

Bosnia Pushed Into An Ethnic War, Again

by Umberto Pascali

“Step by step, in a sort of perverse process, everything seems to lead toward a new war in Bosnia-Herzegovina,” a well-informed Balkan observer told *EIR* after the April 18 NATO raid against the Herzegovacka Banka in Mostar, the Herzegovina capital. In the pre-dawn hours, the bank was raided by NATO troops on orders of the International Representative in Bosnia, Wolfgang Petritsch, who accused it of acting as the financial center for the leaders of the Bosnian Croats, grouped around the HDZ party of Bosnia, who since the beginning of March have declared “temporary self-rule.”

NATO Stabilization Forces (SFOR) used explosives to enter the building, and, according to bank officials, they removed all documents and computers. Immediately after the raid, witnesses saw furniture turned over and opened, paper spread all around, and the basement floor littered with charred bank notes and coins. A senior bank official said that there was more than a million German marks of cash in the vault, and “they took it all.”

It was the second NATO raid on the bank. On April 6, NATO troops raided the bank’s central office in Mostar, and ten other branches. At that time, Croatian protesters broke into the bank, engaging the troops in a confrontation that left at least 25 citizens and 21 NATO troops injured. Petritsch accused the HDZ of having organized the riots, and he installed “international administrators” at the bank.

The military operation, according to local sources, resulted in a strengthening of support for the HDZ “self-rule” strategy. “I saw robberies in movies, but something like this, thank God, never,” a passerby told reporters. One HDZ official expressed fear that “there could be confrontations with the international community.”

Support for “self-rule” has so far been relatively weak in Croatia itself, but that is now changing rapidly. Former opponents of separating the Croatian community from Bosnia are now campaigning against the “provocations of the international community.” A majority of Bosnian Croats have already abandoned *en masse* the Bosnian army, and many Bosnian Croats in the police have formally made it clear that they are not going to obey orders from the federal police chiefs.

‘Mapmakers Will Soon Ink New Borders’

Though the official trigger of the separatist process in Bosnia was the decision by the international administrator to disregard the result of the Croat community’s vote in Bosnia,

the real reason, as *EIR* has repeatedly stressed, is to be found outside the Balkans. The green light for the dissolution of Bosnia was given in the most open way by one of the most powerful British oligarchs, Lord David Owen, in an infamous commentary, entitled “Redraw the Map,” in the March 13 *Wall Street Journal*. Lord Owen indicated that the three ethnic communities of Bosnia must be broken up “following the recent refusal of the Bosnian Croats to cooperate in the Muslim-Croat Federation. A Muslim republic would include Brcko and should also include Srebrenica.”

And what about the third Bosnian community, Republika Srpska? Lord Owen dictated that there will be “the transfer of some territory” to Serbia. Kosovo, in Owen’s “New 1878 Congress of Berlin,” will be independent, and become part of “Greater Albania.”

What about the second remaining Yugoslav republic, Montenegro? The signs are “that it, too, will continue to insist on independence,” and shall so be, with a little geopolitical engineering, by sub-dividing a little strip of land in order to “allow Serbia access to the sea.” The overwhelming pressure exercised by Lord Owen and his faction is so strong, that news wires from the Balkans start with unusual rhetoric, such as Associated Press from Belgrade on April 17: “Europe’s mapmakers may soon be inking new borders for the Balkans.”

The geopolitical orgy outlined by Lord Owen was preceded by a clear call for redrawing Balkan borders along ethnic lines, by some of the most influential U.S. military leaders, at a seminar organized by the U.S. Army War College on Feb. 26-27.

Lord Owen’s vision is rapidly becoming reality. Spokesmen for the Bosnian Croats do not hide their belief that statements by high-ranking Pentagon officers, and officials known for their close links to the Bush Administration, constitute a clear signal that something in U.S. policy is going to change soon. In Montenegro, where parliamentary elections will take place on April 22, President Milo Djukanovic announced that, if his electoral coalition wins a majority, he will call for a referendum on splitting Montenegro from Serbia.

Yugoslav Prime Minister Zoran Zizic stated after meeting Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov on April 18, that the threatened split “could provoke a destabilization of the Balkans, a political crisis, and the disappearance of the Balkans from Europe’s political map.” Ivanov stressed, “Russia supports the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, and a democratic Montenegro which is part of Yugoslavia.” Among the possible consequences of such a split, is the opening of a new tragedy for Sanjak, a province inhabited mostly by Muslims that straddles the border.

‘The Most Violent Century’

Reaction to Lord Owen’s proposals was evident in Kosovo as well. On April 17, the international administration that took over the Yugoslav province after the 1999 NATO bombing campaign, decided that it will establish a customs

tax on the “border” between Serbia and Kosovo. Immediately, violent protests exploded, organized by Kosovo’s remaining Serbians, mostly crowded into the northern city of Mitrovica. They claimed that only a sovereign state can levy taxes, and that, according to the United Nations, Kosovo is still part of Yugoslavia. In the Kosovo capital, Pristina, a bomb exploded in the offices of the Yugoslav government. One Yugoslav official was killed, and others were injured. It was the third fatal bombing since last August.

In Macedonia, the apparent calm that followed the resolute Army action against the Kosovo Liberation Army aggression from Kosovo, is considered by all informed sources to be temporary. Macedonia’s capital, Skopje, became the meeting point for some of the most powerful Western leaders, including British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell. All had words of great praise for Macedonia. However, according to reliable local sources, the “smile offensive” hides one purpose: to make Macedonia accept a territorial division into two “ethnically pure” areas.

Among the many letters of protest against Lord Owen’s commentary that the *Wall Street Journal* received, one read in part: “Too bad [Lord Owen] forgets (or hopes everybody else forgets) that it has been exactly the British penchant for redrawing maps of other people’s territories that created the conditions for so far the most violent century in European history (and elsewhere).”

The Cracks Get Wider In Windsors’ Britain

by Alan Clayton

The British state has once again been rocked to its royal foundations by yet another royal wife whom the Windsors deem to be of “questionable” background, showing an ability to get things as dramatically “wrong” as did the unfortunate Princess Diana before her. The wife of the Queen’s youngest son, Prince Edward, known by the royal title of “Sophie of Wessex,” in a deliberate attempt to move away from the open use of the “Royal Highness” appellation, which has become very unpopular, was the subject of a tabloid “sting” operation in which she made a range of highly indiscreet remarks about politicians and some of the royal family themselves.

The newspaper in question was a Sunday tabloid, *News of the World*. Known colloquially throughout the island as the “Screws of the World,” the paper is a very old scandal sheet which reveals the peccadillos of the great and the small with equal fervor and determination, and covers all its revelations with a traditional and highly effective legitimizing rhetoric of disapprobation—in order that the voyeurs can pretend they are really opposed to and appalled by voyeurism. In recent times, its influence and networking have been so widespread that some have felt there is an MI5 and MI6 connection.

The sting involved an interview with an alleged Arab dignitary ostensibly known as Sheikh Mohammed, who purported to be interested in using Sophie’s public relations company, RJH (the initials stand for Sophie’s maiden name, Rhys-Jones, and that of her business partner, Murray Harkin), for some of his business operations. Judging from the direction of the conversation, the initial motivation of *News of the World* was to ascertain whether, in fact, Prince Edward were gay and his marriage just a convenient sham.

In the event, it came out that the 37-year-old Harkin was not only gay, but also, in the words of the *News of the World*, a “cocaine-sniffing, promiscuous homosexual with an encyclopaedic knowledge of the world’s most notorious gay pickup spots.” Harkin was once hired to promote an X-rated video, which included scenes of simulated rape, group sex, and bondage. The 60-minute “adult” video, entitled “Fantasy Sex,” was so explicit that it had to be modified, before it could be sold in video outlets.

It also emerged that Sophie quite blatantly uses her royal status to obtain business for her struggling company. Prince Edward owns a filmmaking company which loses substantial sums annually, and has to be regularly bailed out by the

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