

## James Baker covers for Serbia in Bosnia massacres

by Umberto Pascali

Secretary of State James Baker thundered out from the front pages of many newspapers against the latest atrocities of the Serbian leadership, this time in its aggression against of the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The massacres taking place daily, said Baker, "are extraordinarily tragic and outrageous," and he proclaimed he had sent "another very strongly worded protest to the Serbian leadership." Moreover, after a meeting on April 14 in Washington with Bosnian Foreign Minister Haris Siladzic, Baker launched an appeal to the Europeans, according to the *Washington Post*, "for help in staving off an assault by the Serb-dominated Yugoslav Army, saying that bloodshed could result in Serbia's further isolation from the West."

Even Lawrence Eagleburger, the reputed grey eminence of the Serbian lobby in the United States, forgetting for a moment his business connections in the Serbian capital of Belgrade, found the time on April 15 to reproach the "Yugoslav" ambassador. But the atrocities have not only continued, they have escalated. Approximately 200,000 Muslim and Catholic refugees, mostly women, old people, and children are fleeing from the fury of the Serbian Chetnik irregulars and the so-called "Federal" Army.

### Disgusting cynicism

"I can only describe Baker's attitude with two words: 'disgusting cynicism,'" a local source who is following the situation in Bosnia day by day told *EIR*. "The world has not forgotten that the Serbian aggression against Croatia started when Baker, in Belgrade, during talks with the regime of [Serbian strongman Slobodan] Milosevic, said publicly that the U.S. preferred a 'united' Yugoslavia—i.e., Croatia,

Slovenia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Macedonia, under the dictatorship of the ferocious leaders of Serbia.

"Now the Bush administration sees the bankruptcy of its foreign policy in that region. The republics of the former Yugoslavia are independent. After having tried everything to stop that process of liberation, Baker and his people are forced to recognize it. Now they pretend to teach the Europeans how to face the threat from Belgrade. But we remember too well what happened last year. The Bush administration first said that it was up to the Europeans to deal with the Croatian crisis, the U.S. would have followed any decision the European Community would take. But when, in December, the Germans and the Vatican led Europe in the recognition of Croatia, George Bush and James Baker unleashed the most brutal pressures imaginable to force the Europeans to stop. The delay provoked by this blackmail caused a bloodbath without precedent in the last 40 years in Europe.

"Also nine months ago, when the aggression against Croatia began, Baker spared a few words of so-called condemnation. But in the talks he had in Belgrade, he, in fact, encouraged the Serbian Army. The peoples of Croatia and Slovenia will never forget it. Are Baker, and the U.N. special envoy Cyrus Vance, reciting the same script now?"

Clearly, the Serbian leadership and Army were not very impressed by Baker's "condemnation." A Croatian source in the United States told *EIR*: "I do not believe for a moment that the Serbians would have attacked, as they did, if they knew that the U.S. was absolutely against it. The only hypothesis I can formulate is that the official condemnation did not correspond to the signals Belgrade received from Washington. Or, even better, that the official harsh words

are just a cover for a green light. With the previous examples of the attitude of the Bush administration this is what is in the mind of any serious observer."

A third observer noted: "Do not forget that London and Washington have every interest in keeping the situation destabilized in the former Yugoslavia. It is a way to keep an open wound in the flank of Europe. Why should the present U.S. administration be against a protracted war of aggression by the Serbs against Bosnia? In fact I don't think they are. I think that despite all the efforts, the process of independence cannot be stopped, but Baker and his advisers can try to prevent it for as long as possible. I did not see any change in the general strategy of the Anglo-Americans. The new world order is still there."

### **The invasion of Bosnia**

On April 6, the European Community recognized Bosnia-Herzegovina, the day after the U.S. recognized the independence of the republic—and the independence of Slovenia and Croatia after stalling for several months. The republic of Macedonia was recognized by neither the EC nor the U.S., because of the furious lobbying and opposition from the government of Greece—this despite the fact that Macedonia has officially met all the criteria for recognition established by the European Community last year.

In an interview with France's daily *Le Monde* on April 7, President Kiro Gligorov of Macedonia said that "if Macedonia is not recognized very soon, it would be a defeat for the European policy." He stressed that recognition has now become "an ethical question for the EC." Macedonia is bordered on the north by the Serbians and on the south by the Greeks. Supplies of food and even milk have been repeatedly blocked in Greek ports, which, until now, have been the main route through which Macedonia was resupplied. The economic siege of the republic constitutes a further element of destabilization in the region.

Within minutes of the European and U.S. recognition of Bosnia, with the enthusiastic support of Belgrade, Chetnik leaders declared the "Serb Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina" and began the war against the government of President Alija Izetbegovic. Soon after the Serbian Army massively crossed the borders. At the same time, the Serbian bombings of Croatian cities—which had never really stopped—renewed their earlier fury.

In Bosnia, the Chetniks have established a "war headquarters" according to Belgrade Radio and claim 70% of the territory of Bosnia. Ethnic Serbians make up less than 29% of the Bosnian population. But the Chetniks are being supplied by the so-called Yugoslav Army with artillery, anti-aircraft guns, and rocket-propelled grenades, as well as with food, vehicles, and so on. The armed forces of Bosnia are no match for the combined Federal Army and Chetniks.

"We will liberate Sarajevo either by agreement or by other means," said Radovan Karadzic, the leader of the local

Serbian Democratic party. In fact, the Army is continuing to take over the suburbs of the Bosnian capital. The borders between Serbia and Bosnia are controlled by the Serbian Army, which is enthusiastically welcoming the flow of men, trucks, and armored vehicles that are invading a republic recognized by both the U.S. and Europe.

### **'Ethnic cleansing'**

On April 14, the Army took over the Bosnian town of Visegrad, five miles from the border. The town was heavily bombarded. An Army colonel told the *Washington Post*: "It will happen very quickly. They [Bosnia forces] are not a strong force; we are going to surround Visegrad and then we are going to call them to surrender." He added that the residents could prevent the demolition of the town if they gave up quickly.

As already happened in Croatia, the Army uses the Chetnik irregulars for the "dirty jobs," like house to house killing. The Chetniks are dressed and encouraged to act in a way to maximize terror among the civilians, generally held to be a part of the Army psychological warfare tactics. What is going on is "ethnic cleansing" aimed at creating "pure" Serbian areas, western diplomats commented, while close to 200,000 refugees are fleeing from their homes in towns and regions, like Pocitelj, that often go without medicines, food, and even water, because of Army blockades.

### **Chetnik terror: liquor and face paint**

The Chetniks color their faces with camouflage paint, and carry large bottles of alcoholic spirits in order to fight. They carry banners with slogans like "With Faith in God, King, and the Fatherland." One irregular in Visegrad told journalists: "The women and children will be left alone." What about the men? He ran his finger across his throat.

"It is happening exactly like in Croatia," says Nedzib Sacirbey, the personal representative of President Izetbegovic in Washington. The *modus operandi*, he explained, is the same, even the personnel are the same. The first terrorizing massacre happened in the city of Bijeljina, inhabited mostly by Muslims. On April 2, a gang run by Zeljko Raznapovic, known as "Arkan," arrived in the town and approached the mosque of Atia. Many people were gathered at the mosque because it was prayer time. Arkan and his men took a few people and cut their throats, in front of the mosque, so that everybody could see it. Other people escaped inside, but were followed. Bombs were thrown inside the mosque, killing around 30 people.

Arkan, at one time a killer in the service of the Yugoslav secret police, conducted similar operations in Croatia early in the Serbian aggression, when the strategy of the Army was to terrorize civilians in Krajina into abandoning the area, where according to the plans, a Serbian "independent republic" was to be established. That is exactly what happened shortly afterward.