

divided, in order to further play the “balance of power” game on the continent. The creation of an economic zone from the Atlantic to the Urals or even to the Pacific Ocean would be prevented. The present-day Soviet Union would be weakened politically and economically allowed, over a long period of time, to “stew in its own juices.” It goes without saying that this strategic orientation excludes any transatlantic partnership on the basis of *equality*.

The Bush administration sent a secret demarche to the governments of the European Community in February. In it, the U.S. government categorically ruled out any European Defense Union, alleging that by weakening NATO politically, it would undermine the U.S.-dominated integrated command structure, and that excluding the United States from the shaping of European security policy would lead to the creation of transatlantic blocs, in which a tendency to include Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia would have a negative impact on the security interests of the United States.

This “veto-demarche” has since been delivered to European capitals by high-level officials of the State Department, James Dobbins and Robert Zoellick. Their boss, James Baker III, had the same line when he spoke to the EC foreign ministers on April 18 in Brussels.

In the cited article, Jim Hoagland claims that what has Washington worried, is that Germany is now associating itself positively with traditional French efforts to create an independent European defense organization, and post-Thatcher Britain is somehow willing to incline toward a “more European policy.” So, “the French reservations cannot be dismissed by Washington as a narrow French viewpoint, as in the past.” All of this wrangling has forced a postponement of the NATO summit from this summer until late in the year.

Zoellick, one of Secretary of State James Baker III’s most trusted aides, demanded in a speech April 23 to the Atlantic Bridge meeting in Berlin, that Germany not “pursue separate security policies that prevent it from demonstrating alliance solidarity.” Further, with evident reference to Germany’s positions vis-à-vis the Gulf war and the current NATO strategy review, Zoellick warned that if Germany stood outside alliance actions beyond Europe, it would confront “more pressure to contribute on the economic side.” But whatever Germany would give in this form, he added, “it will never be enough” to quell resentment from those who provide the military forces for such operations.

Zoellick also insisted that European integration not lead to “insularity.” Evidently with reference to the GATT-“free trade” process, he demanded that Germany (in Hoagland’s paraphrase) “accept responsibility for protecting the world trading system as a whole, instead of seeing trade issues only through the European Community prism.” The fact that Zoellick delivered this speech in Germany, Hoagland stressed, “denotes special concern that Chancellor Helmut Kohl may be following the French down the primrose path of

gutting NATO so that the Community can assume European defense responsibilities.”

Urgent appeals, like that of German Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg on April 13 in Washington, that the United States and Europe must not fall into a trade war and become politically estranged, are likely to fall on deaf ears with the Bush regime. When Alfred Dregger, one of the most high-profile proponents of the European Defense Union idea, states that it is fully compatible with NATO and would strengthen the European security pillar of the Atlantic Alliance, the Bush administration peevishly rejects this—especially since Dregger thinks that the European Defense Union means a “partnership among equals” between Europe and the United States. And that is exactly what is being prevented.

Dregger, a seasoned military expert who can hardly be accused of naivety about the Russian threat, traveled in mid-April to the Soviet Union where he met with Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev and Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov as well as

## Yugoslavia extremists in pre-May 15 push

The Yugoslav crisis, which had been contained through most of April by the vehicle of regular weekly meetings of the Presidents of the six Yugoslav republics, has exploded again.

The centrifugal thrust toward a breakup of the federation among Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro, has been accelerating due to the wrecked economy after years of Yugoslavian obedience to the International Monetary Fund’s austerity dictates. The toppling of communist regimes all over Eastern Europe has also fueled the drive for independence by the republics, especially Croatia and Slovenia.

But the crisis had been somewhat defused by an agreement reached in April by the six Presidents. The agreement called for a republic-by-republic referendum to decide Yugoslavia’s future, either to become a league of sovereign republics, or to continue as a federation. This arrangement now threatens to go up in smoke.

There is nothing spontaneous in the latest round of violence between armed Serbian militias and Croatian police, April 30-May 3, in the regions of Croatia dominated by that republic’s Serbian minority. The shootings, which have claimed at least a dozen lives, are the result of a drive by arch-Serbian extremists, backed by their supporters who form one faction in the top Army leader-

Chief of General Staff Gen. Mikhail Moiseyev and other top military representatives. Upon his return, Dregger quoted Akhromeyev that "the creation of the Western European Union is objectively inevitable. We must for our part forge ties to our former allies bilaterally. That would change the role of the United States, whether they like it or not." Dregger then added, "I can say, that I agree fully with Marshal Akhromeyev on this."

There are growing indications that the Bush administration is not only directly torpedoing the European Defense Union project, but is also making a renewed bid to win influence in Moscow, by appealing to a common superpower interest against Western and Central Europe. The Bush administration seems to be pulling back from the position, "We are the only superpower, and Moscow should stew in its juices." This shift appears to be occurring for three reasons. One is that U.S. influence on Soviet internal and foreign policy was waning. The second, that a full scale economic

collapse and a bloody civil war in the nuclear-armed Soviet Union heralds incalculable risks, even for the United States and Western Europe. Third and above all, that Germany's influence on Moscow in the economic, and as the statements of Akhromeyev indicate, security policy domain, is steadily growing.

Even if the Bush regime lacks the will and the capacity to stabilize the Soviet internal situation through real economic cooperation, it now wants to upgrade the "special" relationship with a weakened Soviet Union. One place this could be manifested is the Middle East. The Baker-Bessmertnykh talks in the Caucasus on April 24-25 point in that direction. Moreover, in June, Bush wants to bring off a summit meeting with Gorbachov. The primary objective of this summit for Bush is to slam down the "window of opportunity" for real economic and security policy cooperation between Western and Eastern Europe, which opened up again in the wake of the Gulf war.

ship, to torpedo the referendum agreement and instead promote a breakup of Yugoslavia and a civil war.

These extremists believe that out of the ruins of a civil conflict, a Greater Serbia can emerge this year, which would incorporate all areas in all republics of Yugoslavia where the Serbian population predominates.

### Tight deadline

The Serbian extremists are operating on a very tight timetable, up against the deadline of May 15. Until that date, a nationalist Serb, Borisav Jovic, is Yugoslav State President, and thus, political commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces. This capability has been repeatedly exercised during the last days of April and first days of May to deploy Yugoslav Army units into the Serb-inhabited Croatian republic regions of Knin and Krajina.

After May 15 that capability to legally intimidate a republic, such as Croatia, will have evaporated. Under the Yugoslav system of an annually rotating the state presidency, Jovic will have to make way for his replacement, the Croat, Mesic, who will never allow the use of the Yugoslav Army on Croatian soil.

Serbia is also about to lose its present assured five "yes" votes, the minimum required on the collective state presidency for deploying the Army. Serbia had acquired the fifth vote through a byzantine arrangement with the centrally located republic of Bosnia, which has a Muslim majority, and a large Serbian minority. In exchange for Serbia refraining from repeating in Bosnia what has happened in Croatia—i.e., the launching of an armed movement for autonomy in the Serbian regions—Bosnia had sent an ethnic Serb as its representative to the state presi-

dency in Belgrade. But on May 2, at the height of the latest violence in Croatia, Bosnian President Izetbegovic announced that he will "very soon" recall the Serb and replace him with a Bosnian Muslim.

A third element of instability, likely to encourage desperate actions by the Serbian extremists, was added by the unforeseen shift in the Armed Forces' leadership in late April, when Defense Minister General Kadrijevic, a moderate Serb, suddenly became gravely ill, and was forced to relinquish his day-to-day running of the Armed Forces. This responsibility has been filled by Chief of the General Staff General Adzic, a rabid Serbian nationalist.

The first sign of an explosion that could blow up the political settlement occurred on Monday, April 29, during the regular weekly meeting of the six republic Presidents. This meeting was held in the Montenegrin capital of Cetinje, at the former Royal Palace, seat of the pre-World War I monarchs of Montenegro.

During a break in the proceedings, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman gave a press conference, as he had done at all five previous such meetings. This time around, *bona fide* journalists were in a distinct minority. The room was packed with non-journalists, clearly deployed by the Serbian-dominated Yugoslav secret police. Tudjman was subjected to a torrent of provocations and insults, causing him to end the press conference but then to also leave Cetinje and break up the meeting of the republic Presidents. By this tactical blunder, he had accomplished the goal of the Serbian disrupters.

Twenty-four hours after this staged incident, mass violence began to erupt in the Serbian-inhabited regions of Croatia.—Konstantin George