

An emergency proposal to end the war in the Balkans

by Gen. Paul Albert Scherer (ret.)

General Scherer is one of the world's leading experts on the former Soviet Union. He was, during the 1970s, the director of the Militärische Abschirmdienst (MAD), the military intelligence and counterintelligence agency of the Federal Republic of Germany. During several visits to the United States since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, he forecast very accurately the fall of Gorbachov, and the probability that war would erupt among the nations of the former Soviet Union.

He is currently visiting Washington as the guest of the Schiller Institute, and gave a press conference at the National Press Club on March 9.

His briefing there focused on the need to stop the Balkans war, as he presented the proposal which is outlined below. He also discussed the explosive situation in Russia, warning that President Boris Yeltsin will be out of power very soon.

General Scherer explained how, in the early 1980s, there was an effort to avert the crisis that has now developed in the former Soviet Union. "In the spring of 1982," he said, "in the Soviet Embassy, there were very important secret talks that were held, with the participation of top American political leaders. The question was, did the United States and the Soviet Union wish, at that time, jointly to develop an antiballistic-missile defense that would make war impossible for the immediate future? This was the Strategic Defense Initiative. These talks went on until about June 1982. Then in August, you had this very sharp Soviet rejection of the entire idea. I can say this with great exactitude, because I have also discussed this thoroughly with the developer, the originator of this idea, the scientific, technological, strategic expert Lyndon LaRouche. The rejection came in August; then the American President, Reagan, decided to push this entire thing out into the public eye, so he made his speech in March 1983 to show that the SDI could be developed even without

the Russians and that it would make substantial progress even so."

The brutal and extremely critical conditions of the situation in the former Yugoslavia no longer permit us to consider Serbia's aggressive war, waged for the purpose of creating a Greater Serbia, and the concomitant genocide of so-called ethnic cleansing, as a civil war.

It is possible the horrible barbarism of this Balkan war may become an example to be imitated among the CIS states which occupy the territory of the former U.S.S.R., and which make up one-sixth of the world's land surface. If Serbian aggression is crowned with success, it is also likely to be imitated by Islamic fundamentalist forces in Iran and elsewhere in the world. The Balkan situation contains the danger of the early outbreak of a third world war which would necessarily entail the collapse of western civilization.

There is no alternative to an immediate stopping of the Balkan war. The strategic situation allows no further loss of time through negotiations. Time is the most fundamental factor of this psychologically explosive situation. Gorbachov's six-and-a-half-year bankruptcy administration of the former U.S.S.R. has deprived the world of any margin in this regard.

A multi-ethnic nation cannot be coerced into staying together if its individuals and peoples no longer wish to remain together. But the successor states, especially in light of their mixed ethnic composition (and we should recall that 52% of marriages in the former Yugoslavia involved members of different ethnic groups) must guarantee the human rights of all persons. None of these states can tolerate armed insurrection or the open incitement to the violent overthrow of its government. On the other hand, those persons who choose to emi-

grate from one successor state to another must be guaranteed the right to do so, and a mechanism for safeguarding their property rights and right to compensation must be provided.

The United States must act

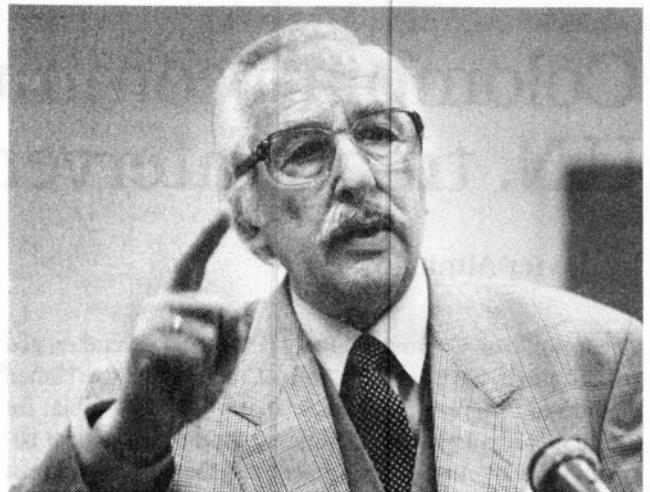
The United States must at this point exercise its function and responsibility as the leading power of European-American civilization within the framework of the NATO alliance. The European nations have shown that they are incapable of carrying out this role. The United States must intervene, applying force against force, before the end of the spring of 1993. But there must under no circumstances whatsoever be any commitment of United States ground forces. This means that the proposal of U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for stationing such U.S. ground forces in Bosnia must be decisively rejected. The approach suggested by Mr. Boutros-Ghali brings with it the immediate danger of a new political and military catastrophe on the strategic scale of Vietnam.

In light of the experiences of the Second World War, as well as of all proxy wars waged after 1945, it is clear that the NATO command must seize air superiority over the entire combat area in the former Yugoslavia. This air superiority must be of permanent duration. In this way, the Serbian artillery positions which encircle and besiege the principal Bosnian cities can be broken up by bombing, in the interest of the starving populations. NATO must establish liaison commands and at the same time deploy air force liaison officers to the fighting fronts. These liaison officers must accompany Croatian and Bosnian units and carry out a double role of calling in air strikes, while at the same time making sure that Croatian and Bosnian units do not violate any international borders. Air drops of humanitarian supplies should be halted, and replaced with transport by land truck convoys and air deliveries to airports where security has been reestablished. Measures must be taken to allow television cameras and journalists of the free world to accompany Croatian and Bosnian units in their operations, and generally to move freely in the war zone.

End the weapons embargo

The embargo against weapons acquisitions by the Croatian, Bosnian, and Slovenian ground forces must be terminated. Ending the embargo must, however, be made conditional on acceptance by these forces of the principle of the respect of all international borders and of the basic human rights of all ethnic minorities that are intermixed in these areas.

With the cooperation of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Buglaria, NATO partner Greece, and Romania, it must be assured that, as long as hostilities last, economic sanctions against Serbia be fully applied. Military operations on the part of NATO should be terminated immediately as soon as all population groups involved recognize and accept the minority rights of the other ethnic groups and cease to de-



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mand special privileges for themselves. All states involved must retain their national sovereignty and territorial integrity intact. Any changes in this regard must be approved by all parties to a peace conference to be convened after the cessation of all hostilities.

Treatment of Serbia

The goal of this policy is to stop the war, but this must not be presented or understood as a punishment of the Serbian ethnic component as such. There is no collective guilt of all Serbians. War crimes must be adjudicated through an action of the United Nations with full validity under the terms of international law, on the basis of evidence gathered by a special commission of international jurists. The goal should be to guarantee that freedom-loving western civilization will never again undergo war.

A further pursuit of a soft line in regard to Serbia must be ruled out, because the contending parties have repeatedly shown that they are unable or unwilling to behave peacefully unless they are compelled to do so. If elements of the old communist *nomenklatura*, in synergy with Great Russian nationalism, are able to seize power from the Russian reformers, a recrudescence of East-West confrontation, probably in the unconventional form of psychological warfare (state-sponsored terrorism, etc.) is to be expected. The need to resolve the Balkan crisis before a possible return to power of the communist *nomenklatura* is yet another powerful reason for forcing an end to the hostilities immediately. In any case, Russia is not going to commit suicide in order to go to the aid of Serbia.

Permanent peace must be promoted through the application of a program of economic reconstruction and development for the benefit of all states involved. This can be planned and financed within the framework of the European Productive Triangle.