

Let Clinton save his presidency and Bosnia

The following article was compiled from reports put together from persons in contact with the Bosnian delegation at the Geneva "peace" talks during the first week in August.

On July 31, Britain's Lord David Owen was formally accused of having lied to Bosnia President Alija Izetbegovic and of having tried to trick him into signing an agreement that would strip Bosnia of its statehood. The dramatic denunciation at a press conference given at 7 p.m. that day in Geneva was made by Prof. Francis Boyle of the University of Illinois, Champaign, the counsel to the Bosnia and Hercegovina government and an authority in the field of international law. At the same time, in a letter delivered to the co-chairmen of the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia, Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, President Izetbegovic stated that he cannot accept the draft agreement presented to him, because, contrary to what the two co-chairmen told him, the agreement implies that Bosnia would lose its statehood.

President Izetbegovic's letter

Thus, President Izetbegovic froze his approval of the draft until such time as the formulation is changed. The Bosnian authorities also released the minutes of a discussion between Owen's legal adviser Dr. Paul Szass, Professor Boyle, and other Bosnian officials including Dr. Kasim Trnka, a justice of the Bosnian Constitutional Court, and Prof. Lamija Tanovic, the Bosnian representative to Denmark. The minutes reveal the scandalous, insulting, and threatening attitude of Owen's team, and, according to experts, constitute in themselves sufficient cause to demand the immediate removal of Lord Owen from his position of mediator. They also confirm the strong will of Bosnia's representatives to resist the partition schemes.

The letter of President Izetbegovic to Owen and Stoltenberg reads in part: "Sirs, Yesterday I gave my preliminary approval of the draft on Constitutional Agreement on the Union of Republics of Bosnia and Hercegovina. My approval

was given upon your statement that the agreement does not question the status of statehood for the future Union and thereby its membership in the OUN [United Nations Organization]. However, I have been warned this morning by experts in international law that Article 1 of the agreement, as it is, leaves doubts relating to the legal status of the Union of the Republics of Bosnia and Hercegovina. . . . Therefore I have to insist upon an unambiguous answer to this question. . . . I have to inform you that, until I receive the answer, I remain reserved regarding the wording of Article 1."

Article 1, in the draft originally presented to President Izetbegovic, reads in part: "The Union of the Republics of Bosnia and Hercegovina is composed of three Constituent Republics." The formulations avoid the use of the word "state." Despite that, Lord Owen told President Izetbegovic that the draft does "not question the status of state" for the future Union. This is clearly false, and Lord Owen could not have been unaware of it. The consequences of accepting such a formulation would be, as Professor Boyle described in a written analysis, the dissolution of Bosnia. "In theory then, Bosnia might lose its U.N. membership automatically and have to re-apply for admission, which will never happen. . . . So the sentence is misleading," Boyle wrote.

At his July 31 press conference, Professor Boyle answered with an unequivocal "yes" to the questions of several reporters whether Lord Owen "had lied," and whether he had tried to "trick" President Izetbegovic. When he said, "Yes, Owen and Stoltenberg lied!" he was greeted with applause and cheering from a dozen among those reporters present.

Owen adviser admits real aim

In his discussion with Bosnian officials that took place on that same day at the Palace of Nations in Geneva, the legal adviser of Lord Owen, Dr. Paul Szass, admitted the real intention of Owen and Stoltenberg. He also admitted that his original formulation was changed by his superiors. The full minutes of the discussion are available to the public upon

request to this press agency. What follow are quotations from the minutes:

Professor Boyle wants to know whether or not the "Union" is in fact intended to be a state, and if not, then what? Dr. Szass: "There were so many disagreements, that we wanted to avoid using certain words and expressions, like that of State." Boyle objects this will destroy the continuity of the Bosnian state. Professor Boyle: "We cannot throw away our U.N. membership. Article 1 cannot be accepted as it is. . . ." Dr. Szass: "This language is meant to establish a new state without explicitly using the word State. . . ." Professor Boyle: "Did you write this, Dr. Szass?" Dr. Szass: "I had tried to be more precise about the question of statehood in my original wording. *But it was changed.* . . . I can tell you there will be little understanding in the international community about these theological questions. . . . Somehow you will get assurances that the problem of your membership in the U.N. will be solved. If all parties start nit-picking and blocking on one article, then we will never get beyond square one. I can tell you, if you go on in this way, the Security Council will tell you to go to hell" (emphasis added).

Emerging from the talks, President Izetbegovic was greeted by a thousand weeping and cheering Bosnian and Swiss sympathizers, who tried to climb the crash barriers to embrace him. They were waving Bosnian flags and shouting "Don't Give In!"

A wrench had clearly been thrown into the works. Not that the Bosnians' military situation on the ground had improved one iota—five bullets a day per man is the quota for the defense of Sarajevo—but the mere fact that Bosnia after one and a half years of one of the most brutal invasions in history, is still fighting, on all fronts, demonstrates a principle of resistance which waves the red flag before the British bull.

The City of Sarajevo was about to fall, as the plump, gleaming David Owen and his Norwegian crony Stoltenberg took their walks along the lake and their meals in Geneva's smartest restaurants. Meanwhile, the government and opposition of the Bosnian state had been hanging around for days in the vicinity of Sarajevo Airport, waiting for a lull in the shelling so they could be brought out to Geneva. The Bosnian delegation arrived haggard. Most have health problems caused by the lack of rest attendant upon the constant shelling, lack of fresh water, hygienic facilities, suitable food, exercise, and sunlight, because taking any form of fresh air in Bosnia's besieged cities is excessively dangerous.

The Bosnian delegation was not made up of professional politicians but medical doctors, professors of history and philosophy, engineers, and scientists. Their staff was a group of Bosnian youths who have come in from different parts of Europe to help out without any payment. They arrived at the Palace of Nations, and found that they had one single international phone line available for 40 people. No fax or photocopy machine for their own direct use was available until four days into the talks; no basic secretarial equipment, not even notebooks. On July 31, after hours of negotiations,

a few dry sandwiches were brought in and thrown onto the table. These are people who had not eaten a proper meal in several months. On Monday, they were informed that these sandwiches were being cut for "budgetary reasons." It was obvious that Owen intended to smash them by breaking down their physical and mental resistance.

On the British side—it is important to be clear that this is a British show, and that the Croatian and Serbian delegations were simply there for window dressing—were the entire intelligence and media capabilities of the British state, represented by an army of U.N. bureaucrats (mainly British themselves), lawyers, and a fully equipped and running secretariat with dozens of aides, secretaries, and operatives.

Owen had been hard at it to divide the Bosnian delegation. By Sunday morning Aug. 1, he had invited the Bosnian opposition to a meeting at 10:30 a.m. in the Palace of Nations, which he had timed to overlap exactly with the press conference the opposition had called for 11 a.m. But, at 11 a.m. sharp, to Owen's undisguised revulsion, the opposition got up and walked out. Although cunning questions were put by the press to play up internal divisions within the opposition, the panel stuck to its guns: They said that they were all supporting President Izetbegovic in his refusal to sign Owen's original document, and read out the critical points made by the delegation's legal counsel. Then they closed the press conference.

By Tuesday morning, Aug. 3, Owen had succeeded in getting the three Croatian members of the Presidency, including Prime Minister Akmadzic, to leave the Bosnian delegation and go over to the Croatian group of Mate Boban.

U.S. presidency also at stake

At the time of this writing on Aug. 5, it is not known whether President Clinton will save his presidency and raise the siege of Sarajevo. American statesman Lyndon LaRouche warned on Aug. 4 on the weekly "EIR Talks with LaRouche," that "if the Clinton administration does not bull through military action to save the Bosnians from the Serbian fascists in time to save Sarajevo, in particular, then the Clinton administration goes down in flames; I don't think much of anything could be done to save it. That's where the issue lies. And if the Clinton administration loses credibility in that way, then all of the world's governments—western Europe, Japan, the whole kit and caboodle—lose credibility. And we go on to a slide in the direction of chaos, globally. That's what this really means." On Aug. 2, after the Serbians took the strategic hill of Bjelasnica outside Sarajevo, President Izetbegovic decided to interrupt the talks and sit it out in his hotel.

Sometime in the previous 24 hours, Reginald Bartholomew, the as-yet unconfirmed U.S. ambassador to Italy who had been hanging around Geneva for the last few days, had a message conveyed to the Bosnian Presidency: There will be no U.S. intervention, no cavalry coming over the hill to save your capital. All this talk in Brussels about intervention was just a show to get you to sign. So sign.

Owen then sent back to President Izetbegovic the exact

same draft document, without a single alteration, which the President had demanded be modified on July 31.

As we go to press, the entire force of British diplomacy and blackmail is being brought to bear on the U.S. presidency not to intervene to break the siege of Sarajevo, and on the Bosnian presidency to sign what is, in effect, its capitulation and liquidation as a state. The only hope is that Clinton acts now to prove them wrong.

Interview: Omar Beslagacic

They are trying to extinguish Bosnia

Omar Beslagacic is mayor of Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina. He was interviewed in Geneva on Aug. 2.

EIR: What has to be done?

Beslagacic: Unblock the roads, the airport. And the phone blockade—we had 20 lines to Croatia and they were cut by the Croats. The blue roads must be opened.

EIR: What about the airport?

Beslagacic: The airport was ready to be opened one year ago. We asked all international organizations to open it but received no reply. My opinion is that it is an *international plot* not to open the airport. There is no other reason. We would fulfill the conditions if there were any. But there are none given. No reply from [U.N. Secretary General Boutros] Boutros-Ghali either, no reply from Owen, but we wrote to both of them.

We found out that a “procedure” on the airport has been moved in the U.N., but nothing has moved. This region is already economically closed down.

EIR: What is happening at these talks?

Beslagacic: They are trying to extinguish Bosnia-Herzegovina here. The mediators should follow the London conference rules but they don't; force should not be recognized, the refugees should be able to go back to where they were “purged” from, then the negotiations might make some sense. Today we talked with mediators. We asked for a guarantee that Bosnia continue in the U.N., even if it becomes a Union of Republics. They want it to be divided, but what are the parameters? Ethnic? Religious? What are their parameters?

Owen took us over to a map today. He showed us the

front lines. He said that these are the borders which could just be slightly changed. That means recognizing force as a means of solving the conflict.

EIR: What message do you want to send?

Beslagacic: I would like to send a message that what is happening in Bosnia is fascism, and if the world does not stop this fascism, there will be fascism soon in each one of your homes. And we will certainly have World War III.

Documentation

Hague International Court: Sorry, on vacation!

The following is taken from the “Request for the Indication of Provisional Measures of Protection, Submitted by the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina,” presented on July 27 to the International Court of Justice in The Hague by Prof. Francis Boyle. The request calls for applying to Serbia and Montenegro the provisions of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide. Professor Boyle was acting as the General Agent of the Republic of Bosnia before that Court. The answer of the International Court to this last-ditch attempt to reestablish some form of justice in international relations, was that it could not meet before Aug. 25, because the judges had to have their vacations. Presenting this shameful statement to the press in Geneva, Professor Boyle remarked bitterly that “If you want justice, do not go to the International Court.”

On March 20 (see EIR, April 9, 1993), Professor Boyle had asked for provisional measures to stop the Bosnian holocaust. On April 8, the court issued an order to the Serbians to halt the genocide, but it contained no provisions for the order's implementation. From the July 27 request:

At that time [March 20], I stated quite clearly that in the event the Respondent [Serbia] continued with its campaign of genocide . . . I would have no alternative but to file another Request. If I remember correctly, the President of the Court took note of my statement. . . . The time has come for me to carry out that commitment. . . . The Respondent paid absolutely no attention whatsoever to the Court's Order, and immediately proceeded to violate each and every one of its provisions. . . . Furthermore, pursuant to its campaign of genocide, the Respondent is now proposing their partition,

dismemberment, annexation, and incorporation, which will constitute the logical culmination and ultimate success of its genocidal plan to establish a "Greater Serbia." . . . If not prevented by this Court, the Respondent plans to annex and incorporate substantial portions of the sovereign territory of Bosnia and to remove therefrom all people who recognize Bosnia citizenship irrespective of their other affiliations—whether Muslim, Christian, Jew, Serb, Croat—by means of genocide and acts of genocide in violation of the Genocide Convention and this Court Order of April 8, 1993. Clearly, the destruction of a sovereign nation-state by means of genocide by another state must fall within the prohibitions of the Genocide Convention to which both states are parties. The Respondent's proposed partition of Bosnia will be the prelude to the final extinction of our State and the ultimate extermination of our People. . . .

Provisional Measures Requested:

1) That Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) must immediately cease and desist from providing directly or indirectly, any type of support to any nations, group, organization . . . in Bosnia and Hercegovina for any reason.

2) That Yugoslavia and all of its public officials—including especially the President of Serbia—must immediately cease and desist from any and all efforts . . . to partition, dismember, annex or incorporate the sovereign territory of Bosnia. . . .

3) That the annexation or incorporation of any territory of Bosnia . . . be deemed illegal, null and void *ab initio*.

4) That the Government of Bosnia must have the means to "prevent" the commission of the acts of genocide. . . .

8) That in order to fulfill the obligations under the Genocide Convention. . . the Government of Bosnia must have the ability to obtain military weapons, equipment and supplies from other [Convention] Contracting Parties.

9) That in order to fulfill their obligations under the Genocide Convention. . . all Contracting Parties must have the ability to provide military weapons . . . and armed forces to the Government of Bosnia.

10) That United Nations Peacekeeping Forces in Bosnia (Unprofor) must do all in their power to ensure the flow of humanitarian relief supplies to the Bosnian People through the Bosnian city of Tuzla.

McCloskey demands removal of Lord Owen

The following are excerpts from a press conference given on Capitol Hill on Aug. 5 by Rep. Frank McCloskey (D-Ind.) and Mr. Marshall Harris, former head of the Bosnia Desk at the State Department, who resigned the day before in protest

against the U.S. policy toward Bosnia.

McCloskey: . . . I call on Secretary Christopher and President Clinton, and they will be formally advised to that effect today, to ask the European Community to replace David Owen as its mediator in the talks. Owen, who is cravenly calling for the dismemberment of the sovereign Republic of Bosnia-Hercegovina, has egregiously exceeded his mandate as a mediator by pressuring the parties to the talks to agree to the alteration of international borders. In effect, perhaps without his knowing it—I don't know the state of his consciousness—he has become a *de facto* proponent of Serb genocidal interests.

I am pleased to announce today that Marshall Freeman Harris has joined my staff as a foreign policy adviser, in fact, my major foreign policy adviser. Mr. Harris resigned yesterday from his position as Bosnia Desk Officer at the Department of State to protest U.S. pressure on the Bosnian government to accept a partition agreement in Geneva. His expertise in the State Department was in Balkan affairs. He will advise me, however, on the full range of foreign policy issues.

. . . The Clinton administration's decision to launch air strikes against Bosnian Serb targets if the siege of Sarajevo continues is a most welcome development. I have talked to President Clinton himself several times on this in the last two weeks, and I know he is truly sincere in wanting to lift the siege of Sarajevo and, indeed, all of Bosnia, particularly in places where the problems are even worse, such as Gorazde.

I urge the President and the Secretary of State, Christopher, to work vigorously to realize this policy objective. At the same time, I urge them to do more. Air strikes should be only the first step in a U.S.-led military campaign to roll back Bosnian Serb gains and restore Bosnia as a unitary state. The administration should act immediately to lift the arms embargo so that the Bosnian people can defend themselves against the Bosnian Serb forces' campaign of genocidal terror. I also urge President Clinton to withdraw immediately our country's support for the Bosnian partition talks in Geneva. Those are not peace talks, they are genocide—genocide-abetting partition talks, if I might say that.

The following are quotes from an exchange between Mr. Marshall Harris and reporters:

Q: Mr. Harris, are you resigning because you disagree with the policy or do you disagree with the way it's being implemented?

Mr. Harris: I disagree with the policy, and the policy is that we are prepared to use air strikes now in Bosnia, not merely to punish the Bosnian Serbs, who are guilty of genocide and brutal aggression in that country, but to use those strikes as a means of compelling a political settlement in Geneva, a political settlement that will inevitably lead to the partitioning of Bosnia. . . . The administration, I think, should—as the congressman has said today—immediately