

World War I started at Fashoda, not Sarajevo

When most people think of how World War I started, they think of Sarajevo, of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand. But although the Balkans were the starting point, the stage was set long before that, in a place called Fashoda, on the Upper White Nile (now in Sudan).

During the late 1800s, France was a battleground between two political forces. On the one side were those who desired to see France in alliance with her greatest historic enemy, England, as a means of recovering the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, annexed by Germany following the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Recovering the lost provinces became a simmering psychosis in the French population known as *revanche*, or revenge.

On the other side were figures like Gabriel Hanotaux, foreign minister during most of the period 1894-98. Hanotaux sought a rapprochement with Germany, and the establishment of a powerful continental alliance to neutralize England diplomatically and economically. London was determined to prevent that.

Against the Hanotaux faction, Minister of Colonies Théophile Delcassé, a buffoon character with a huge mus-

tache and lifts in his shoes, promoted the Marchand expedition to Fashoda, to plant a French flag under the nose of the British, who had also embarked on a mission to Fashoda. Instead of allowing Hanotaux's "flanking maneuvers" (as he liked to call them) to reestablish France's influence in Egypt and the Nile Valley, Delcassé sent a numerically inferior force to confront a British contingent—a move which could only spark a military confrontation between France and England. And the British Navy outnumbered the French two to one.

When the two contingents met at Fashoda in September 1898, the two countries were on the brink of war. The crisis was only resolved when, under the threat of attack on French soil by London, and amid a severe government crisis provoked by the London-manipulated Dreyfus Affair, Delcassé ordered the Marchand expedition to retreat.

Only months after Hanotaux left office, the results of his diplomacy lay in ruins. Delcassé—now foreign affairs minister—immediately began negotiating a secret "entente" with England, Perfidious Albion, the country that had just handed it a humiliating defeat. The Entente Cordiale between France and England became the core of a reorganization of alliances in Europe into a hostile encirclement of Germany. By 1904, the stage was set: All of Europe would dance to the tune orchestrated by London in its grand concert of nations.—*Dana S. Scanlon*

Greater Israel meets Greater Serbia

Making matters worse, certain parties, both inside and outside Yugoslavia, are putting forward extremely provocative proposals for mass transfers of population between Serbia and Croatia, as a "solution" to the crisis. On July 25, the *Jerusalem Post* (owned by the Hollinger Corp. on whose board of directors sits Henry Kissinger) published a commentary on Yugoslavia by Shlomo Tadmor, former director general of the Jewish Agency. Tadmor wrote: "If the crisis is over three-quarters of a million Serbs living in a would-be independent Croatia, the solution is obviously transfer. . . . It is not such an unthinkable thing to transfer 750,000 Serbs, or to incorporate the area in Croatia where they live into Serbia, in exchange for compensating land from Serbia."

Tadmor stressed: "Some thorny problems have been solved this way. A million Greeks were transferred from Turkey to Greece in 1921. Millions of Muslims and Hindus were transferred across the new borders when India and Pakistan became independent in 1947. The only solution in Algiers was the transfer of 1 million Pieds Noirs to France. This sensible solution was also suggested by the Peel Commission in 1937, recommending not only partition, but also transfer as the solution to the evidently irreconcilable co-existence of Arabs and Jews in Palestine."

In fact, the partition of India and Pakistan, created and overseen by Britain's Lord Mountbatten, resulted in the deaths of millions of Hindus and Muslims. Equally amazing is the citation of the precedent of the 1937 British Peel Commission. Although mass transfers didn't occur in Palestine along the lines of the 1937 British proposal, Tadmor's characterization of the idea as "sensible" aligns him with the Israeli influentials who see mass transfers as a "final solution" for the Palestinian problem, and as a means to achieve a "Greater Israel." Otherwise, Tadmor's pro-Serbian article would suggest a potential emergence of a Greater Israel-Greater Serbia axis in the Balkans-Mediterranean-Near East region.

Sources familiar with the Balkans stress that Serbian-Zionist ties have important historical and ideological roots and are being reinforced today. One obvious point of convergence is animosity to German diplomacy in the Balkans region. In Serbia, propaganda against a new "Fourth Reich," including repeated comparisons of German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to Adolf Hitler, is reaching fever pitch. In a similar vein, Tadmor's article lambasts Croatian President Franjo Tudjman as a pro-Nazi anti-Semite.

The mess is made worse by the idiocy of European Commission diplomacy, under the direction of the Netherlands, current president of the EC, with backing from Britain and