROFOR occupied the peak to provide a buffer between the two sides.

Macedonia and Slovenia agreed to cooperate on military matters. The countries will exchange military attachés, and cooperate on information, training, and equipment exchange.

Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev warned that rebel Serbs will give a "Yes, but..." to the peace plan. "Yes but ..."



means 'No'", responded Secretary of State Christopher. Christopher said anything less than full acceptance of either the map or the broad constitutional principle that Bosnia's borders should remain untouched would constitute a rejection.

UN envoy Owen disagreed, saying the contact group nations would welcome changes to the proposed partition map, but before the July 19th deadline.

Italy wants to form a **new contact group**. France opposed that idea because a change might give the Serbs hope that the decision-making process was changing.

The world powers that presented Bosnia's warring parties with a "take it or leave it" partition plan last week are still **badly divided** over how to enforce the ultimatum.

"We need American resources, but we need them under international control," said one diplomat. The UN fears that the US would otherwise dominate the peacekeeping operation or pick sides, thus becoming the "Bosnian Air Force." "We can't be here as peacekeepers while they're on an enforcement mission. We don't want another Somalia."

UNPROFOR commander LTG Rose requested an American airmobile division, plus additional engineers, transport, commo and civil affairs units.

The total peacekeeping force could eventually top 50,000 troops.

Two Serb mech battalions, each with 20 tanks, are attacking **Mount Igman**, a strategic height overlooking Sarajevo. "The road is vulnerable. It would not take much to cut the route and halt traffic in and out of Sarajevo," said a Bosnian officer.

Heavy artillery fire pounded the front lines near **Bihac**.

Serb Power Struggle

It is unclear what sort Serbian hegemony Serbia's President Milosevic wants.

It is unlikely that the Serb leader is driven by emotional, missionary desire to unite all Serbs under the sovereignty of a Greater Serbia. Shorn of nationalist ideology, **Milosevic is entirely attuned to the retention of power** in the core Serb state. If that means telling Bosnian Serbs to go along with the 'contact group', so be it, provided that his own position is not threatened by accusations of "betrayal" from Serb nationalists at home.

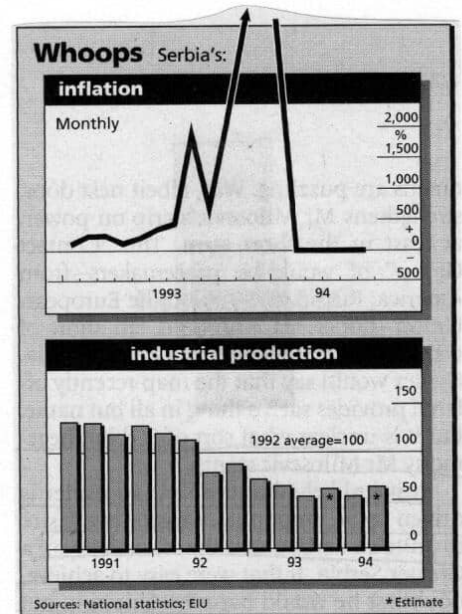
Milosevic is ready to play a long game. He is stronger, politically and economically, than the composition of parliament or statistics from the National Bank of Yugoslavia might suggest. The press is free -- but the bits that count are in Milosevic's hands (the 80% of the population outside Belgrade must depend on news from the main television channel, which is run by Milosevic cronies). He is under no great political pressure from inside his own country to settle. He was comfortably, and fairly, reelected president in 1992. In December 1993, his Serb Socialist Party won by far the most seats of any one party in the Serb parliament.

The ruling elite is thick with corruption. Milosevic, untainted by accusations of material greed himself, can use knowledge of colleagues' transgressions to coerce or undermine them as needed. Milosevic does not like the idea of a Bosnian Serb tail wagging a Serbian dog. He has been particularly crafty in keeping his Bosnian Serb clients at arms length, occasionally allowing allegations of their venality to be aired so that he can twist their arms if the needs of international diplomacy so demand.

Milosevic is anxious to lift the two-year old embargo on Yugoslavia. "Milosevic is hoping to manage some sort of settlement in Bosnia that will allow sanctions to be eased before the economy collapses," said Milos Vasic, a leading political commentator in Belgrade.

Now that Karadzic and the Bosnian Serbs have openly disregarded Milosevic's advice by rejecting the 'contact group' peace plan, Milosevic may also try to undermine them.

"The strain of economic sanctions, no matter how devastating they are, cannot be compared to the supreme sacrifices we have made in liberating Serbian lands ... It would be painful should [Serbia] criticize us for not accepting a concept which is illogical and does not serve the interests of the Serbs as a whole," said Krajisnik, the Speaker of the Bosnian Serb parliament.



"Milosevic will soon start blaming Serbian nationalism for everything," Vasic says. "He will say, '[Karadzic], you blew it! Serbia can't be held responsible for your mistakes.'"

Milosevic -- who has a history of dropping friends and allies who don't follow him -- has launched a campaign to distance himself from opponents to the plan, including his protégé Karadzic. Some indicators of the trend:

- Bosnian Serb TV news has vanished from Serbia's airwaves,
- Milosevic's Socialist Party has started opening local branch offices throughout Bosnia -- including in the Bosnian Serb strongholds of Pale and Banja Luka, where Karadzic's Serbian Democratic Party has long held unchallenged sway. Socialist party officials are ominously asking locals whose side they are on.

- Karadzic and his colleagues are under fire for alleged corruption.

- When the Bosnian Serb delegation returned from recent peace talks, Milosevic did not receive Karadzic, or any of his civilian or military assistants.

Historian Milorad Ekmecic, spiritual father of Bosnian Serb nationalists, said that Milosevic wants to oust Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic -- either to force the Bosnian Serbs to accept the partition plan or to install a more pliable leader, as Milosevic did among the Krajina Serb rebels in Croatia. Karadzic rejected the speculation of Russian and US media about his alleged replacement as "sheer fabrications."

"We cannot make concessions that would betray our people and soil their honor and dignity," Krajisnik said. He also said the Bosnian Serbs would continue trying to negotiate amendments to the peace plan.

14 July 94

Macedonia's government survived a vote of confidence by a healthy 61-2 vote. The earliest another vote of confidence can be legally held is in three months.

15 July 94

Macedonia and the newly-created demi-state of Palestine plan to establish diplomatic relations.

17 July 94

Bosnian Serbs drove a T-55 out of a UN weapons collection site in Ilidza yesterday. Three others tried to leave, but were stopped by Ukrainian peacekeepers.

18 July 94

Bosnia's Muslim-dominated parliament approved the 'contact group' peace plan. Bosnia's Serbs have until tomorrow to join in the approval.

19 July 94

The Bosnian Serb parliament refused to reveal its verdict on the 'contact group' peace plan, but said it would attach conditions to any approval, rather than give a straight yes or no answer as the 'contact group' is demanding. Today is the deadline for acceptance.

21 July 94

Bosnia's Serbs ignored the July 19th peace plan deadline. Instead they sealed their response in a pink envelope which was carried by Bosnian Serb president Karadzic to mediators in Geneva. Karadzic refused to reveal the contents of the envelope. "Following the Serb rejection of the peace plan, our unconditional acceptance is no longer valid," said Bosnian President Izetbegovic.

'Contact group' foreign ministers will not meet until at least July 30th to discuss a response to the Bosnian Serbs de facto rejection.

22 July 94

Defense Secretary Perry canceled a visit to Bosnia after ground fire hit three aircraft, including a US C-141, in Sarajevo. The C-141 was riddled badly enough that it was forced to do a wheels-up landing in Germany. It was the second day in a row that planes landing in Sarajevo had been attacked. The UN reacted by suspending its airlift to the city. Perry's eight nation European tour has taken him to the neighboring countries of Macedonia, Albania and Turkey over the past three days.

Croatian refugees have been blockading UNPROFOR checkpoints near Strmac, in western Slavonia, for several weeks. The Nepalese troops are short of water and fuel. UN envoy Akashi has protested to the Croatian government, but to no avail.

The Bosnian Serb parliament declared it rejected the peace plan because "all the elements of the peace plan were



not known" to it. "Following further negotiations, the assembly of the [Bosnian Serbs] shall be deciding on the complete peace plan."

23 July 94

Bosnian President Izetbegovic changed his mind, saying Bosnia once again **unconditionally accepted** the 'contact group' peace plan.

The Sarajevo airport was shelled for the third straight day. Two more planes were damaged.

Heavy artillery battles continue in Bihac and near Mt. Ozren.

24 July 94

Yugoslav President Lilic and Foreign Minister Jovanovic are meeting this week with Libyan leader Khaddafi. This is the second high-level delegation to visit Libya in the past month. The two sides will discuss "bilateral cooperation."

The European Union (EU) took control of Mostar. German, Croatian, Bosnian and UN officials presided. The EU has allocated \$45 million in aid to the city; 200 EU police officers will train a combined Muslim-Croat police force. The EU will administer the city for two years.

Note: Currently there are three factions fighting over Bosnia's carcass. Bosnia is a mess. The UN has over 100 'chiefs' in the General Assembly, another dozen or so 'chiefs' in the Security Council. The EU has a dozen or so 'chiefs' of its own. NATO about the same number of

'chiefs' as the EU (though not necessarily the same ones). That means six governmental bodies being tugged in close to 200 directions will be trying to administer post-war Bosnia. That's a recipe for chaos ...

25 July 94

Saying the UN alone could not provide the 60,000 troops needed to monitor a peace accord in Bosnia, Secretary General Boutros-Ghali recommended **withdrawing all 35,000 UN peacekeepers** from the Balkans. He said it would be up the current peace plan's authors (the US, Germany, Britain, France and Russia) to create a replacement task force. Security Council members France, Britain and the US would probably veto such a withdrawal.

Note: They would not have much say if presented with a fait accompli by troop donor nations which chose to recall their troops anyway.

Serb forces violated the **Gorazde** exclusion zone for the second straight day, firing artillery at Bosnian army positions.

Yugoslav President Lilic held talks with Tunisia's Secretary of State.

Note: It's interesting that the Serbs (being non-Muslims) are the ones cozying up to the Muslim countries of the

Middle East (Tunisia, Libya, Iraq, Palestine, et al).

26 July 94

Bosnian Serbs closed **Sarajevo's** only road to the outside world.

27 July 94

Serb forces fired on a British convoy as it approached the **Sarajevo** road Serbs closed yesterday. A French reaction force was sniped at. NATO warplanes were called in but didn't fire because they "couldn't identify the target." One peacekeeper was killed and two wounded.

28 July 94

The Bosnian Serb parliament said that approval of the 'contact group' **peace plan** would be an introduction to national suicide.

Serbian President **Milosevic** appeared to agree, saying a comprehensive peace plan for Bosnia must be based on the vital preconditions of equitable territorial divisions and constitutional arrangements, as well as lifting of sanctions against Yugoslavia. He said maintaining sanctions against Yugoslavia and the Serbs in general encourages war and jeopardizes the peace process,

preventing a political solution to the crisis. He stressed that the Serbs are vitally interested in peace.

29 July 94

Serb snipers shot at civilians using Sarajevo's tram system, killing two people. French peacekeepers returned fire.

The Bosnian Serbs said they would not reopen **Sarajevo's** severed supply road until the Muslims turned over Serb prisoners.

30 July 94

Bosnian Serbs said they were waiting for the full text of the 'contact group' response before reacting further.

31 July 94

Yugoslav President Lilic said the Bosnian Serbs should accept the 'contact group' **peace plan**. He said that sentiment is shared by the leadership of Yugoslavia and its republics of Serbia and Montenegro. (The Yugoslav army, Serbia's prime minister and assembly president, and the foreign minister of Montenegro all toed the party line.)

Speaker of the Bosnian Serb parliament **Krajsnik** reacted by saying the Bosnian Serbs would do their best to take into account Milosevic's suggestion that they accept the 'contact group' peace plan.

Quote

"I don't like seeing any lines drawn across Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is like cutting through living tissue. It bleeds." (Haris Siladzic, Prime Minister, Bosnia)

Sources

Wall Street Journal, Milwaukee Sentinel, The Economist, InterNet, FBIS Daily Reports.



How a Bosnian Serb army newspaper sees the conflict: the West punishes a little Serb for misdeeds committed by a Muslim (centre) and a Croat (right)