

'Greater Serbians' seeking to 'restore' 1915 Balkan borders

by Mark Burdman

Emboldened by the bankrupt diplomacy of the European Community and the evident resolve of both sides at the U.S.-Soviet summit in Moscow to impose a balance of power arrangement in the Balkans to the detriment of political freedom and independence, the proponents of a Greater Serbia are moving to "restore the boundaries" of Serbia which existed in 1915. That year was the high point of the Serbian offensive in World War I against the Austrians, during which Serbia significantly expanded its geographical perimeters.

This design is being carried out by combined actions of the Greater Serbian "Chetnik" militias and the Serb-dominated Yugoslav federal military. Over July 26-28, these forces left some bloody examples of their intentions, with massacres of Croatian police and civilians in the strategic towns of Glina and Struga. In Glina, corpses were found strewn along fields, while in the case of Struga, civilians were used as "live shields," while butcheries were committed against police forces. Some 200 died, at least half of them Croatian police, in the fighting in these and other Croatians towns. As of this writing, fighting is continuing in Croatia, and the federal Air Force has been brought in to bomb Croatian targets.

Following the weekend fighting, Colonel Dragan, commander of the Chetniks for the "Serbian autonomous region of Krajina" in southern Croatia, appeared on Serbian television, to announce that the Croats had been "cleaned out" of the region around Glina. As he spoke, he smiled and held a skull in his hand.

The military goal of the Greater Serbians is very simple: All Chetnik military deployments are subordinated to taking over a Croatian region encompassed by the three points extending from Karlobag on the northwest Adriatic coast, eastward toward Slavonia through Karlovac and Virovitica. These three cities were formerly part of the Serbian "borders of 1915." With the help of the federal armed forces and given the relative military weakness of the Croats, it is possible that the aim could be achieved within the coming period. According to France's *Le Monde* July 30, a leading Chetnik stated on Belgrade television on July 27: "Only two more villages, and we will have the Serbian borders of 1915. It is only a matter of days." Said one informed Austrian military source: "The Greater Serbians believe that this is their historical moment. They appreciate now that Yugoslavia can't be reconstructed, and they want to get the best arrangement they

can in what follows."

Chetnik head Vojislav Seselj, whose nickname is "The Red Duke," told the London *Independent* July 30 that "the Croats must either move or die. . . . We want no one else on our territory, and we will fight for our true borders." He said that Croatia could be "independent," as long as it "amputated" its arm along the Dalmatian coast, and relinquished all of Slavonia in the east, and those parts of the center that should belong to a "Greater Serbia." Seselj stated that Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic, formerly an opponent of the Chetniks, is "moving closer and closer to our position."

On July 29, a Chetnik chieftain named Milan Martić, self-professed "Interior Minister of the Serbian Autonomous Region" inside Croatia, declared that after the fall of Glina, the towns of Petrijna and Kost will be "taken in a few days," and then his forces would move to take Karlovac. His comments were widely reported in the Serbian media. One day later, the Yugoslav Air Force bombed Petrijna and Kost.

Martić also raved that the Croats had built "concentration camps" for Serbs in areas of the Adriatic coast, implying these would be next to be militarily targeted by the Chetniks. Such deployments raise the question of the future fate of the Dalmatian "arm" of Croatia, which Seselj wants "amputated." Reports have begun to circulate in Europe, of the sudden emergence of a new "Dalmatian autonomy movement."

In the aftermath of the July 26-28 bloodletting, Croatian sources are concerned that 150-200,000 federal soldiers and 700 tanks, many of them put into action in early July by the Belgrade authorities ostensibly for action against Slovenia, are positioned against Croatia. In addition, there are 15,000 reservists, predominantly Serbian, mobilized along the Danube. Newly appointed Croatian Defense Minister Sime Džodan countered on July 30 with a warning: "If Serbia wants war, then we have about 200,000 Croats abroad who have volunteered to fight. We will buy guns, anti-tank, and anti-aircraft weapons from Hungary, Italy, and France, because there are many Croats abroad who are prepared to give a lot of money to help Croats." Speaking to the closed session of the Yugoslav presidency during the week of July 22, Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Marković warned that "a critical mass is being concentrated for a catastrophic civil war," which could result in "a few thousand, perhaps millions of victims," destabilizing all of Europe in the process.

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

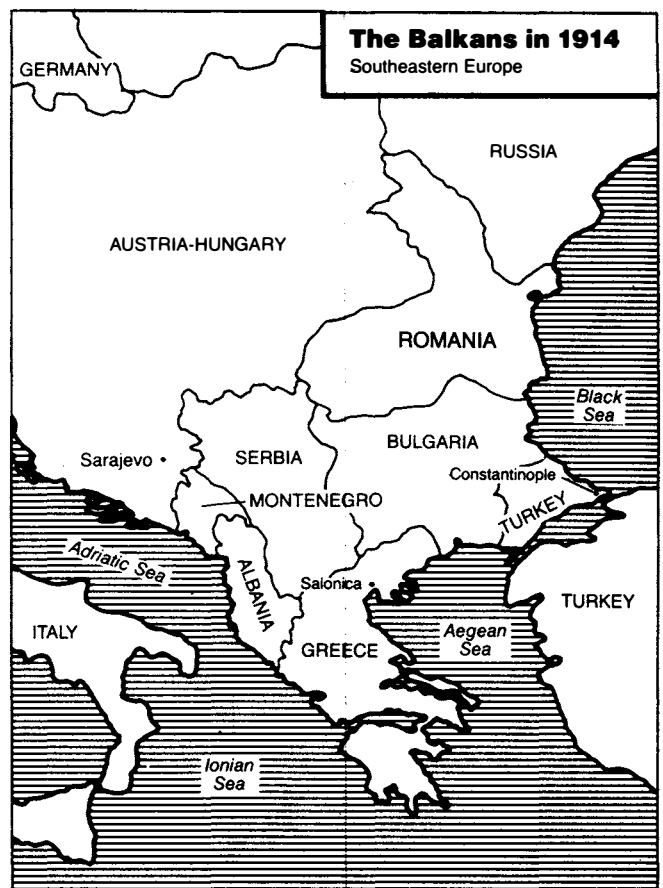
Making matters worse, certain parties, both inside and outside Yugoslavia, are putting forward extremely provocative proposals for mass transfers of population between Serbia and Croatia, as a "solution" to the crisis. On July 25, the *Jerusalem Post* (owned by the Hollinger Corp. on whose board of directors 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



On the left, the Balkans in 1911. Turkey still has much land under its control. On the right, the Balkans in 1914. Montenegro and Serbia have expanded at Turkey's expense, while the corridor between them, a potential rail route from Vienna to Salonica, has disappeared.

France. The meetings in Brussels July 29 between EC representatives and Yugoslav Prime Minister Markovic, Foreign Minister Loncar, and other senior Yugoslav politicians, excluded representation from Slovenia and Croatia. Worse yet, Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van der Broek put forward an unworkable proposal for "joint peacekeeping patrols" of Croatian national guard and Yugoslav Army units.

The sabotage of European efforts from the inside may be to discredit continental Europe's ability to deal with such crises and to replace European efforts by a "balance of power" or "spheres of influence" approach, involving the Soviets, the U.S., the British, the French, and the Turks. Radio Moscow reported July 29 that "ways of settling conflicts in the Balkans and the Middle East through joint efforts" would feature prominently in the Bush-Gorbachov summit discussions. On the same day, the *Financial Times* reported that the Bush administration had, up to now, allowed the EC to take command of diplomatic efforts for Yugoslavia, but that senior administration advisers were "skeptical" about EC efforts.

Not much light is being shed on what the superpowers are discussing substantively about Yugoslavia, but a "Balkans appendix" to the summit is occurring Aug. 1-2, with the

arrival of Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Markovic in Moscow.

The monarchy restoration project

The U.S. and Soviets may both be supporting a British-orchestrated scheme for the restoration of the Serbian monarchy in Belgrade. In the days leading up to the Moscow summit, Yugoslav Crown Prince Alexander, whose headquarters is in London, was in the U.S., including attendance at the exclusive Bohemia Grove, California conclave of American and European elites. In mid-June, the Soviet magazine *New Times* published a feature on Prince Alexander, which stated: "As it searches for new forms of statehood, Yugoslavia's nation cannot help recalling 'the good old days,' which necessarily includes monarchy. Half a century of anti-monarchist propaganda has not been enough to rout the popular sympathy (or at least interest for monarchy). The slogan 'We want a king!' is very often heard at meetings and demonstrations in Belgrade." The accompanying photo bore the caption, "Monarchists' rally in Serbia."

The Chetniks are among those who lobby for a king to head a new Greater Serbia; the name Chetnik derives from the World War II units who supported the royalist cause.