

'J'Accuse': A Croatian leader denounces American hypocrisy

by Srecko Felix Korpar

The author graduated from the University of Zagreb with a degree in economics. Mr. Korpar is a journalist and has been in political exile for five years, the last two in the United States. He is the president of the Croatian Cultural Club in Olympia, Washington; an executive member of the Croatian-American Alliance for Democracy; and a member of the Croatian Movement for Statehood.

The last decade of this millennium is in flux. Living in it, mankind is witnessing dramatic historical events: The Soviet Empire vanishes; oil spills in all the world's seas and oceans; the Spotted Owl is saved; the U.S.A. liberated Kuwait from foreign occupation and re-established its "democratic" feudalism; western ladies are concerned with Raisa's health; dictator Saddam Hussein is still in power; the world community recognizes independence of the Baltic republics (the "leading" world's democracy was country No. 37); the Lion of Russia—B. Yeltsin—participates in a mourning ceremony for the three (!) victims of the Soviet democratic revolution; George Bush addresses the United Nations with a brilliant speech, which says nothing; the U.S. Senate takes its role in the "Clarence Thomas Soap Opera"; *O tempora! O mores!*

Meanwhile, Croatians and Croatia are silently dying. In the heart of Europe one of the oldest nations of that continent is being subjected to a genocidal war of conquest, more inhumane than Hitler's. The number of deaths is approaching 2,000. Over 200,000 Croatians are refugees in their own country. Old Croatian towns, jewels of European and world culture, such as Sibenik, Split, Zadar, and above all Dubrovnik, are targets of frantic Serbian terrorists and the ex-Yugoslav, now Serbian, Army. The cultural monuments which survived invasions of Huns, Tartars, Turks, and Germans are now in ruins. The brave old nation of the Croatians, which defended western Europe for centuries by stopping the Turks in its territories, seeks help. Instead, insensible European and American politicians, deeply entrenched in their narrow, greedy interests, are blessing cruel neo-communists and Greater Serbian neo-Nazis, and encourage genocidal war against Croatia, betraying the holiest principles of Christianity, democracy, and freedom. The judgment of history will punish and name them "the modern Shylocks,"

as they are.

We Croatians can only ask ourselves why the world so passively and indifferently watches the newest tragedy to our nation. Where is the answer? In history? Croatian history was usually tragic, but always honorable.

Croatians settled their homeland in the first centuries of the Christian era, but a major wave of Croatians came in the seventh century. They settled all the lands bounded by the River Socha on the west, the River Drina on the east, the River Drava on the north, and the Adriatic Sea on the south. It was a final destination of an ancient nation of Aryan stock, who were mentioned in Sanskrit and Zarathustra's Avesta in 2000 B.C. From the ancient Harahvaiti in northeastern Persia, the Black Sea's Tanais and White (or Great) Croatia in northeastern Europe, where they mixed with Slavs and Slavicized, Croatians came to their homeland as a completely formed nation.

They became one of the first baptized (under western ritual) nations of Europe, and the eastern Croatian border (the River Drina) became the historical marker between western and eastern civilization. Even though the country was ruled by a king, all major decisions had to be approved by the Parliament. So, it can be said that Croatians have one of the oldest parliamentary traditions in the world. As a western nation, Croatia went through all the cultural processes in Europe, and innumerable monuments, written documents, great artists, and scientists witness that.

Political tragedy for Croatia started in the fifteenth century, when the powerful Ottoman Empire occupied over 50% of the Croatian territories, and the rest of the nation became the front-line border of Christianity—a military zone of the western world. At that time, the Kingdom of Croatia entered the Austro-Hungarian Empire and remained a federal state until 1918.

After World War I, Croatia was an independent state for about a month, when members of the "Yugoslavian Committee" proclaimed, without parliamentary approval, unification with Slovenia and Serbia. The Kingdom of Serbians, Croats, and Slovenes was born, and the greatest tragedy for Croatians began. Primitive Serbians, who had spent almost 500 years under Turkish occupation and who had missed all cultural

and political events for centuries, started World War I to realize their raw imperialistic concept of "Greater Serbia"—a country formed from Serbia and all the neighboring countries, where Serbians should be the sovereign rulers and all the others just the slaves. In the spirit of such a political concept, they ruled that kingdom as their colony from the beginning until the last day of its existence. Croatian and Slovenian goods were plundered, the economy destroyed, and over 80,000 Croats died as direct victims of the Serbian dictatorship. Independent movements in Croatia and other oppressed parts of Yugoslavia grew stronger, and finally they destroyed that odious kingdom in 1941.

Unfortunately it was the time of the Second World War and Germany had full control over Europe. Slovenia became a German protectorate, Croats established the Independent State of Croatia which was under German control (like almost all European countries, including France), and Serbia, as the only country from the former Yugoslavia, formed its Nazi Party—ruled by Milan Nedic—and was a Nazi puppet state. It is an interesting detail that the Serbian capital, Belgrade, was proclaimed the first European city "free of Jews." Only 200 out of 25,000 Belgrade Jews survived World War II.

For Croats, that war was a cruel civil war, where three factions were fighting among each other. Serbian royalist bands, known as Chetniks, were fighting on the Croatian territory against Croats, to reestablish Yugoslavia as Greater Serbia and to destroy as many Catholic and Muslim lives as possible. Their bestial crimes are still remembered, especially in eastern Bosnia. Tito's partisans, controlled by Moscow, were fighting against Chetniks and Ustashi to reestablish Yugoslavia as a Bolshevik country. Civilians were killed by all of them. When Churchill decided to support Tito and his partisans, who were useful against Germany, that faction was chosen to be the postwar ruler, and a second Yugoslavia was born. Interestingly, over 50% of Tito's soldiers were Croats who believed that they were fighting against Nazism and for western democracy. But they all were wrong.

The second Yugoslavia was a communist dictatorship, ruled by Tito and Serbian generals who took power in the postwar Yugoslav army. In that severe war over 1 million Croats died (about 400,000 were massacred at the Austrian border when Britain purposely returned 150,000 Croatian soldiers and over 200,000 civilians to Tito's murder squads a week after the war was over).

Croats were betrayed again. Freedom was lost and the Serbs who infiltrated the Communist Party started plundering Croatia once more. Hundreds of thousands of Croats left their homeland, hundreds of thousands became political prisoners, thousands were killed as "state enemies." Rich Croatia was a Serbian colony once again.

After Tito's death, and the complete collapse of the Yugoslav economy, destroyed by Serbo-communist greediness

Croatia's political benchmarks

A.D. 879	Croatia is first recognized to be a sovereign state. 1776: Croatian republic of Dubrovnik becomes the second country to recognize U.S. independence. 1918: Austro-Hungarian Empire breaks apart and Croatia is forced to join the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. This union was never ratified by the Croatian Parliament.
1945	Communists form the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and outlaw all competing political parties. The S.F.R.Y.'s capital is located in the Serbian city of Belgrade.
1990 April 30	Free elections held in Croatia for the first time since World War II. Eight political parties competed in elections certified by international observer teams.
May 19	Referendum held allowing the Croatian people to endorse the new government's program of independence. Referendum passes with 94% of the ballots cast (80% of electorate eligible votes in election).
1991 June 25	Croatian Declaration of Independence.
July 7	Croatia agrees to a three-month moratorium on its independence.
July 30	First accounts of Federal Army MiG jets destroying civilian targets such as hospitals and schools.
Aug. 1	First accounts of heavy losses of Croatian police to Army tanks.
Sept. 16	Zagreb, Croatia's capital, comes under attack for the first time in its 900-year history.
Oct. 7	Croatian Parliament ratifies the May referendum despite threats from Federal Army.



One of Croatia's cultural treasures, a medieval church and cloister in Dubrovnik. In an interview with an Italian magazine in September, Franjo Kuharic, the cardinal of Zagreb, said that some 70 churches had been severely damaged, some of them almost totally destroyed. "This is a premeditated action," he charged. By Oct. 24, Dubrovnik itself was being shelled.

Dr. Frederick Guggenbuehl

and mismanagement, Serbian communists and ultra-nationalist intellectuals, supported by the Army, decided to play with open cards. They publicly proclaimed their old goal: establishment of the "Greater Serbia" of Croatian, Bosnian, Albanian, Montenegrin, and Macedonian territories, and abolishing all rights in non-Serbian nations.

After the first democratic elections in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, and Macedonia last year, when all these nations decided to adopt a free market economy, western democracy, and overwhelmingly voted for independence, Serbia decided to start the war. This is probably the last war of conquest in Europe, but certainly the most inhuman in the modern history of mankind.

Chetniks are butchering civilians again. The Army is destroying everything, even cultural monuments, hospitals, kindergartens, schools, and old people's homes. There is no honor in the war. It is a genocidal war against Croatia.

I believe that we Croatians have a holy right to happiness, peace, justice, and freedom in this world. That is the reason why I blame you Americans, "the leaders of the free world," ambiguous western European leaders (especially the British), and invertebrates from the United Nations, for each tear of our children, for each drop of spilled Croatian blood, for each destroyed house or cultural monument in Croatia. You took the right to lead the world, but you are purposely "forgetting" that the main part of right is responsibility. So, if you lead the world, you are responsible and have no right to be

indifferent. You have no right to play the supreme creatures and preach all over the world about freedom, peace, and democracy, using these holy words as synonyms for profit, interest, and hypocrisy.

As worshippers of liberty, humanism, and justice, we are ashamed of your behavior and ruthlessness. We still can't believe that the deputy secretary of state, a man who is in charge of the American stand in the crisis, can be a person who has strong mutual business interests with the old Yugoslav communist regime and personal business involvement in Serbia (Jack Anderson, *The Washington Post*, Nov. 12, 1989; Pat Buchanan, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, June 29, 1991; *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Sept. 25, 1991).

His colleague from "Kissinger Associates," Lord Carrington, is the chairman of the European Peace Conference on Yugoslavia. Are the financial interests, or American-Japanese-European economic and strategic policies more important than democracy and justice, or the destiny of one nation?

Somebody said that all the politics of the world are not worth a single child's tear. While writing this text, I am hearing of the newest destruction in Croatia. Hundreds more people in my country are dying, and I am crying. I am not ashamed of feelings. I am ashamed of you and in the name of love, God, and justice, I accuse you of betraying the essential principles of democracy, liberty, and humanity. I accuse you, and proclaim the trust in you—dead.