

Is European Community becoming superfluous?

This statement was issued by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, president of the Schiller Institute in Germany, on Sept. 9.

As expected, the extraordinary conference of the EC on the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, has produced less than nothing. While Croatian villagers too old and weak to run away continue to be bestially murdered by the Serbs, the EC has again proved itself completely useless vis-à-vis this war being played out in the middle of Europe. The very idea that this conference, in the face of the catastrophe in Croatia, might be dragged out over half a year, is the absolute height of absurdity.

When in the face of a fundamental crisis—and this war is precisely that—institutions prove themselves completely incapable of responding in an adequate way, but instead stage trivial discussions, then these institutions will not long survive. When Lord Carrington, no less, thinks that he can play the role of “honest broker,” when we should be putting a stop to bestial genocide occurring right in front of our eyes, then we have to ask ourselves,

what is really behind all this?

If the EC as an institution, and the governments that support it, again let themselves be made into fools, the laughing-stock of their own peoples, then they put their own existence into question. Why should our taxes support a huge bureaucracy which does nothing? And why should we elect governments that, in the face of the aggression of inhuman tyrannies, do nothing?

The EC were well advised to remember, that it was the total incapacity of the League of Nations to react to the crisis of Ethiopia which brought about its discrediting, and the widespread opinion that its representatives were no more than a heap of fools. Clearly the EC, faced with a crisis of incomparably greater import, runs the same danger.

Close at hand lies the suspicion that this is precisely the aim of those sabotaging decisive action by the EC. The intent of the Anglo-American opponents of the idea of European unity is very clearly to make the EC into a laughing-stock, precisely because they fear the positive potential for all of Europe implicit in the current historic situation. It is high time that we draw the consequences from this. The immediate recognition and adequate defense of Croatia and Slovenia, is the first step long overdue. Ridding the EC of elements hostile to Europe, the second.

A New Congress of Berlin?

The EC's establishment of a “peace conference” process, chaired by Lord Carrington, and thus under British hegemony, has undercut any positive efforts by nations of continental Europe to render effective assistance to embattled Croatia. Specifically, as was bitterly noted in a Sept. 11 press conference by Croatian Foreign Minister Zvonimir Separovic, the “peace conference” prevented an otherwise inevitable recognition of Slovenia and Croatia as independent states by Germany, which was moving rapidly in this direction. The German move would have opened the door to recognition by Austria and Hungary, which border on Slovenia and Croatia, thus creating first a central European corridor of assistance, with other EC members expected to follow.

The “peace conference” process contains many haunting parallels to the 1878 Congress of Berlin, convened at British initiative to impose a European “Concert of Powers” territorial settlement on the Balkans, in the wake of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, which militarily had driven the Ottoman Empire off the European continent. The Congress of Berlin was chaired by Britain, and its deliberations dragged on for months, as the present case will be under the Carrington script. It devoted itself solely to redrawing the map of the Balkans. It neither solved nor attempted to solve any of the

problems that were leading to war in that region, beginning with the miserable economic and social status bequeathed by four centuries of Ottoman rule. The republics of former Yugoslavia have also been bequeathed a staggering economic crisis, with its roots in 45 years of communist rule, and accelerated to beyond the breaking point by the last several years of stringent International Monetary Fund conditionalities, an exorbitant debt repayment burden, and the enforcement, through Harvard's Jeffrey Sachs, of the mass shut-down of industrial enterprises.

The 1878 Congress of Berlin imposed a deceptive pseudo-stability on the Balkans, while in reality its decisions created the preconditions for World War I. In much the same way that a historically dead “Yugoslav Federation” is being artificially propped up today as the pseudo-legal cover for Milosevic's expansionism, the Congress of Berlin artificially kept alive the European part of the Ottoman Empire, by restoring the Turkish hold over much of the southern Balkans. This policy created the basis for the subsequent manipulation by Britain and other powers of the Balkan states, drawing them into the wars of 1912 and 1913 over the division of the remaining Ottoman territories.

The failure to solve or even address vital economic questions provided the basis for the bankrupt countries of the