

# Ditchleyite demands defeat of Serbia

by Mark Burdman

Sir Reginald Hibbert is a dissident voice, from within the higher echelons of the British establishment, on western policy toward Bosnia. A former director of the Ditchley Foundation and former British ambassador to France who had served with the Special Operations Executive in the Balkans during the Second World War, Hibbert strongly disagrees with the Anglo-French Entente Cordiale policy of appeasing the Serbs. He backs decisive military action to inflict a military defeat on the Serbs, whom he holds responsible for having begun the current war already back in 1981, by their massive repression against the Albanians in Kosova. Hibbert blames the British, French, and other European governments for undermining President Clinton's stated policy of ending the arms embargo to the Bosnians and unnecessarily creating a rift in the European-American relationship.

Speaking to *EIR* on May 17, Hibbert stated: "Things are now taking the predictable, logical path they must take because of the failure to have done what should have been done. Until we do, there is no solution in the Balkans. At some stage, the Serbs, who express an ideological expansionist nationalism, comparable in a small way to Hitler's Germany, have got to suffer military defeat. This is simply a technical problem: what means do we need to do it? All this talk of needing 50,000, or 70,000, or 100,000 men is patently absurd!"

## Sound policy for success

Hibbert insisted that any sound policy must begin with arming Serbia's neighbors, including not only the Bosnians and Croats, but also the Albanians and perhaps the Hungarians. "This, obviously must be carefully monitored and dosed. But it is a straightforward political problem: How do we check the Serbs? To do that, we have to use the military. In the whole of history, there has never been a force checked by outside military intervention, without engaging the front lines. The only question worth asking, is what are the most economic means of inflicting military defeat on the Serbian forces? The first most obvious means toward this end, is to let the neighbors of Serbia defend themselves."

Hibbert summarized his view: "I'm not pleading for massive intervention, because it's not necessary. We need to take a cool look, to find the most economical and effective way of imposing a military reverse on Serbia. Then we ask, Where, how, and who? But the first thing, is letting the adversaries defend themselves. I never knew a war to be fought, in all

of history, other than on the front lines. If that fails, we can bring in other means, like air strikes or other moves."

Hibbert stated that official British and French policy "is based on a very false intelligence appreciation of the situation, an appreciation that is fundamentally wrong, that has been reached in London as well as in Paris, perhaps for different reasons in the respective cases. Our people have approached the problem as if it were a localized civil war, and that's *precisely* what it is *not!* It is a branch of a general *Balkans* war, as anybody who knows the Balkans would immediately be aware. To stop it, requires containing the Serbs." He noted that that "false intelligence appreciation" was shaped by various "wishes and prejudices" toward the Balkans area.

Within Britain, Hibbert blamed "excessive sympathy for the Serbs," which goes back decades, because of diplomatic and other ties. This pro-Serbian mood has been nurtured, in recent years, by a vocal and influential pro-Serb lobby in Britain, including such figures as Lady Nora Beloff and historian Michael Lees.

Hibbert expressed disagreement with the notion of "sanctuarization" enunciated by French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé, whereby various Bosnian towns would be declared U.N. "protected zones." Said Hibbert: "This is based on assuming [that] this is a localized conflict. In fact, the whole recent history of this present war started in Kosova in 1981, when the Serbs imposed a very unpleasant reality on the Albanians there. There will be no peace in former Yugoslavia until this is settled."

In this respect, Hibbert's analysis is correct: The war did begin in 1981, when the Serbs began a campaign of political intimidation, murder, and mass arrests against the Kosova Albanians. From then on, it was clear to other ethnic groups that their turn would come next.

## Why have the Europeans made such a fuss?

Hibbert expressed astonishment at the way the Europeans have decided to confront the United States over the Bosnia issue, doing everything possible to box in a new American President. "Why have the European powers made such a terrific fuss about what is, ultimately, a secondary issue in the world as a whole, compared to other more fundamental problems? Serbia, after all, is a small country, that must be checked. I would have thought the western powers would have found a way, even if not ideal, to stop Serbia. There are many ways, after all, of killing a cat, as we say here. It is astounding that a relatively minor issue has become such a source of dispute." He said that European posturing had "damaged NATO, the European Community, the United Nations, and the balance in the world," and had "played into Russia's hands," giving the Russians a favorable diplomatic position in the region. The Russians would never have been in a position to counter decisive western military intervention into Bosnia, he said.