

rise within Tudjman's party, the HDZ. Josip Manolic and Stepan Mesic, the presidents respectively of the upper and lower house of parliament, have openly broken with Tudjman. Manolic is a former high police official, and his potential influence is not to be underestimated. Also in the Catholic Church, which plays such a prominent social role in Croatia, there are signs that it may be distancing itself from Tudjman. One of the leaders of the "dissident" grouping of former HDZ leaders is Fr. Tomislav Pavao Duka, a member of a state legislature and one of the founders of the ruling party. He stands for the Catholic tradition of the Croatian freedom struggle against the Serbs, a tradition linked to the role played before and after World War II by Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac, whose writings have recently been republished.

The citizens' initiative 'Libertas'

In late March, a citizens' initiative called *Libertas* went public with demonstrations in Zagreb and Split. This was a significant change, since for more than two years there had not been any demonstrations expressing opposition to Tudjman's government. The fact that they were allowed to occur testifies to the growth of a political mood that is fed up with Tudjman's negation of Croatia's national interest. There is a spreading sentiment that "enough is enough." Leading figures in *Libertas* include ex-foreign minister Prof. Zvonimir Separovic, ex-Defense Minister General Spigelje, journalist Srecko Jurdana, the former leader of Mothers for Peace Slavica Bilic, Christian Democrat Marko Veselica, and Franciscan priest Barnimir Kosec.

Libertas sees Croatia's very existence as a nation put at risk through the Tudjman government's passivity and kowtowing to Anglo-American geopolitics. The daily newspaper *Slobodna Dalmacija* wrote that *Libertas* demands that Croatia stoutly oppose any "pax Britannica-Sovietica."

Anglo-American intentions

In fact, the goal of British strategy is to create two "confederations" on the territory of former Yugoslavia: an "East Yugoslavia" with Serbia, the Serbian-occupied areas in Croatia and Bosnia, Montenegro, and Macedonia; and a "West Yugoslavia" consisting of the carcasses of Croatia and Bosnia. It goes without saying that the intent of this currently operating British plan is to make Serbia into the hegemonic military and political power in the Balkans. Anglo-American and Russian interests come together in the U.N. apparatus, which is the central vehicle for realizing this plan.

The fact must be faced that the actual situation in Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina is farther away than ever from any "normalization" or "controlled crisis management." The "geopolitical cleansing" and "restructuring" of former Yugoslavia which Anglo-Russian interests have in mind cannot possibly be carried through to completion. Instead, the political and military situation will likely grow even worse in coming months.

Hamas may be softening toward PLO

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

The Islamic Palestinian movement, Hamas, which has led the bloody opposition to the Gaza-Jericho accord with increasing brutality over late March and early April, may be shifting its position toward accommodation with the agreement, and with Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization Fatah, which is leading it. If such a change in Hamas strategy were to be confirmed, it could open a new chapter in the saga of the Israeli-PLO negotiations.

The news broke on April 19, as Israeli Army units were conducting a vast sweep of hundreds of Hamas militants in the Occupied Territories, that a leader of the movement, Moussa Abu Marzouk, had issued a statement indicating willingness to talk to Israel for the first time. The statement, as carried by the Jordanian weekly *El Sabil*, ran as follows: "There could be a peace treaty, or a cease-fire on condition that the Zionist forces dismantle all the Jewish settlements of the Occupied Territories and withdraw completely from the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem." Although the Hamas speaker did not endorse the Gaza-Jericho approach for a transitional process of autonomy, he did not reiterate the traditional Hamas position to "liberate the whole of Palestine from the [Mediterranean] sea to the [Jordan] river." This has been interpreted to mean that Hamas may be altering its commitment to an Islamic state in the whole of historic Palestine, in favor of a "mini-state" composed of the Occupied Territories. Furthermore, Abu Marzouk is quoted as referring for the first time to "the international legitimacy of the resolutions" of the United Nations "regarding the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem as illegally occupied Palestinian territories." Whether or not such a view of the U.N. resolutions includes recognition of the state of Israel, is unknown.

According to Palestinian sources in the region, the shift is tantamount to acceptance by Hamas of the PLO Fatah position. Discussions going on between leaders of both formations in Jordan, are reportedly dealing with arrangements whereby Hamas will participate in the Palestinian police force which is to guarantee security in the autonomous areas. Furthermore, Hamas appears to have reversed its earlier opposition to elections slated for the autonomous areas, indicating its willingness to participate in a national state.

Hamas finds itself in an increasingly untenable position, militarily and politically. Although its violence against Israelis has attracted support from desperate Palestinian youth, the nature of the terrorist attacks reveals the presence of other

forces inside the movement. Bombings like those which killed Israelis in Afula and had not been in the Hamas repertoire heretofore, lead terrorist experts to hypothesize that the hand behind the attacks really was that of the Abu Nidal group. On the ground, Hamas sympathizers have been rounded up by the hundreds in Israeli Army raids launched following the Afula bombing. Hundreds of Hamas members have been in Israeli prisons for years.

Politically, Hamas enjoys popularity among Palestinians doctrinally opposed to peace with Israel, but, even with escalating terrorism, it has not been able to halt the dynamic unleashed on Sept. 13. Much of its support in the Occupied Territories comes from Palestinians who initially welcomed the Gaza-Jericho accord, but were demoralized by the lack of visible improvement in their living conditions thereafter. As soon as visible progress is made, in the release of prisoners and/or the withdrawal of Israeli military, these layers are expected to rally to Yasser Arafat's leadership.

King Hussein turns some screws

A further development which undermined Hamas was a statement issued by Jordan's King Hussein in the second week of April, denying that the group enjoyed legal status in the country. He said, "We do not recognize or agree to cooperate with anybody representing or professing to represent our Palestinian brothers except the Palestine Liberation Organization." The king made his remarks following accusations by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, that Jordan was harboring Hamas terrorists—accusations which carried the threat that the United States might be urged to place Jordan on its list of countries supporting terrorism.

King Hussein's statement represented no change in policy for the Hashemite kingdom; Hamas has no official status as a party in Amman, although it does have offices there, and most of its personnel are members of the Muslim Brotherhood, which is a recognized party in Jordan. The Muslim Brotherhood and its Hamas offspring enjoy support from the Saudis. Furthermore, Jordan has always recognized the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Nonetheless, the public reiteration of the king's stance, accompanied by the withdrawal of Jordanian passports from two leading Hamas members, underlined the delicacy of the position Hamas occupied politically.

If Hamas pursues the path which leads to rapprochement with the PLO, it could open the way to a national dialogue, averting the specter of civil war. Rapprochement works both ways: Some of the points on which Hamas was most intransigent have now been pushed up on the list of priorities also for several members of the PLO executive committee, particularly in the wake of the Hebron massacre. Clarification of programmatic aims between Hamas and the PLO will be important, not only for the elimination of terrorism, but also for coordinating an agreement which will lead to a comprehensive settlement including all Arab partners.

Rwanda heads down the Somalia route

by Linda de Hoyos

Rwanda is the latest African target in the drive by the United Nations and its non-governmental organization allies to create conditions for depopulation in Africa. Violence in Rwanda, believed to have claimed 100,000 lives in only two weeks, was sparked by the April 7 terror-downing of an airplane carrying Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundi President Cyprien Ntaryamira. Both Presidents were killed. No one has claimed responsibility for the downing of the plane, which was bringing the two heads of state back from negotiating sessions in Tanzania.

The western press has sought to explain the violence as a result of conflicts between the minority Tutsi and the majority Hutu groups in the country. Although both groups speak the same language, Rwanda had been traditionally ruled by the cattle-owning mercantile Tutsi group, until the post-colonial period.

Another more accurate picture has been put forward by Africa Watch, the Africa branch of Human Rights Watch, a well-heeled outfit with longstanding ties to the U.S. State Department. Alison Des Forges and Frank Smythe of Africa Watch have published accounts in the press stating the conflict is not tribal but political. According to this account, Habyarimana had agreed in February—under pressure from the U.S. Project Democracy crowd and its assets in Rwanda—to form a transitional government, dividing ministerial posts three ways: among Habyarimana's own Akazu clique, Hutu opposition parties led by Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana, and representatives of the Tutsi minority.

The proof of this, says Africa Watch, is that as soon as it became known that Habyarimana had been assassinated, his Presidential Guard—joined by Hutu hardliners in the military—went on a rampage in the capital city of Kigali. One of the first victims of slaughter was Prime Minister Uwilingiyimana, a Hutu. Another Hutu democracy-activist, Monica Mujawamariya, had warned in late March that plans were afoot among the military and among hand-picked militia armed by Habyarimana to eliminate "all those who give trouble" to the President. The murder of Habyarimana thus set off a slaughter that had already been planned.

Blame lies outside Rwanda

Nevertheless, this more informed view is a grotesque lie. The reality is that the 100,000 men, women, and children