
Interview: Milo Susak and William Kuharic

'The western politicians have done Croatia more harm than good'

by Umberto Pascali

"If it is in the interest of Europe and the western world to allow terrorists to kill and butcher children, then they should not recognize Croatia, if they can face this massacre in front of the TV cameras without feeling anything. . . . But they are going to be responsible, responsible in front of God and history," Mile Susak, a Croatian-Canadian living in Ottawa, told *EIR* after having received the latest details on the "mediation" missions of Cyrus Vance and Lord Carrington, representing, respectively, the secretary general of the United Nations and the European Community.

William Kuharic, another very active Croatian-Canadian from Alberta, stresses the same concept with concern verging on disbelief. "Vance is talking about an intervention of peacekeeping forces in 'ink blots,' i.e., between the invading Yugoslav Army and the Croatian resistance. Later, he says, we will take care about the borders. But the Serbians have taken more than one-third of our territory. This would mean to recognize and guarantee the bloody conquest. We cannot accept this."

The West had been the reference point for Croatians over the long years of communist rule, the force that would welcome Croatia into the democratic world. What happened is quite the contrary.

Now the hopes of people like Kuharic and Susak are set on a possible move by Germany, Austria, and Italy to recognize their country without waiting for European "unanimity." This possibility was restated on Nov. 27 by German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, but only as a possibility. Besides the many statements of good intention by several parliaments—such as Australia, Canada, or the weak-kneed resolution ("Consult promptly with the EC") presented by Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) and passed in the U.S. Senate on Nov. 25—the genocidal massacre continues implacably, and nobody lifts a finger to stop it.

Cyrus Vance's ink blots

On Nov. 27, the United Nations Security Council declared its total support for Vance and his plans. The former U.S. secretary of state, faced by two diametrically opposed requests for the intervention of peacekeeping forces—the Greater Serbians as a recognition of their military conquest,

and the Croatians as a reestablishment of the officially recognized borders—sided with the Serbians. "What we are going to use is a device that has been used previously by the U.N.," he told the MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour broadcast on Nov. 26. "The establishment of what we call ink blots, areas which are areas of extreme danger and where the fighting is particularly heavy. Then a blanket is laid over that particular area. Then it is demilitarized and . . . filled in by U.N. peacekeeping forces." And the ink blots gradually get bigger and cover more territory? "If necessary. . . ."

Vance added: "By the way, I might add, this is not something new. This was used in Cyprus in the early days of the Cyprus fighting and used successfully; and it was also used in southern Lebanon and used successfully." Cyprus and Lebanon! The two successful examples of death and destabilization sponsored by a western mediation in the best Anglo-American colonialist tradition: This is the future of Croatia under Vance's plan.

The U.N. mediator had just brokered a "cease-fire" that was immediately violated by the Yugoslav Army. After having destroyed the Danube city of Vukovar and slaughtered its population, the Army continued its advance, this time targeting the important city of Osijek, which the Serbians bombed. As if this were not outrageous enough, the Serbian irregulars, or Chetniks, with the support of the Army, established a "Serbian Autonomous Region of Slavonia" and started repopulating the area with Serbians.

Massacre and resettle

A communiqué issued by the Republic of Croatia on Nov. 26 denounced the "Serbian resettlement of Croatian areas" as "the latest crime against humanity." The communiqué read in part: "Now that the Serbian insurgents and the Serbian-led federal armed forces have destroyed the city of Vukovar, where the majority of the citizens were Croats, they have moved on to Osijek in eastern Croatia where 82% of the population were Croats. In their wake, the communist leaders of Serbia have announced plan to 'resettle' 20,000 Serbs in 'liberated' Baranja, a fertile region of farms and vineyards between the Danube and the Drava rivers."

The Yugoslav Army resisted attempts by the Red Cross

to go to Vukovar, after a large part of the town was vanquished and the defenders murdered house by house. Eyewitnesses report a repugnant spectacle of bodies abandoned to rot in a city that no longer exists.

As a way of announcing its next moves, the magazine *Politika*, the main mouthpiece of the Serbian regime, published an editorial by its military affairs writer who is known to have links to the high command. He called for an all-out offensive of the Army as deeply as possible into Croatian territory. The Greater Serbians were also shameless in their use of black propaganda lies: The international media were fed the story that there had been a "massacre of 41 Serbian children." It was later denied by everybody, including the Yugoslav Army and Reuters press agency, but meanwhile, it had provoked the intended reaction. Later, a self-proclaimed Information Minister of the Autonomous Serbian Region accused the Croats of having bombed three villages using crop-dusting planes.

Vance blames Croats for Vukovar

Asked about the Serbian bombing of Osijek, Vance stated that these are "only scattered violations, tragic, but scattered." And what about the genocide in Vukovar? "It was particularly brutal, particularly for everyone who was in Vukovar, anybody that saw that could not help but be impressed with the incredible brutality that took place. Block after block totally leveled, nothing but rubble." Lest anyone think Vance was condemning the Serbians, he hurriedly explained, "On the other hand there is another side to that." The "other side" was the fact that Croatia blockaded the Yugoslav Army barracks on Croatian territory—the minimum an assaulted sovereign country could do.

The Croatian government in Zagreb repeatedly offered food and water to the troops and guaranteed they could safely leave the barracks and go back to Serbia unarmed and protected, the only condition: They must leave behind the weapons and equipment that the Army would use against Croatia. The Serbian generals, counting on western support, refused. In fact, both Lord Carrington and Vance imposed the diktat that the invading Army must have their equipment and weapons returned to them. Ultimately, the Croatian government was forced to swallow this suicidal condition. And what had Vance to say about that? "I think one of the reasons that there was such vicious, brutal fighting in Vukovar was because of the fact that the Yugoslav federal army troops were still in those barracks after many, many months." Vance concluded by comparing the blockaded soldiers to "hostages"!

"The Croats are showing again their humanity," responded Mile Susak in his interview with *EIR*. "They gave the Yugoslav Army the chance to move out of Croatia, and they are going [to go over] just on the other side of the border, and they are going to attack Croatia. It is 99.9% sure: Those weapons released by the Croatian government will be used against us. And I strongly disagree with the government

Blockade forces Haitians to brave death at sea

One hundred and thirty-five Haitians drowned on Nov. 19 while attempting to escape almost certain death in Haiti under the U.S.-led worldwide economic blockade against that country. The victims were among thousands of Haitians fleeing the embargo imposed by President George Bush on Oct. 30, supposedly to force the restoration to power of dictator Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

The blockade, adopted through the Organization of American States (OAS), has stripped Haiti, already the poorest nation in the western hemisphere, of electricity, water, medicine, fuel, phones, and food. Some 65,000 Haitians have been forced out of a job in a country where even before the embargo most of the 6 million people earned less than \$50 a year. Cars, trucks, and buses have disappeared since Venezuela and Mexico cut off all diesel and gasoline supplies. There is no kerosene for lamps. Only one-third of Haiti is arable, and people are eating weeds "and what animals usually eat," said a relief worker cited by the Nov. 23 *New York Times*.

David Duke immigration policy

As the decomposing bodies of the men, women, and children from the capsized boat were washing ashore on Cuba's eastern coast, Bush ordered the forced repatriation of thousands of Haitian boat people intercepted by the U.S. Coast Guard. The "moral underpinning" of his forced deportation policy, said Bush in a televised interview, was that Haitians are economic, not political, refugees. "I am saying I don't want to have a policy that acts as a magnet to risk people's lives," he said. "If you have the whole country turning out for economic reasons, and the economy of Haiti is a disaster, we just can't handle that."

Bush claimed that the exclusionary policy against Haitians, who are black, "is not based on some race or double standard." But almost no one buys that. While those fleeing Cuba are invariably given red carpet treatment, includ-

allowing the Army to take any ammunition outside our territory. They will attack us again. And why should we give them back those guns. These guns were bought by the people of Yugoslavia—i.e. by the Croats—and we permit them to get those guns and shoot at us."

"In my opinion," added Kuharic, "the western politicians have done us more harm than good. The wish of 4.7 million

ing receiving financial assistance to resettle and U.S. permanent resident status within a year, most Haitians are denied entry into the U.S.

"You can always say it's economic," said Rep. Major Owens (D-N.Y.) at a news conference on Nov. 20. "The Hungarian revolution, at the basis of it, was economic. If Hungary had succeeded as an economic system, there would have been no Hungarian revolution," said Owens. "Why are we pursuing what I would call a David Duke immigration policy? There is no difference that can be pinpointed except the fact that these people are black."

"We would not say no if the refugees were European," said Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.). "The administration's policy has been a failure up to now. It has been mean-spirited and racist."

A concentration camp in Guantanamo

Sen. Connie Mack (R-Fla.), a staunch supporter of the administration, also condemned the policy of forced repatriations. A federal court in Miami temporarily halted the deportations on Nov. 19, but not before the U.S. Coast Guard dumped off 538 people back in Haiti without so much as a box lunch. Unchastened by the outcry, the administration has set up a barbed-wired concentration camp for the Haitians in Guantanamo, the U.S. military base in Cuba, rather than allowing them into the U.S.

There were also calls for a foreign military occupation of Haiti, the first nation in the Americas, after the U.S., to gain independence, and the world's first black republic. The Nov. 26 *Washington Post* claimed a so-called foreign peacekeeping force is needed "to restore democracy." The Rev. Jesse Jackson, the shadow senator from Washington, D.C., one of the first to support U.S. military action against Iraq, is also demanding that Bush invade black Haiti. The Haitian military "is a less formidable foe" than the Iraqi army, said Jackson in Brooklyn on Nov. 24. "It will take less effort to get it out."

An attempt to resolve the crisis through negotiations sponsored by the OAS between Aristide and Haitian legislators failed when Aristide refused to call for ending the embargo. At the talks in Cartagena, Colombia, on Nov. 23 and 24, the legislators and Aristide agreed that constitutional rule should prevail. But, "lifting the embargo is a

moral duty" of the international community to stop "the genocide," said Sen. Dejean Belizaire.

This was opposed by "the elegantly dressed" Aristide—a suspended priest of the theology of liberation camp, whose claims to be on the side of the poor have not stopped him from living in a luxury hotel in Caracas since leaving Haiti, when not jet-setting around Europe, the U.S., and elsewhere. A leftist backed by Fidel Castro, Aristide said that Haitians should starve "so democracy can return home as soon as possible, so that we can hold hands with the U.S. government to develop our country."

OAS mediator Augusto Ramírez Ocampo confirmed that Aristide had caused his own downfall by violating human rights, by building a private army to replace the regular army, and by acting against the Constitution and generally behaving like a totalitarian dictator. Nonetheless, he insisted, Aristide must return to the presidency.

Ocampo said he would recommend to OAS Secretary General João Baena Soares that the embargo be progressively eased. But, the Nov. 27 *Washington Post* reported, Baena Soares has said "he is not inclined" to lift the embargo. "There's every disposition to hold [the Haitian authorities'] feet to the fire."

Bush's new world order allies are also spurning the Haitian refugees. France, the colonial power in the country until the Haitians defeated Napoleon's legions, is tired of the "noise and smell" of immigrants, said former Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, according to the *New York Times*. We have reached "the threshold of tolerance for immigrants," said French President François Mitterrand.

Canada decided to starve a group of 19 Haitian youths who entered its embassy in Port-au-Prince requesting diplomatic asylum on Nov. 20.

A proposal by Honduras for members of the OAS to take in some of the refugees caused by their embargo, was rejected because of opposition by the big countries, particularly Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Venezuela. Carlos Menem of Argentina, and Venezuela's Carlos Andrés Pérez have been among the most vociferous supporters of the embargo against Haiti, while calling for the U.S. to lift its economic blockade against Cuba. They are also calling for a military invasion to restore Aristide.

—by Carlos Wesley

Croatians who voted for independence has been thrown into the gutter. After Croatia and Slovenia voted for independence, James Baker stated that he wishes to see Yugoslavia united. Two days later the Yugoslav Army invaded Slovenia. That statement was a crime. If Baker wants to be a friend, let him stay at home and take care of his own affairs."

Kuharic and Susak had been very upset by the speech in

Parliament of Canadian Foreign Minister Barbara McDougall, who opposed an almost unanimous request to recognize Croatia, after she had discussed the issue "personally with both Vance and Carrington."

Susak continued: "There must be some connection between them [Vance and Carrington] and the Serbians. That could be the only reason. It doesn't make any sense from an

human standpoint. The Croatians are accepting and implementing any condition, any request from the West, from the European Community. The Serbians fail to fulfill all of them. If they are mediators, they must mediate. But they don't. They do not distinguish between victim and aggressor. We are asking Europe and the West to recognize us. Nothing more, nothing less. Ninety-four percent of our people voted for independence. This is the will of the people. Now the U.N. is saying they could send peacekeeping troops.

"Croatia asked long ago [for the U.N.] to send troops to the borders. Everybody knows where the borders are. And this was before all these innocent people were killed, and killed in an horrible way, cutting throats, taking eyes out. But no. . . . Only now, when the Serbians fear to lose on the long run, now they are discussing sending troops in the buffer zones. But if they do that, the whole of Europe will be in trouble, the whole West. No border will be recognized. Every country stronger than another can expand its border as much as it wants by butchering people and by violence. Changing borders will create this precedent."

Concerning the Canadian government stance, Susak was emphatic. "The Canadian government cannot do anything on its own, especially [Prime Minister Brian] Mulroney. He cannot do anything without Bush or London's approval." And what about the military situation in Croatia? "You must understand that most of the media are lying. For example around Vukovar there are still 1,200 Croatian fighters. But this is not even the point. I believe that there is no such a power in the world, not any army, that can wipe out one race. We have fought in Vukovar for three months basically bare-handed. The morale of the Croatians forces is high. Ninety percent of the Serbians in the Army do not know why they are fighting. They are there against their will. A few days ago Serbian mothers living in Croatia wrote a letter to the government of Serbia saying that the government is going to be responsible for the whole war if it continues. Only 10% of the Serbian Army, butchers and terrorists hungry for somebody's blood, are willing to continue the war. If Croatia is recognized we will easily win. We know what we are fighting for, the enemy doesn't."

The civilized face of Croatia

But despite the fury of this war against a civilian population, William Kuharic wanted to make the point that it is in these historical and tragic moments that the morality of a national culture bears fruit. Recently, on Nov. 17, he served as interpreter for his uncle, Cardinal Franjo Kuharic, the Archbishop of Zagreb. The cardinal, as *EIR* reported last week, had been invited to address the U.S. National Conference of Bishops, and he later held a press conference in San Jose, California. "I told my uncle that I disagree with some of the tactics being used in this war, that Croatians are giving too much away and not really fighting, and are not using methods adequate to those used by the Serbians. He very

strongly opposed my statement. He said, 'This is how Croatia shows its civilized face!' This made me think.

"In the conference, the Cardinal stressed how concerned he was, how upset. He also expressed concern for the destruction of churches and all the beautiful monuments of our history. I can understand very well. Thirteen centuries of Croatian Catholic history are being destroyed before TV cameras and nobody cares. These are the visible contributions of so many generations and nobody will be able to replace them. But that was not his basic message. Cardinal Kuharic was pleading with the Catholics of the world and Croatia not to develop hatred in their hearts. He was pleading for forgiveness. He said that if we start to hate, we are no longer Catholics. Croatia as a Catholic nation, cannot hate, cannot seek revenge. At the same time he made clear that Croatians have the right and the duty to defend their homes.

"He was asked about Croatians fighting back. He said what he tells our National Guard: Be careful how you shoot. To shoot in self-defense is acceptable by any standard, but if you shoot because you hate, as revenge, then you must ask your conscience what you are doing. I had mixed emotions because war is war, it's an extremely ugly affair, but I could sense that the Cardinal was talking about the human race, which doesn't have the right to kill each other, and for sure not in any kind of revenge."

Kuharic insisted on how strong the cultural tradition of Croatia is. "In 1979 Croatia celebrated the treaty signed between King Zvonimir and the Church. On the basis of that treaty Croatia would never invade the territory of anybody. We were faithful to that treaty, and never invaded any country, only defended ourselves. Despite having been invaded several times, we never went beyond our borders, even in this war—or should I say, slaughter. Under the communist regime the Church leaders in Yugoslavia were treated like nobody. I know that in the West, a Cardinal is treated with respect.

"But the point is that the Church is not a political organization. The Church is not the buildings of the Church. This is the mistake the Serbians are making. They are bombing and shelling the Church buildings in the wild hope of wiping out the Catholic Church from the Croatian land. A huge mistake. They do not understand that the Church is the people, not the building. One must remember that the fundamental teaching of the Church is the freedom of humanity, the sense of divinity, the essence of reason. This must be totally supported everywhere.

"I know that the U.S. and Canadian bishops enjoy a lot of respect in their countries. They could do a lot for Croatia. To oppose the right to freedom of the Croatian people, of course, would be in contrast with the fundamental teachings of the Church."

In concluding, Kuharic wanted to stress a final point: "There are Croatian Catholics and Croatian Muslims and Croatians belonging to other religions. We are all together now in defending our land."