

Balkans: Deal with Russia heralds broader war ahead

by Umberto Pascali

“Now the Russians are again in the game officially, called back by the Anglo-Americans. Thank Warren Christopher. Now we are getting really scared. Do you know what it means to call back the Russians into the negotiations? Do you know what that means for us Bosnians? These are the people behind the Greater Serbians. A broader war could be closer than people think.” The Bosnian insider was commenting on the news that Reginald Bartholomew had arrived in Moscow on Feb 12.

Bartholomew, the new U.S. envoy to Bosnia nominated by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, is better known as the “destroyer of Lebanon” for the role he played in that country, where he was ambassador from 1983 to 1986. As a State Department official working on Bosnia put it, “Indeed Lebanon is our preferred example when we discussed Bosnia.” Lebanon, a prosperous, vibrant country, and an example of peaceful collaboration between Christians and Muslims, not unlike Bosnia, was pushed—through machinations involving above all Moscow, Washington, London, Israel—into one of the most destructive civil wars of this century. After ten years of chaos and genocide the country was split de facto between Israel and Syria. “After all,” the State Department official commented, “Lebanon was pacified at the end. Yes, it took ten years, but now they live in peace there. But Mr. Bartholomew was not chosen just because he had been in Lebanon. He is a tough negotiator and that’s what is needed to convince the three parties in Bosnia to find an agreement.”

As if to signal a firm agreement inside the Anglo-American elite, this was the same analysis pushed on Feb. 11 by Simon Jenkins, the political editor of the London *Times*. What is going on in Bosnia is “a classic civil war and one that has by no means achieved the point of exhaustion, where each side collapses under the authority of the nearest guarantor of order. That point has been achieved in Lebanon. The Syrian intervention was postponed by Israeli and then multinational attempts at ‘peacekeeping,’ a peace that left thousands dead. The Syrian army was guilty of atrocities that made the Serbs seem like angels. But it has brought a sort of peace to Lebanon, because Syria’s security requires it.”

Strategic map of the Croatian-Bosnian theater of war



The Serbian military strongholds shown on the map should be the targets for U.S. bombing missions that could end the war within 1-2 months, according to Croatian journalist Srečko Jurdana.

A Lebanese source told *EIR*: “Bartholomew was the destroyer of Lebanon. It was he more than anybody else who prepared the groundwork for handing Lebanon to the Syrians and it was under the Bartholomew tenure that the U.S. approved of a ‘multinational force’ to police Lebanon.”

Prior to his Lebanon posting, Bartholomew was the State Department’s special Cyprus coordinator in 1981-82. There

as well, the Anglo-Americans ran another atrocious social experiment on the Turkish and Greek inhabitants. Bartholomew’s first major State Department posting was under Henry Kissinger in 1974, and he left State with Kissinger in 1977. In 1979 he came back while Cyrus Vance was secretary, and Warren Christopher undersecretary.

This is the man that Warren Christopher chose as U.S.

chief negotiator as he announced—on Feb. 10—his support for the Vance-Owen plan. A Bosnian source commented: “While many gullible people were expecting Clinton and Christopher to impose law and justice upon the British and Russians, any serious observers knew that Cyrus Vance of the Vance-Owen plan was the former boss of Christopher and that the two have been in communication all the time. Vance had boasted about his ‘influence’ on Christopher in the pages of the *New York Times*. His endorsement of Vance was no surprise. The second non-surprise was that Christopher called the Russians in. What we are going to get is a new and more dangerous form of Yalta.”

It was in fact in the Feb. 10 briefing on the “conflict in former Yugoslavia” that Christopher announced: “Earlier today, the President spoke with Yeltsin by phone to convey his personal request that both our nations work closely and cooperatively in this search for a peaceful resolution. He is also sending Ambassador Bartholomew to Moscow to discuss our approach before the ambassador returns to New York to participate in the negotiations.” It could not have been clearer: Before there are any negotiations, we will strike a formal and open agreement with Moscow.

One of the first to rejoice was the British “negotiator,” Lord David Owen, who finally felt free to say in an interview with the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, in the issue that appeared on Feb. 15, that the Russians “will appear on the scene more visible than before.” He revealed: “We have used their diplomatic connections and their experience for our cause, also in the past, though. Their ambassador attended all the talks in Geneva and New York. We have made clear to the Americans that in terms of the policy contents, the Russians were on our side.”

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd welcomed the American position because it “reinforces the Vance-Owen plan” and “relieves the Muslims of the belief that the United States will act to impose a settlement.” So the Bosnians will more easily have their backs put to the wall without their pre-election illusions of U.S. support.

Russians: Lift sanctions on Serbia

On Feb. 13, Russia—in a perfectly symmetrical maneuver—communicated to the U.N. Security Council that it had nominated its own high-level envoy, Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaly I. Churkin, the highest Russian decisionmaker for former Yugoslavia. Vance and Owen welcomed the Russian decision, while United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali asked Bartholomew and Churkin to come up with a preliminary solution to the war in Croatia by the end of March.

On Feb. 13 Bartholomew was in Moscow smiling to reporters after a 90-minute meeting with the Russian foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev. The former envoy in Cyprus and Lebanon confided that the talks had been “very, very positive.” Positive indeed. The Russian legislative leaders made clear that they want the sanctions against Serbia lifted. Ko-

zyrev himself, showing a great familiarity with the art of diplomatic blackmail, made clear how much pressure he is under from the “hardliners” who accuse him of being too tough with the Serbian “Orthodox brothers.”

The latest news from Moscow is that the Russian Parliament explicitly demanded sanctions against Croatia or, if this is not done, lifting of the sanctions against Serbia—and this is final. A senior Bosnian journalist commented: “It is clear that they want to establish a non-European solution. Russia in particular is engaged in inheriting the position of the Soviet Union in all respects. For them, Bosnia must be an example to all the Muslim populations that were once part of the Soviet Empire. None of those Muslim countries should dare claim real independence—or else. In this—exclusion of Europe, i.e. Germany, from the game, and repression of Muslims—national-communist Russia wants to find a global partner in the Anglo-Americans.”

The brutality of the Serbian position has been shown lately by the Chetniks (the Serbian irregulars) in Bosnia, whose very existence depends on regular and continuous supplies from Serbia. The Chetniks, led by Radovan Karadzic, have cut off supplies to the whole of eastern Bosnia, whose population is going to be starved or killed by the winter and by disease. Even the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees is now saying that up to 200,000 people are facing death there. And, in a development that should shame the West, the first reports of cannibalism arrived on the desks of the media, in particular from the city of Tuzla. The Chetniks continue to obstruct the U.N. convoy; and the U.N. forces, which have an official mandate to get those convoys and supplies to the civilian population, keep backing down.

The Bosnian government, with the support of the people of Sarajevo, has taken the heroic decision to refuse any further supply for the capital city until the U.N. obeys its mandate and resupplies eastern Bosnia.

The first answer came from Lt. Gen. Philippe Morillon, commander of the U.N. forces in Bosnia, who was declared *persona non grata* by the government after the Serbian assassination of Deputy Prime Minister Hakija Turajlic while under U.N. protection. “A decision to fast to death,” stated Morillon sarcastically, comparing it to the fasts of Mohandas Gandhi during the fight for the independence of India. But Gandhi, Morillon said, smiling, “never imposed his fasts on others, he did it alone.”

In the meantime most Balkan countries are preparing for imminent war. Serbian provocations in Kosova are escalating (see interview, p. 29). Most of those countries are rushing into military alliances, exactly as happened before World Wars I and II. Albania and Bulgaria signed their first agreement on Feb. 14. They underlined that they will do everything possible to help “contain” the war in Bosnia and to stop the fighting from spilling over into Makedonija and Kosova. Turkish President Turgut Özal is touring Bulgaria, Makedonija, and Albania.