

seen by the world as ridiculous. Bosnian Foreign Minister Haris Silajdzic was given the floor June 16 for a short speech in which he described his country as "a bloodstain on your TV screens. . . . Bosnia is everything that human rights are not." He talked about the town Gorazde, "where 60,000 people are awaiting death, as we speak, *now*—an hour from here by airplane. . . . Some 20,000 children in Gorazde are in a position to be killed. Human rights, I ask you, where are the human rights? Where is the political will?"

On June 24, the 51-nation Organization of the Islamic Conference presented a special draft declaration on Bosnia to a plenary session of the World Conference. The OIC declaration rejected the latest Serb-Croat plan for a three-way split of Bosnia, and called for the lifting of the arms embargo against Bosnia. This sent deputy head of the U.S. delegation John Shattuck into a tantrum. Calling the move a breach of conference principles, he whined, that "The issue of Bosnia is diverting energy from the drafting process!"

Wide spectrum of opposition

It appears that more planning went into opposing the major planks of the conference than went into putting it together. As Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas explained in Geneva (see *Documentation*), following the four preparatory meetings a consensus position had been worked out under the auspices of the Non-Alignment Movement. Also known to have contributed to this process was extensive diplomacy by Malaysia's Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. Mahathir insisted that "if democracy is to be the only acceptable system of government within states, there must also be democracy between the states of the world: A few nations on their own cannot be allowed to take it upon themselves to determine the new world order."

Zoller admitted that there has been an attempt to induce the African countries, which "are faced with exceedingly urgent economic problems," to break off from this hard-line opposition to the U.N.-NGO agenda. He said that "efforts were made prior to the conference in Vienna to encourage European countries to show more flexibility in the face of African demands."

According to the daily newspaper of the conference, "China has up to 70 countries on its side of the argument." But the notion that China is the leader is fallacious. The attempt by the U.S.-U.N. apparatus to tar these countries with the Tiananmen massacre brush, is particularly cynical, given that George Bush, Henry Kissinger, and Brent Scowcroft were the first to rush to defend Deng Xiaoping's regime, even before the blood was washed away. Moreover, the United States is the main sponsor of China's slave labor-based "great economic reform." Leaders such as Mahathir are fully aware of these cynical geopolitical games between the United States and China, but that has not prevented them from using China to bolster their own efforts to overturn the "human rights" chessboard.

Documentation

A atas: 'A clash between two western traditions'

Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas, addressing the World Conference of Human Rights, called the battle line-up in Vienna "the lingering echo of an earlier clash between two western traditions"—that of Alexander Hamilton and that of Thomas Jefferson. Here are excerpts of his speech.

As the state presently holding the chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, we are also entrusted to reflect the consensus position on human rights taken by 108 member states of the movement which met in Indonesia last year. . . .

We are constrained to voice our concern at the recent spate of international media reports that tend to give the impression that the success of this conference is being threatened by a clash of values between the developed countries of the North and the developing countries of the South, by a confrontation between the perceived universal—mostly western—concept of human rights that stresses political and civil rights and the purported "dissident" view, particularly of Asian countries. . . . This is erroneous, unwarranted, and counterproductive. We have not come to Vienna to advocate an alternative concept of human rights, based on some nebulous notion of "cultural revisionism." . . .

If today there appears to be still a debate on the concept of human rights, it is not so much from any contention between East and West or between North and South, but the lingering echo of an earlier clash between two western traditions, between the principle of individual liberty which, for example, Thomas Jefferson passionately espoused, and the principle of a strong, lawful authority which Alexander Hamilton just as passionately advocated.

On the rights of the individual as measured against those of the state, the view of the latter tradition is that "When it comes to a decision by a head of state upon a matter involving its life, the ordinary rights of individuals must yield to what he deems the necessities of the moment." These are not the self-justifying words of some leader of the developing world. They constitute the considered view, in the Hamiltonian tradition . . . of [American Supreme Court] Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. . . .

Human rights questions are essentially ethical and moral in nature. Hence, any approach to human rights questions which is not motivated by a sincere desire to protect these rights but by disguised political purposes or, worse, to serve as a pretext to wage a political campaign against another country cannot be justified.