

The Road between Srebrenica and Genocide

The Fall of Srebrenica

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Six years ago the town of Srebrenica was hardly known to the outside world. Today it is seen as the turning point of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

What actually took place in this little town in the Drina Valley in mid of July 1995 that transformed Srebrenica into the fulcrum of world policy-making in the Balkans?

Apparently all that has been factually proven is that the Muslim enclave, Srebrenica, after having been under siege for 3 years, was militarily taken over by Bosnian Serb forces July 11, 1995.

The Muslim inhabitants still in the town were sorted out by Serb troops according to age and sex: women, children and elderly of the city were taken by bus to Muslim lines, where they were taken to Tuzla. This much is agreed to by all sides, including independent observers and witnesses from the United Nations. It is the fate of the men of fighting age that has been the factor drawing the political spotlight to Srebrenica.

Muslim/Croat government officials in Sarajevo, the US government and the International War Crimes Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY) accuse Serb forces of having committed an act of genocide and crimes against humanity by systematically executing the up to 8,000 Muslim men left behind in the enclave, disposing of their bodies in mass graves in the surrounding area.

It is this version of events that has formed the basis of far-reaching political decisions, upon which the entire current significance of Srebrenica, as the turning point of the war is based. This version of the "Fall of Srebrenica" led to the discredit - and finally marginalization - of the UNO and its Blue Helmet, peace keeping mission in Bosnia, a prerequisite for the US taking over leading responsibility, as leading NATO "partner". NATO can thus be portrayed as a "*peace force*".

It is this version of events that has furnished the Clinton Administration with the pretext for the final phase in its attempts at sabotaging the Vance-Owen Peace Plan to pave the way for the Dayton Accords. The Vance-Owen Peace Plan, though it may not have been the best plan possible, it at least adhered to the principle of bringing all parties in the conflict to the negotiating table to find a solution that they will subsequently all have to live by and with, which the Dayton Accords do not attempt to do.

The consequences of the belief in this version of events around the "Fall of Srebrenica" was what laid the basis of the complete marginalization of not only the spokespeople of the Bosnian Serb population, but the Bosnian Serbs as a people, from their rights in the international arena. The Serb people, not just in Bosnia but as a people, have been criminalized in international public opinion. Through declaring the leaders of the Bosnian Serbs, Karadzic and Mladic "*outlaws*", they were effectively shut out of the negotiation process altogether and were as representatives cut off from international contact. They became untouchables. On the other hand the threat of also being implicated in the "Fall of Srebrenica" provided the major source of leverage brought to bear against Slobodan Milosevic, President of Serbia, making him pliant to American blackmail and paving the way to the Dayton Accords. At Dayton President Milosevic was pressured into "cooperating" with US intentions - at the expense of the Serbs of Bosnia.

In Germany, it was the adamant, unquestioned belief in this version of the "Fall of Srebrenica" that politicians have used to justify a revision of German post-war (1945-1990)

policy of refusing (open) German military participation in engagements outside the defined NATO area. In the Federal Parliament's Dec. 6, 1995 decision to support participation of German military forces in Yugoslavia, the proclaimed justification was the genocide supposed to have taken place in Srebrenica.

Srebrenica provided sufficient justification for these politicians (including those in the formerly anti-militarist Green Party) to relativize their former "fear" of past German militarism and Nazi barbarism, which up to that point had been the main argument used for refusing renewed German military adventures - outside the Nato sphere. Even previously accepted historical reasons for specific refusal of renewed German military presence in Yugoslavia, where only 50 years before, German fascist forces and their Croatian "Ustashi" and Muslim allies were engaged in a program of genocide against Serbs, Jews and Gypsies were relativized. "Srebrenica" became the magic formula for freeing the genie of German militarism from its post-war "domestication" bottle.

Even though the International War Crimes Tribunal for Yugoslavia and the American official accusation of "*war criminals*" Karadzic and Mladic predates the fall of Srebrenica, it was the accusations arising from the "Fall of Srebrenica" that have become the main justification for the existence of this *tribunal* and constituted - until Karadzic stepped down and Mladic was relieved of his duties - the primary preoccupation and source of the ICTY's public credibility. On this version is based also the public relations effort that the ICTY has spent so much time and effort in bringing VIPs on pilgrimages to the area, to stand at the sites and declare to the press that they were certain that under the surface of the grounds where they stand, **thousands** of bodies of innocent Bosnian Muslims in mass graves are to be found. For nearly a year, the ICTY had, out of lack of funds and various other pretexts, hesitated to open and expose the contents of those "mass graves".

The Muslim/Croat government bases this grave accusation on the assertion that these men never reported to Muslim lines. As one paper put it: "*What is certain is that at least 3000 men were killed, who had been selected in Srebrenica and taken away. No one knows the details. The Serbs are refusing access to that region.*"¹⁾ We know today - nearly 2 years later - little more about the details now. And it is just this "certainty" without "details" that is so disturbing, particularly when such a momentous political policy change is based on it affecting the lives of millions.

Let us go back to Srebrenica to find out what did happen.

The credibility of this version in the public(ized) opinion is based on a manipulative misrepresentation in public awareness of very important evidence. In order to begin to approach the truth one must situate Srebrenica in its context.

Srebrenica the *UN-Safe Area*:

Srebrenica is rarely mentioned without the accompanying descriptive "*UN-Safe Area*" and most often in the false supplementary context of a "defenseless zone" under the sole protection of the United Nations UNPROFOR troops. This constitutes a second important manipulation of public opinion. Public opinion is rarely informed that in fact UN forces were lightly armed only for their own self-protection serving much more in the functions of diplomatic arbitration between belligerent sides rather than as a military peace enforcement unit to impose peace by force upon the warring factions.

UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali complained in his Report to the Security Council dated May 30, 1995 - 6 weeks before the "fall of Srebrenica" - that the Muslim

¹⁾ Jochen Schmid; *Wie die UNO die Menschen von Srebrenica opferte; Badische Zeitung, 20.10.95*

government armed forces were intensifying their attacks against Serb forces in the surrounding area with "unprovoked attacks" launched from the safe area jeopardizing UNPROFOR's defense of the civilian population.

"37. In recent months, [Bosnian Muslim] government forces have considerably increased their military activity in and around most safe areas, and many of them, including Sarajevo, Tuzla and Bihac, have been incorporated into the broader military campaigns of the government side. (...) The government also maintains a substantial number of troops in Srebrenica (in this case, in violation of a demilitarization agreement), Gorazde and Zepa, while Sarajevo is the location of the General Command of the government army and other military installations. There is also an ammunition factory in Gorazde.

38. The Bosnian Serb forces' reaction to offensives launched by the [Muslim] government army from safe areas has generally been to respond against military targets within those areas, often at a disproportionate level. Notwithstanding the provocation, these acts of the Bosnian Serb forces violate the safe-area regime and other local agreements. The Serbs have also initiated unprovoked shelling of safe areas. In both cases civilian casualties have occurred. UNPROFOR's mandate to deter attacks upon the safe areas requires it to react to Serb actions, irrespective of whether the Serbs are responding to offensives launched by the other side. When they are doing so, however, the impartiality of the UNPROFOR becomes difficult to maintain and the Force is seen as a party to the conflict, with resulting risks to isolated United Nations personnel."¹⁾

Of course when Serbs retaliated, the media portrayed this as unprovoked brutality against a *disarmed, helpless civilian* population. Special UN negotiator David Owen summed up the Muslim government policy as: "[T]hey saw nothing wrong in being protected in safe areas by the UN and at the same time attacking out of the safe areas."²⁾

The Srebrenica Deal:

Another manipulation of public opinion is that an accord had been reached between the belligerents to cede the territory of Srebrenica to the Serb side in exchange for the Serb held Krajina and the Bosanska Krajina to the Croats and the Muslims respectively. The idea behind these and other territorial exchanges was that these territories were "ethnic" enclaves in the middle of surrounding territories under the full control of another "ethnic" group, thereby necessitating corridors and transit routes to the territorial main body of the ethnic group.

The well known and influential ideologist of the ruling Socialist Party of Serbia, Mihailo Markovic, speaking in a Newsweek interview, explained the practical effects of this accord as follows:

"Why, people ask, in the decisive moment when Croatian forces were clearly preparing the ground for an attack on the Krajina, did [General Mladic] divert his forces to attack the eastern enclaves [of Srebrenica and Zepa]? He left the Krajina undefended. He fell into their trap, invited once again the satanization of the Serbs, which made it possible for international popular opinion to tolerate the invasion of the Krajina [by Croats] and to support intervention.

¹⁾ Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council Resolutions 982 (1995) and 987 (1995); S/1995/444, 30.5.1995.

²⁾ Owen, David; *Balkan Odyssey*; Harcourt Brace & Co., New York, 1995; pg. 200.

(Newsweek:) *But wasn't the fall of Srebrenica and Zepa a deal worked out between the Muslims and Serbs?*

(Markovic:) *Of course Srebrenica and Zepa was a deal, and also [to take] Gorazde. But it was too slow, it fell apart, [Robert] Frasure [the US Balkans envoy killed shortly afterward in a road accident] and Holbrooke made that deal. Lets have simple solutions, they said, not corridors and enclaves.*

(Newsweek:) *Which explains why the Muslims didn't fight for Srebrenica, and why later the Serbs didn't fight for Bosanska Krajina, the territory in western Bosnia overrun by Croat and Muslim troops, which conveniently brought the territorial divide from 70% Serb/30% Muslim to 51%/49% in time for Dayton.*

(Markovic:) *Yes, (...) [t]here were two advantages to a deal brokered by Holbrooke: we could choose what to give back, and it is much easier to come and say in the last moment, the Muslims are about to occupy this place, and we have 2 hours to get out. That's what happened. (...) And then the Muslims took much more than had been arranged and everything got very confused when the Muslims and Croats went too far, and Serb soldiers came back to recapture territory, and many died in all that confusion."³⁾*

Further evidence of a deal is to be found on the Muslim side. Since February Serb troops had been tightening the encirclement ring around Srebrenica with territorial gains. It seems that the "*the enemy is coming, we have to quickly leave*" tactic worked also for the Muslims. Four weeks before Serb forces made the final assault, the commander of the Muslim forces in Srebrenica, Naser Oric and 18 officers of his commanding staff were called to a "training course" in Tuzla. He never returned to Srebrenica. (Oric has since been discharged from the military.)⁴⁾ This is obliquely confirmed by the UN forces that had been stationed in Srebrenica, "*The commanders of [UNPROFOR] Dutch forces [Dutchbats](...) depicted [Srebrenica's] Muslim defenders as leaderless soldiers who fled their posts in droves, abandoning their families, and fought among themselves.*" (...) "*The Dutch accounts, by soldiers, officers and the defense minister, were unanimous in asserting that the Bosnian Muslim soldiers who had been under siege in Srebrenica for 3 years abandoned the town about 2 days before it fell.*" They even confirmed that executions had taken place after the Serb takeover. They said though "*that Bosnian Serb invaders executed at least 10 Muslim defenders and abducted from 150 - 300 men aged 16 - 60.*"⁴⁾

The summary executions of war prisoners is itself a violation of the Geneva Conventions - a war crime, but 10 executions cannot be called "genocide". Not even 300 could qualify - if in fact these men had been massacred which has not been proven - would qualify for the term "genocide". This alone should raise questions concerning just how many of the previous occupants of Srebrenica were actually captured much less killed. But no one asked. Anyone who would question the "officialized version" would like the Dutchbats be dubbed "anti-Muslim" in the ensuing media campaign.

Yesterday it was the Iraqi leaders (and People) that were designated "war criminals" by the mighty. Today this distinction has been passed to the Serbs of Bosnia - and beyond. Who knows which people will be placed on the wanted list tomorrow? Today the US and its allies has given itself a kangaroo court to lend the process of subjugation a certain

³⁾ Markovic, Mihailo/ Nordland, Rod; Dayton: The Inside Story, Newsweek; 5.2.96, pg. 52

⁴⁾ Rathfelder, Erich; Die Verantwortung für Srebrenica tragen viele;(Trans: The Responsibility for Srebrenica lies on the shoulders of many) Tageszeitung (Taz), Berlin, 8.11.95

⁴⁾ Cowell, Alan; Dutch Cite Limited Abuse; UN Troops report fewer War Crimes than Refugees; IHT (NY Times); 25.7.95

"legal" flair.

"We should not let people make fools of us..."

As time passed the original (simple) version became embellished, by both press and politicians: according to the New York Times, the UN issued a report on November 29, 1995 "on atrocities in Bosnia in which ... Bosnian Serbs had been engaged in 'a consistent pattern of summary executions, rape, mass expulsions, arbitrary detentions, forced labor and large scale disappearances.'"¹⁾

"We should not let those, who say that absolutely nothing has been confirmed, make fools of us. Thousands of people have been murdered. We knew that something like this could have happened. The Serbs have done it several times before." Jan Pronk, Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation²⁾

The Taz journalist, Johannes Vollmer, claims that Minister Pronk is the first to have "broken the silence" about the supposed massacre of Srebrenica. But to have "*broken the silence*" would imply that he had to have been suppressing facts about the events in Srebrenica that he now makes public.

Minister Pronk, himself had no facts, proving that a massacre had actually taken place. He, who was not present at the time Srebrenica changed hands, had relied, on the one hand, solely upon information from displaced persons coming from Srebrenica, in other words, upon information that should have first been verified before blowing it into the populist horn. Information that, according to most accounts could not have been based on eye-witness accounts because the women, children and elderly were removed by bus **before** the alleged systematic executions were supposed to have begun. At best, the minister was colporteur - as **fact** - the (understandable) expressions of the worst premonitions of those, who, traumatized through having lived so long under siege and having their haven fall into the hands of the enemy, were now worried about the unknown fate of loved ones, the men, they left behind in the hands of the enemy in Srebrenica.

Since this version - in spite of obvious reasons for skepticism - has become all but the unquestioned, only acceptable version allowed in public discussion and international policy it is necessary to examine the validity of this version, which in turn would shed light on other accusations.

Under a "rule of law" regime innocence is presumed until guilt is proven. Radovan Karadzic and Mladic had been accused of the mass murder of between 6,000 and 8,000 men from the Srebrenica Enclave. The following is a cross-examination of the evidence against them. This is not so much in defense of 2 individuals as it is bound with the modest hope of defending a certain sense of justice - rapidly becoming obsolete in foreign affairs.

The Charges

Nevertheless indictments were raised as made charging the two Bosnian Leaders, Karadzic and Mladic before the ICTY with Crimes against Humanity and Genocide. *in the Bosnian town of Srebrenica. Chief prosecutor Richard Goldstone, in an indictment unsealed at the Hague Thursday, [Nov. 16, 1995,] accused the two Bosnian Serb leaders of supervising the massacres of thousands of Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica last*

¹⁾ Barbara Crosette, NYT, 30.11.95

²⁾ Johannes Vollmer, "Männer nach links, Frauen nach rechts; Indizien zum Massenmord von Srebrenica verdichten sich. Niederländische Blauhelme haben ihr Schweigen gebrochen," Taz, 19.10.95,

July,⁸⁾ wrote an InterPress Service news bulletin.

For the Tribunal to charge them with "genocide and crimes against humanity in the Bosnian town of Srebrenica" the evidence must be overwhelming. But on the contrary, one learns, in the same news bulletin, that Richard "Goldstone (...) complained that the United States, whose intelligence agencies have gathered **extensive** evidence about war crimes in the former Yugoslavia, had not provided key evidence as quickly as he would like", and the spokesperson for the US State Department, Nicholas Burns, promised that: "the United States strongly and unequivocally supports the work of the war crimes tribunal ... "and reaffirm our intention to provide all pertinent information to Justice Goldstone as he pursues indictments and prosecutions against war criminals"⁹⁾" leading to the assumption that the Tribunal - at the time of the indictment - may not have had - could not have examined - all "extensive evidence" needed to justify their weighty indictment against the two main figures representing the Serbs of Bosnia. Judging from the statement of the State Department's spokesman, it is questionable that the Tribunal will **ever** see or examine **all** "extensive evidence" but that it will have to be satisfied with only the "pertinent information" that the US government decides that the Tribunal should have to "pursue indictments and prosecutions against war criminals".

The indictment charges are a mixture of confusion and caprice leaning heavily on what appears to be anti-Serb political/"ethnic" prejudices:

"According to Goldstone's indictment, Mladic was personally involved in separating Muslim men and boys from their families in Potocari, (...) where the Srebrenica's predominantly Muslim population fled after their UN.-guarded enclave fell to the Serbs Jul 11-12.

(...) [T]he Bosnian Serbs proceeded to transport the separated Muslim men to the surrounding areas of Bratunac and Karakaj, "where they were massacred by Bosnian Serb military personnel," the indictment states.

Goldstone cites seven specific cases where Muslims were reported to have been summarily executed. Among those incidents were the killings of dozens of Muslims on Jul 17 or 18 at Konjevic Polce, the capture and killing of 150 Muslims a few days later at Meces -- who were shot after digging their own graves -- and the burial while alive of some 260 Muslims, also at Meces.

The indictment also claims that Mladic personally assured the safety of "thousands of Muslim detainees" at a school complex near Karakaj around Jul 14. But (...) it says, "Ratko Mladic was present at one of the mass execution sites when Bosnian Serb military personnel summarily executed Bosnian Muslim men."¹⁰⁾

Is the reason behind the prosecution putting Mladic in two places at the same time to show - by any means necessary - his personal involvement in a criminal act? According to the press accounts and the prosecution, the number of Muslims massacred after the fall of Srebrenica is supposed to be in the **thousands**. With the specific counts given above, one arrives at **410** (plus an unspecified "dozens"). With which stretch of the imagination is the "thousands" in the press to be justified?

The Evidence?

⁸⁾ FAH/JL/95, Bosnia-Rights: Tribunal Indicts Mladic, Karadzic for Srebrenica, IPS, 16.11.95

⁹⁾ *ibid*

¹⁰⁾ *ibid*

If Karadzic and Mladic - or anyone else for that matter - are guilty of having carried out massacres at Konjevic Polce, at Meces, why has no concrete proof been exposed to the public that a massacre actually took place? Every massacre - by definition - produces a large number of dead bodies. Why have these bodies not been shown to the public? Where are the 400 plus "dozens" of bodies that were supposed to have been killed in Konjevic Polce and Meces? Where are the other bodies that Mladic and Karadzic were charged with?

"The indictment placed the death toll at Karakaj in the thousands. U.S. sources place the total number of men and boys killed after the fall of Srebrenica at about 5,000, while the Bosnian government claims as many as 8,000 deaths."¹²⁾

Mass graves in Mrkonic Grad have been opened, with collaboration of Tribunal staff, exposing hundreds of corpses of Serbs, massacred by Croats. The Tribunal has shown no interest in investigating or prosecuting the authors of this massacre. (Chief prosecutor, Goldstone, on CNN's *Judgement at the Hague*, (5.5.96) in response to a question about the one-sidedness of the Tribunal's investigations denied knowledge of this and other mass graves of massacred Serbs.)

Standard trial procedure is that the prosecution has **the obligation** of furnishing the proof 1) that a crime has been committed and 2) that the accused committed it. Are there mass graves under the surface of those areas marked on the photo? And If there are, are the bodies from victims of *mass executions* or are they victims of other aspects "normal" to warfare i.e.. bombing attacks, deaths on the battlefield, disease or starvation. To these questions the prosecution still owes the court – and the public – proof.

Prosecutor Goldstone has difficulties proving that under these grassy sites enough dead bodies are buried to justify the charge of "genocide", "crime against humanity" or simply "war crime". In spite of the fact that Goldstone is being supported by more than 100 US officials and agents working full time for the International Tribunal¹³⁾ there is no proof that a genocide was being carried out in Bosnia against the Muslims.

One US official having access to the intelligence on Bosnia has in fact come very close to admitting that the US has no proof that a massacre - much less genocide - had in fact taken place when "*promises by the CIA in December to provide more satellite imagery and (radio) intercepts 'still had a way to go to make it work.'*"¹⁴⁾ Would this not imply that the US government is again engaged in the **fabrication** or manipulation of evidence for political gain, making it appear that their political enemy was guilty of an atrocity?

Goldstone is not the only one to protest American reluctance to furnish proof of the genocide accusations against the Bosnian Serb leadership. The Washington-based Human Rights Watch requested that the US Court force the State Department and CIA to make "*information they have about massacre of Bosniaks [to anti-Serb chauvinists this is their way of saying Muslims] in Srebrenica, committed by Serbs last summer*" available to their organization. "*State Department & CIA are blamed for refusing to give materials on the massacre to Human Rights Watch.*" HR Watch claims, the government's refusal is motivated by the fact that informing the public ... would push the Clinton administration "*to a tough policy [in relationship to the] Serbs*".¹⁵⁾ The reason behind their law suit is but one

¹²⁾ *ibid*

¹³⁾ J.Elsässer, *Scharfmacher; Das Kriegsverbrechertribunal in Den Haag ist ein Instrument der US-Außenpolitik, Konkret, Mai '96* pg. 15.

¹⁴⁾ Jane Perlez, *Balkan War Crimes Court Undermined by Problems*, IHT / NYT, 29.1.96 (*emphasis added*)

¹⁵⁾ *Human Rights Watch: Cia & State Department Cover Crimes, Press TWRA, April 9, 1996*

example of the estranged use of "human rights" as an instrument of foreign policy to violate the rights of peoples.

Confronted with the reluctance of its "star witness" (the US espionage agencies), Richard Goldstone has finally gone a step further: He has for the first time threatened, "*the exhumation of the graves may become necessary in order to determine the identity of the corpses and the time and cause of death and to obtain the necessary evidence.*"¹⁶⁾ What - after nearly a year! - what is here formulated as a threat should have been - in a normal court of law - the most logical **first** step for determining that a crime has taken place and the necessity of a trial. But in The Hague politics is being made - not justice.

According to the Bosnian (Muslim) news agency, "Press TWRA", the Dutch defence minister, Joris Voorhove accused the Serbs of "*trying hastily to destroy the evidence of the massacre they committed against thousands of Bosniaks around Srebrenica. Intelligence services have informed that these days Serbs have been exhuming the corpses from the mass graves in order to remove the evidence of their crimes.*"¹⁷⁾

Once again, where is Voorhove's proof? Where are the bodies? How does someone exhume and dispose of **thousands** of corpses without being detected by satellite or reconnaissance flights? When political necessity calls for it the Serbs it seems, are capable of everything, Mladic being at two places at the same time or being able to make thousands of corpses vanish.

At about the time that Goldstone was making this threat in Brussels, American journalists were preparing public opinion for the disappointment that would/could eventually come when/if the graves are ever exhumed. Washington Post Journalist John Pomfret visited the site where "*according to a Western investigator, could be 2 of several mass graves in the region believed to hold corpses of some of the estimated 12,000 Muslim fighters*". Pomfret observes: "*But, while dirt obviously had been moved recently around the sites in Glogova, if Serb gunmen had attempted to tamper with it or destroy evidence, they did not do a thorough job. Bones were readily visible on the clay dirt, as were bandages, shoes and other things that obviously once belonged to the men buried below.*"¹⁸⁾ Mr. Pomfret, does not seem too convinced about the extent of the tampering, since he leaves the efforts of the would-be tamperers at the level of "attempting to" and admits that they did it unseriously. Perhaps it was meant to appear as such. This appears as an attempt to support Vorhove's allegations. Aside from engaging in inflationary reporting, pulling the sum of "*12,000 Muslim fighters*" out of thin air, it would seem that Mr. Pomfret also aside from his "*Western investigator*" has a "*special*" source of information about those amateur, tentative tamperers: where else would he know that they were carrying guns - "*gunmen*" - shovels would have been more appropriate.

But this version is not without its opposition. As the NY Times reports:

"Aerial photographs show that a field thought to be the grave of hundreds of Muslim civilians was not tampered with while NATO was responsible for monitoring the site, according to alliance officials.

"Officials of the war crimes tribunal at The Hague have said that the earth at the field was disturbed and that bodies could have been removed.

¹⁶⁾ *god/cha, UN-Tribunal will Massengräber in Bosnien öffnen lassen; Goldstone: Exhumierung notwendig zur Beweissicherung, Agence France Presse (Deutschland - AFD) 19.01.1996 - 17:54*

¹⁷⁾ *A.S., Serbs Try To Remove Evidence Of Massacre In Srebrenica, Press TWRA, News: Daily Bulletin, Nov 18, 1995.*

¹⁸⁾ *John Pomfret, Bosnia Killing Fields Reveal A Grisly Demise, Mass Graves near Srebrenica, IHT / WPS, 20.1.96*

*NATO officials did not deny the field may have been disturbed, but they insisted Sunday that any effort there by Bosnian Serb forces to hide evidence of atrocities did not occur on their watch."*¹⁹⁾

And of course, no one asked about Americans, having been the "tamperers".

Media "shock treatment":

Public opinion has been submitted to a sort of shock treatment leaving the distant observer reeling on the ropes from one horror blow of atrocities following the other in rapid succession. It is not that each blow is rendered with that much more force but that the strength in the knees are weaker and the mind foggier with each blow that finds its mark. Without the possibility of verifying one of the stories the next is already in circulation.

Through massive disinformation, over an extended period of time through skillful application of "*The Repeated Big Lie...*" by both media and politics, a pogrom climate, and a lynch mob atmosphere has been created.

The complication of the situation was simplified to an "*our side*" vs. "*their side*" formula, so familiar to the cold war. Considerations of right and wrong, of justice and injustice or even of what are the long-term solutions and consequences for the region and its populations are issues hardly considered.

Double standards are used to sanctify "*our side*" and incriminate "*their side*" - evidence disproving either, being simply ignored and/or played down. Thus, whereas little proof of a fundamental moral difference between the leaders of the different sides in this conflict has been presented, "*their*" statesmen have become war criminals and "*our*" war criminals, statesmen.

Serbs compared to Nazis

On the other hand, Minister Pronk relies upon the climate of anti-Serb bias, created by a deluge of propaganda comparing - in a cynical twist of history - the Serb leadership to Hitler - the Serb peoples to Second-World-War Germans.

This campaign fell on fertile soil and open ears in the context of German and American foreign policy. (What was very surprising throughout this war was the extremely few critical German voices that attempted to demystify that image for the German population - particularly disappointing is the silence of those voices, that had once claimed to have "*learned the lessons of German history*". The ferocity of recent attacks against Peter Handke for criticizing this conformity are but confirmation of the extent to which the current generation of German intelligentsia accepts the thought strait-jacket imposed by the current German foreign policy.)

Minister Pronk was following a general trend in media and politics. Just as he, with no first-hand knowledge, panhandled his unverified assumptions as fact, 2 years earlier, Time Magazine reported on another instance where an official with high responsibility in this war was engaged in the same enterprise of passing unverified rumor as fact:

*"The UN. High Commissioner for Refugees informed the Security Council that Serb forces were attacking the settlements around **Cerska and Srebrenica** and driving out the villagers. **"Civilians, women, children and old people are being killed, usually by having their throats cut,"** reported the High Commissioner, Sadako Ogata. **In fact Ogata, like other UN. officials and foreign journalists, had no firsthand knowledge of***

¹⁹⁾ Gravesite Tampering is a Mystery to NATO, IHT / NYT, 16.4.96

what was happening. The world was relying on what ham-radio operators in the Muslim towns were broadcasting. But, she said, "if only 10% of the information is true, we are witnessing a massacre."³⁾
(Emphasis added)

Not only was 10% of this propaganda **not** confirmed, General Philippe Morillon, commander of the UNO-Troops in Bosnia had "*taken it upon himself using the overland route and under dangerous conditions*" to visit the cities of Cerska, Konjevic Polje and Srebrenica during the first and second weeks in March 1993 in order to have the wounded, the sick, women and children evacuated. He also wanted to verify reports from ham-radio operators that "tens of thousands were desperately waiting to be saved. One week **before** Ms. Ogata made her statement, General Morillon reported - after visiting Cerska and Konjevic Polje - that, "**Muslim reports of Serb atrocities, of heavy losses among the civilian population and of starvation could not be confirmed.**"⁴⁾ Ms. Ogata, like General Morillon and all other UN personnel were under constant heavy pressure from the Muslim and Croatian authorities and their American and German backers to confirm the propaganda allegations - or be considered "pro-Serb". As Special UN negotiator David Owen in his book *Balkan Odyssey*, relates: "*[I]t was a sad affair to listen as the various generals in Sarajevo - the Canadian Mackenzie, the Frenchman Morillon, the Belgian Briquemont, then the British Generals Rose and initially Smith - came under personal criticism in Sarajevo and in America for being pro-Serb as they struggled to implement both a humanitarian and a peacekeeping mandate with demanded impartiality.*"⁵⁾ When the UN personnel proved too conscientious about their mission for the whole of the population of Bosnia, they were eventually relieved of their duty.

Ham-radio operators are a favorite instrument of the CIA, BND and many other western secret services for spreading what the CIA calls "*black propaganda*" (propaganda devoid of any factual basis). In 1968 during the "Prague Spring", for example, there was a whole network of ham-radios broadcasting from the territory of the FRG for the CIA and BND spreading panic and confusion. August 22, 1968, their "*news*" included the assassination of Alexander Dubcek.⁶⁾

Five weeks later Time Magazine was again a willing partner in the Srebrenica ham radio propaganda offensive:

*Even as fighting eased in Srebrenica under a cease-fire agreement brokered in Sarajevo late Saturday night, painful memories were being evoked half a continent away, in Poland, where preparations to mark the **50th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising** were under way. In 1943, **60,000 Jewish survivors** of starvation and deportation - roughly the same number as those trapped in **Srebrenica - confronted Nazi troops in a final, hopeless battle.** Back then the outside knew little and could do less about what was afoot. But the horror of the last days of **Srebrenica** could not be ignored by a world kept abreast of every twist and turn in the bloody Bosnian conflict.*⁷⁾

³⁾ B.W. NELAN, J.L. Graff and J.F.O. McAllister and B.van Voorst, *More Harm than Good; In the Name of God; Bosnia's brutal tragedy grows worse while the U.S. and its allies resolve to remain spectators*, Time Magazine, 15. 3. 1993 (emphasis added)

⁴⁾ Reuter / AP, *UN-General widerspricht Greulbericht; US-flugzeuge warfen Lebensmittel und Medikamente für das belagerte Srebrenica ab*, Berliner Zeitung, 8.3.93

⁵⁾ David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, Harcourt Brace, 1995, Pg. 201

⁶⁾ See Patrice Chairoff, *Dossier Neo Nazisme*, Ramsay, Paris pg. 426-429)

⁷⁾ J.L.GRAFF B.Angelo, W.Mader, J.F.O.McAllister and M.Montgomery, *Srebrenica Succumbs; The fall*

Minister Pronk's allegations that "*something like this could happen*" that "*the Serbs' have done it more often*" are based on a false credibility given to previous war-propaganda. This criminalization and isolation of a people, makes it much easier to declare them outside the realm of "civilization" and therefore devoid of rights. This, in turn, makes it much more acceptable to violate their Rights as members of the human race. Through the deluge of propaganda a climate of complicity has been created in the outside world making these violations generally easier to be accepted.

It should not be difficult to believe that "*the Serbs*" too are capable of carrying out such a massacre. If Americans in Hiroshima, or My Lai or Israelis in the Sinai or Sabra and Chatila were capable of such massacres, why should Serbs in Bosnia not also **at least be** up to the "*civilized*" barbarism of those governments that more often than not appear beyond reproach - no matter what they do.

A military force trying to conquer hostile territory, surrounded by an enemy, defined along distinct "*ethnic*" lines, that can melt into the population at will, it becomes clear that "*the Serbs*" also could be capable of over-reacting. If units and soldiers are capable of torture of inhabitants thousands of miles from home, in Somalia, while providing "*humanitarian*" aid as part of a UNO-Blue Helmet mission, why wouldn't Bosnian Serbs fighting for their homes and their means of survival in a civil war, not also be capable of such barbarism. It should not be forgotten that Serbs remember better than most Germans what happened to their countrymen just a couple generations ago.

But the existence of the **capability** is no proof of the **deed**.

That the Serbs are seen as more criminal than the other parties in this conflict - even those openly flaunting their fascist pasts and current fascist/chauvinist ideologies or those who in order to provoke US intervention are ready to massacre their own citizens and blame *the Serbs* - says more about the chauvinism of the observer than it does about *the Serbs*.

Too often the idea peeps through that war, itself, is not the negation of civilization sometimes could even be correct, if only it were not for those who commit, what is known as "*war crimes*". That certain levels of social, political and technological "development" has brought about attempts to "control" warfare (terms like clean, surgical were at times fashionable for generals and politicians lending a certain hygienic or clinical aura), does nothing to relieve warfare of its conditions of naked barbarism, particularly for those directly confronted with the struggle for survival at the point of battle - the soldiers.

"Possible Mass Graves ..."

The US government, has supported this version with satellite photos purporting to show "disturbed earth" that US officials interpret as showing the sites of mass graves.

"As early as August, Washington shared with the United Nations spy satellite photography showing mounds of freshly-disturbed earth at Nova Kasaba, indicating the digging of mass graves there around Jul 13 or 14. Goldstone has asked Washington to provide more data more quickly."¹¹⁾

Two buildings, a main and subordinate road are shown on the photos. Two light colored patches (indicated with arrows) in the middle of what could be a field with a parallel double-lined path (tire tracks?) leading from the main road to each of the light areas. The photo is entitled: "*Possible Mass Graves; Kasaba/Konjevic Polje Area, Bosnia; unclassified*

of a fated town deepens the Balkans' tragedy and shames a spectating world, TIME Magazine, 26.4.1993

¹¹⁾ *ibid*

Jul. 95". In the lower left corner the explanation of the arrows: "*Recently disturbed earth.*"

This satellite photo of "*recently disturbed earth*" along with what is purported to be eyewitness accounts were the only tangible evidence upon which the indictment was based.

Upon cross-examination of the photographic evidence important questions arise:

- * When and where was this photo taken?
- * What would differ this aerial photo: "*Possible Mass Graves*" from one of a construction site, an excavation site or a site where dirt from construction site is dumped? Where are the other photos showing the massacres, the unloading of the trucks, the open pits filled with bodies, the burials,? Why is the photo entitled: "**Possible** Mass Graves"? Could it be that the origin of these mounds of dirt have nothing to do with "*Mass Graves*" which could explain the "*Possible*" in its title?

A satellite (if it is not in a fixed stationary orbit) passes over the same area several times per day, taking photos, at regular intervals, of developments taking place meaning there must be other photographic information explaining the origin of this "*recently disturbed earth*". There is no specific date on the photo published in the press, meaning it could have been taken before the fall of Srebrenica, long after, or in any area of the world. The court and the world public is being asked to accept on faith that such a photo - the **only** optical evidence - provides evidence of mass graves. The media and the politicians have since transformed the "**Possible** Mass Graves" into "*Mass Graves*".

Eyewitnesses

Refusing to exhume the graves, not having other visual proof of mass executions, the Tribunal is forced to rely on "Eyewitness" testimony. As can be verified on any given day in court, this form of evidence is the easiest form of "proof" to be directed, stunted, in short, manipulated and tailored to fit.

The most recent sensational "eyewitness" to be found is Drazen Erdemovic, who, according to the confession given the French daily, "Le Figaro", as a "*soldier in the Bosnian Serb Army (...) participated in mass executions of Muslim civilians from Srebrenica. He describe[d] in details the massacres of 1200 people on one field of the farm in Pilice, near Janja, on the road Bjeljina- Zvornik. The perpetrators [had] used bullets of 7,62mm (...).*"²⁰⁾

With such detailed information, one would think that the Tribunal would finally have what it would need to be able to locate and secure the necessary evidence to bring concrete charges against those who participated. All they would have to do is to exhume the bodies and submit them to a forensic examination to see if they had been killed with 7,62mm bullets. That is of course, if the tribunal wanted to learn if Erdemovic was a reliable witness or giving false information out of some personal or political motivation.

Erdemovic is described as "*a child of Serbo-Croatian marriage, [he] was one of many volunteers who believed in 1991, that he was fighting for Yugoslavia, by besieging Vukovar. In 1992, in his native Tuzla, first he had joined HVO (**Croatian Council of Defense**), then he [ran] over to the Serb side. In Serbia he had come in contact with ABC TV- station,²¹⁾ and (...) offered his story, and his testimony to Tribunal in The Hague.*"²²⁾"

²⁰⁾ VANESSA VASIC-JANEKOVIC, A MAN WHO KNOWS TOO MUCH (*Covjek koji zna previse*), quoted in the ARZIN index-60, 15.3.96

²¹⁾ His first contact (and inspiration?) to tell this story was through his contact with the American journalists - for pay? - But the press credits the breaking of this story to "Le Figaro". This corresponds more to typical CIA "black propaganda" methods? Plant a false story in a foreign paper to have the

The press agency, Reuters, gives his "ethnic origin" as Bosnian **Croat**.²³⁾ The International Herald Tribune adds: "*Mr. Erdemovic, who was born near Tuzla in Bosnia and had been an ordinary soldier, said that after a falling out with his commander in Bosnia he decided to move to Serbia and tell his story, **apparently in revenge**. He then sought refuge with his friend, Mr. Kramenkovic.*"²⁴⁾

Is this a reliable witness? He seems more like an agent-provocateur or simply an agent. What is a HVO - Croat doing in the armed forces of the Bosnian Serbs? Was he ever in the Bosnian Serb army? It has also been reported - and denied - that chief prosecutor Richard Goldstone had offered Erdemovic benefit of the "state's witness" regulation ("Kronzeugenregelung" - another name for bribery and/or blackmail for testimony favorable to the prosecution). Erdemovic was reportedly offered freedom from prosecution for himself and was guaranteed a new life abroad, (in America? - for helping take the American government "off the hook" with "proof" that a massacre had taken place?)²⁵⁾ Time will tell if Goldstone's dementia proves more credible than his evidence.

The charges of "*genocide*" brought by the Muslim/Croat government in connection with the events in Srebrenica are but the most recent accusations against their Serb compatriots. The credibility of these charges are based in large part on previous largely unsubstantiated charges, charges that were also accompanied by vociferous, high visibility public relations campaigns with high ranking international and national political figures, human rights organizations and media organs.

To support incriminations against Bosnian Serbs, there had actually been reports - with photos - of "concentration camps", "a deliberate policy of military attacks against unarmed civilians", "a policy of ethnic cleansing" and "a policy of forced insemination". These campaigns were usually short-lived, often preceding - if not serving as the reason for - international diplomatic or military intervention against the Serb side.

It was in the early stages of this civil war, that the accusation of "*genocide*" began to take a prominent place in the western media. "*Genocide*" was arbitrarily and unilaterally used against Bosnian Serbs by the Moslem authorities and their allied in western capitals. Picked up and endlessly repeated by a willing press, it became "unquestionable" for many that Serbs are the "*worst criminals*" since Hitler (a charge strikingly familiar to that brought against Saddam Hussein of Iraq). The definition - much less the proof of - genocide has been pushed far into the background.

It is also this inflationary use of the term "*genocide*" - particularly by those far removed from the scene and relying solely on the (dis)information received through a less than objective press - that has helped make the search for an overall solution to the conflict much more difficult. It is the mixture of manipulation through disinformation and ignorance, replacing objectivity with emotionality, that creates the background for supporting violations of the human and civil rights of peoples. One should keep in mind the definition of genocide and insist upon hard proof before jumping to conclusions.

As David Owen, in his chronicle **Balkan Odyssey**, a chronicle of his and Cyrus Vance's efforts as special UN negotiators, to bring about a negotiated peace to the region explains:

American press pick it up as a reprint, of an independent source.

22)

ibid

23)

aza/kjf, JUGOSLAWIEN/KRIEGSVERBRECHEN; Zeuge- 1200 Moslems aus UNO-Schutzzone ermordet, REUTERS 08.03.1996 - 15:32

24)

Jane Perlez, Milosevic is expected to Aid in a War crimes Case; 2 Bosnian Serbs may face court, IHT, 14.3.96 (emphasis added)

25)

cd sg Bosnien/UN/Jugoslawien; Tribunal verlangt in Belgrad Auslieferung von Srebrenica-Zeugen, dpa 12.03.1996 - 12:57

*"Genocide is a crime against the whole of humanity. The UN Convention on Genocide defines genocide as certain 'acts committed with intent to destroy in whole or in part a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such'. It is a highly specific crime to eliminate a definable group from this planet. Genocide was committed against the Serbs by the Croat Ustashas in the Second World War."*³¹⁾

Public opinion was first shocked to attentiveness with stories of what was called "*genocide through forced insemination*": Serbs were accused of systematically raping Muslim women, in order to decimate the Muslim population through "bastard" children. Few dared to question the veracity of the allegations, and ignorant of the "ethnic" origins of the region's populations, few realized just how ridiculous this charge is.

Ethnicity is a **voluntarily** accepted definition of group membership - derived from the selection of any assortment of characteristics combining to form the personal identity that is shared with others having the same characteristics. Ethnicity is based on including those, who share a number of these common characteristics and as a line of demarcation to mark the difference between this "ethnic" group and all others.

Whereas ethnicity is a psychological attribute, insemination creates genetic differences. "Ethnically" speaking, Muslims of Bosnia are of the same *genetic* origins as Serbs and Croats. The difference is that they had converted to Islam. It would be impossible to wipe out an ideology, a cultural way of life or a religious belief through *genetic* means.

February 4, 1993 the French TV program, "Envoyé Spécial" broadcast a report from the journalist Jérôme Bony on his trip to Tuzla, known for having a concentration of Muslim rape victims: "*As I was 50 Km from Tuzla, I was told »Go to the grounds of the intermediary school in Tuzla, 4,000 raped women are there.' When I was 20 Km away, the number sank to 400. When I had 10 Km to go, only 40 were left. And when I reached the place I found only 4 women who were willing to make a statement.*"³²⁾

Nora Beloff, former chief political correspondent of the "*OBSERVER*", and author of several books on Eastern Europe, including "*Tito's Flawed Legacy*" protested the biased unsubstantiated used of rape as a means of political manipulation in the European Community policy. She submitted the following letter to the editors to the British "*Daily Telegraph*":

Doubts about Serb Rapes

"It is high time that the blood-curdling allegations of Bosnian Serbs raping Muslim Women as a deliberate policy of intimidation were challenged. My own inquiries have led to an admission from a senior German official that there is no direct evidence to support the wild figures of rape victims.

*The European Community first espoused the rape atrocity issues at EC Edinburgh summit last month and according to Danish and British participant, **the initiative and dossier were exclusively German.** Fran Wild, who is in charge of the Bosnian Desk in the German Foreign Affairs Ministry, says the material came partly from the Izetbegovic government and partly for the Catholic charity Caritas - that is from Muslim and Croat sources. No effort has been made to seek corroboration from more impartial sources. All that we do know is that in this dreadful civil war, woman from all three communities have*

³¹⁾ David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, Harcourt Brace & Co., 1995, pg. 79-80

³²⁾ Brock, Peter, *Bei Andruck Mord, Konkret (Hamburg)*, 3.94 pg. 19.

³²⁾ Brock, Peter, *Bei Andruck Mord, Konkret (Hamburg)*, 3.94 pg. 19.

been raped.

The figures vary considerably. Patrick Bishop says that "35,000 Muslim women have been violated, according to conservative estimates" (article, Jan. 17). Dame Anne Warburton puts the figure at 20,000, and Shirley Williams 50,000. Such stories have contributed more than anything else to the American and European enthusiasm for war against Serbia.

The Foreign Office's press department concedes that these figures are totally uncorroborated. When I suggested that it should issue a denial, it referred me to the Danes, currently chairing the EC. Copenhagen agreed that the reports were unsubstantiated, but this seems not to have bothered Danish politicians. Belgrade has even asked for the Danish Foreign Minister Mr. Uffe Ellemann Jensen, to be replaced by somebody less anti-Serb.

The most likely explanation for German behavior is that they need to "satanise" the Serbs in order to cover their own responsibility for pitching Yugoslavia into civil war. (...)³²⁾

As more people began to demand proof, explicit mention of rape was replaced by a general and unspecified mention of "the crimes" that the Serbs had committed throughout the war. This in turn, relied upon the effects of previous propaganda campaigns and long lists of rumored atrocities attributed to nameless "survivors" but rarely corroborated by serious journalists or independent observers.

As Ms. Beloff writes "*woman from all three communities have been raped*". In this context, the unilateral accusations against Serb men imply, on the other hand, being in accord with Muslim and Croatian rapists, or that rape of Serb women is less abominable than that of their Croatian or Muslim sisters. Or does one simply pick up the crusade against Serbs because the European and world powers have declared it safe to do so?

Unfortunately rape, as a demonstration of absolute subjugation of one person by another, is a common aspect of victory in warfare. One accompanying psychological problem today is that the attempt is being made to separate *rape-in-warfare* from all other forms of brutality which makes up warfare. One runs the risk of supporting the illusion in public opinion that "**warfare is good but rape in warfare is bad**". Warfare - in all of its barbarous aspects - must be banished.

Throughout history the rape charge has often been used by racists and other chauvinists to justify lynch murder and other forms of repression of members of a targeted group. This manipulation is often based upon the claim of racial/"ethnic" superiority that provides one group "*property rights*" over "*their*" women, to protect the "*purity*" as child-bearing instruments for the "*propagation of **their** race*" as it is called.

Overlapping the accusations of "*genocide through rape*" was the charge of "**concentration camps**". These were followed with charges of "*mass murder in Srebrenica*".

Time Magazine explained the difficulty in trying to accurately report on this war:

"What sparked the political uproar in Europe and the U.S. last week were emotional new charges that each faction in Bosnia is running a network of internment camps where beatings, torture, starvation and even murder are commonplace. International observers have been scrambling to investigate the claims, most of which come from interested parties, but inspectors have largely been kept out of the places they most want to see. Until they get unhampered

³²⁾ N.Beloff, *Doubts about Serb Rapes*, "The Daily Telegraph", (London), 19.1.93

access, sorting out reality from propaganda will be impossible.

So far, there is **no evidence** of genocide or systematic extermination; actual proof of individual murders is still rare. But there are numerous accounts of starvation, beatings, interrogation and miserable sanitation. Western diplomats think many of the camps will turn out to be similar to the few they have been allowed to see: harsh but not murderous detention sites where enemies, civilian and military, are warehoused before expulsion or exchange. Yet there is the fear that other camps could be much worse.

Bosnian officials, who present the most detailed bill of particulars, claim that Serbs are running at least 105 camps, through which 260,000 people have passed since April, with 17,000 deaths. At least 130,000 remain incarcerated. How bad are the camps? A Bosnian report, possibly exaggerated, tells of the Vuk Karadzic primary school in Bratunac, where Serbs are accused of bleeding 500 Muslims to death so wounded Serbs could get transfusions; at a cafe-pension named Sonje in the town of Vogosca, a Serb group led by one Jovan Tintor was said to have hanged prisoners by the legs and gouged out their eyes with special hooks. Serbs deny such stories and countercharge that Muslims and Croats are running 40 camps of their own where more than 6,000 Serbs have died."³³⁾ (My emphasis)

One has to first fathom such acts of torture being carried out on other human beings to be able to describe them. The mind that can conjure up such acts is already one that can also imagine carrying them out. The description of these rumored forms of torture sharpens the imagination of others as well toward these and other forms of sadism. Though these may in fact be exaggerations - at the hands of the Serbs - they are not necessarily at the hands of Muslims and Croats against Serbs or each other. One interesting aspect is that it is rare to read where Serbs are reported giving such sadistic details.

"According to reports", writes Peter Brock, "the Bosnian Serbs were unusually cooperative in respects to international inspections of their camps, while Bosnian Muslims and Croats either refused or hampered the inspection of their camps."³⁴⁾

In 1992, Time Magazine furnished statistics of the casualties the war had made to that time:

"After more than nine months of fighting, an estimated **125,000** have been killed, more than a million refugees are homeless, and Bosnian Serbs hold 70% of the republic."³⁴⁾

Time Magazine furnishes more statistics, but one notices a marked difference in reporting:

"The war has been as ugly as any in history. At least 85% of the **200,000 killed** in three years of fighting have been civilians. An additional 4 million have become refugees, most of them driven from their homes in pogroms of "ethnic cleansing." Survivors tell of concentration camps, brutal guards, starvation rations, killing grounds, mass graves. They remember a sadist called the Butcher, the killer gang known as the Jokers. They have witnessed summary

³³⁾ J.F.O. McAllister/J. Kuzmanovic/W. Rademaekers/B. van Voorst, *Balkans: Must It Go On?, Specters of barbarism in Bosnia compel the U.S. and Europe to ponder: Is it time to intervene?* TIME Magazine, 17.8.1992

³⁴⁾ Brock, Peter, *Bei Andruck Mord, Konkret* (Hamburg), 3.94 pg. 17.

³⁴⁾ B.W. NELAN J.L. Graff/ W.Mader/J.F.O. McAllister, *Stand and Deliver: Bill Clinton / Serbia's Spite*, TIME Magazine, 25,1.1993

executions, decapitations, human beings being thrown on bonfires. Some still hear the moans of raped women, the shrieks of terrified children, the howls of men under torture.

*Fifty years after Hitler's fall, war crimes are being committed in the Balkans **on a level reminiscent of Nazi Germany**. Governments and private organizations have compiled detailed documentary and eyewitness evidence of at least **5,000 specific cases**, along with lists of 3,500 named individuals allegedly responsible for committing the crimes.* ³⁵⁾

One realizes a marked change in the professionalism in Time Magazine reporting in this article and the previous article published. The result of the influence of the Clinton administration? The comparison with Hitler, similar to that in the propaganda prelude to the war against Iraq, probably signaled that the Clinton administration had already decided to become militarily engaged.

But sensationalism of the unverified rumors aside, the comparison of the two sets of statistics show that in the 21 months between the two "only" 75,000 people had been killed. (Twice that many had lost their lives in the first 9 months of the war.) Statistically this means a drop in the average monthly death rate from 13,800/month for the first 9 months to one of 2,700/month for the next period 3 times as long. Where does one prove with these statistics a design "**on a level reminiscent of Nazi Germany**" to physically liquidate the Muslim people of Bosnia.

The Bosnian Federation's UN ambassador, Muhammed Sacirbey has brought charges, before the International Court in The Hague accusing Serb leaders, of having committed the "worst crimes since Jews were murdered by the Nazis." He claimed that Bosnia Herzegovina has suffered the worst injustice in Europe since the horrors of the Holocaust. ³⁶⁾

But his accusation can not be unilaterally aimed at Serbs. In this civil war, all parties that have participated in the dismemberment of Yugoslavia are the perpetrators, and all the peoples that have been driven from their homes are the victims. But to claim that this compares to genocide under Hitler, is a strong trivialization of German barbarism during the Second World War.

On the question of genocide David Owen further observes:

*"I know of no accurate figures on the number of fatalities there have been in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. News organizations and specialists, after three years of war, talk of 200,000-250,000. The Bosnian government in April 1995 lowered its previous estimate to just over 145,000, **about 3 per cent of the pre-war population**. But George Kenney, who resigned from the State Department in 1992 to protest at the failure of US policy to do more for the Muslims, puts the figure between 25,000 and 60,000.* ³⁷⁾ He argues that

'Bosnia is not the Holocaust or Rwanda; it's Lebanon. A relatively large number of white people have been killed in a gruesome fashion in the first European blow-up since World War II. In response the United Nations has set up the first international war crimes trials since Nuremberg. But that does not mean the Bosnian Serbs' often brutal treatment of the Bosnian Muslims is a unique genocide. ³⁸⁾

³⁵⁾ By J.O. Jackson/J.L. Graff/J.F.O. McAllister/N. Morris and C. Soloway; *No Rush to Judgment*, TIME Magazine, 27.6.94

³⁶⁾ *cd, oe, Sacirbey: Serben begingen schlimmste Verbrechen seit dem Holocaust*, DPA. 1.5.96 (11:40)

³⁷⁾ George Kenney, 'How many have died?' NY Times Magazine, 22 April 1995, quoted in Owen pg. 80

³⁸⁾ Owen *op.cit.* pg. 80

It is not clear what Kenney expects to prove with his reference to "*white people*" being "*killed in a gruesome fashion*". "*White people*" have been responsible for probably the grand majority of killing throughout the history on this planet and killing is **always** *gruesome*. In this case, race, nationality or cultural background only makes a difference to racists and other chauvinists, who assign values of rank to the group from which the corpse or the culprit comes. Evidently to Kenney - and probably many other American and European government and press representatives - it does make an important difference. It's alright as long as the **victims** are non-white. The excitement around the relatively few deaths - both real and imagined - of Bosnian Muslims is far greater than that of a far greater number of Afghans, Kurds, Rwandans or Iraqis.

The underground escape route:

Now that Dayton has begun to be applied, the problems of trying to prove genocide in Srebrenica is not only a problem of presenting proof, but also of suppressing proof of the contrary. The American government, its allies and the Tribunal are not only engaged in bribing or blackmailing testimony to create inculpatory evidence, they are also apparently engaged in suppressing possible exonerating evidence.

Drazen Erdemovic is not the only "eyewitness", who has a story to tell. There are other eyewitnesses that neither the Tribunal nor the American government show little interest in having come to The Hague to testify.

*Hundreds of Bosnian Muslims prisoners are still being held at 2 secret camps within neighboring Serbia, according to a group of men evacuated by the Red Cross to a **Dublin** hospital from one camp at Slijivovica.*

*The weary and terrified prisoners had made their way from the fallen enclaves of **Zepa** and **Srebrenica** last summer and were imprisoned in the camps last August, under Serb police authority.*

A group of 24 men was flown to Ireland just before Christmas. But some 650 others remain incarcerated in Slijivovica and at another camp near Mitrovo Polje. Their fate remains uncertain. Under the Dayton peace agreement on Bosnia, all detainees should have been released on January 19, or "D plus 30" as it is known in the accord.

*(...) The men "medevaced" to Dublin have been granted papers to remain in Ireland and are lodged in the Cherry Orchard **mental hospital** on the outskirts of the city.*

Since late August, the Red Cross has made fortnightly visits from its Belgrade field office. Its spokeswoman said officials were not allowed to comment on conditions within specific camps, but acknowledged "some abnormalities" in the treatment of prisoners - usually a diplomatic term meaning beatings and starvation-level food rations.²⁶⁾

In its news brief, Jan. 19, 1996, the Moslem, Press TWRA adds to the above information:

Tim Butcher wrote about the camp Mitrovo Polje in "The Telegraph". (...) The states ready to provide accommodation for the others are USA, Australia, Italy, France, Ireland, Belgium and Sweden and their release has been negotiated by ICRC and the Belgrade authorities for some time. Western govts. and ICRC, which knew about the camps, have not released the truth hoping for the solution

²⁶⁾ Ed Vulliamy, Serbs 'run secret camps'; Bosnian Muslims freed from secret detention tell Ed Vulliamy of random beatings and 'mobile torture machines', *Guardian Wkly (Wash. Post)*, 28.1.96

to be reached by secret diplomacy. ICRC spokeswoman admitted ICRC's accepting Serb condition not to inform the public on the existence of the camps in FR Yugoslavia and in return, the ICRC officials were allowed to visit the camps every fortnight.

"The Guardian" also reported that "A survivor from Srebrenica, Safet Ilic says he fled from the town with 2,000 more people, many of them killed in artillery and heavy machine gun fire. Some groups fled to the free B-H territory and some to Serbia. They were arrested in Serbia and put to concentration camp. Before they left eastern Bosnia, many had been caught up, slaughtered with knives, axes or fire arms. (...) Delegation of the Hague Tribunal is sent to Dublin to record the evidence of the former detainees of Serb camps. Belgrade does not let the Hague Tribunal approach to the places in question. Delegation of the Hague Tribunal is sent to Dublin to record the evidence of the former detainees of Serb camps.

Why would war prisoners - normally whose first wish would be to be reunited with their families and restart their interrupted lives in peace - be rushed off to a **mental** hospital in Dublin, with "*papers to remain in Ireland*"? One possible reason could be that if they should decide to tell an uncomfortable truth (uncomfortable for the Muslim/Croat government) about what really had happened in Srebrenica, - **before** elections take place - their stories could be discounted as being the hallucinations of someone driven "*insane, through the harsh treatment in the camps*". This is a method not unknown in the US for silencing witnesses in embarrassing cases (e.g. the Martin Luther King assassination).

*US decided to accept **214 Bosniaks** who, after the fall of **Srebrenica and Zepa**, had been detained in Serb camps and give them refugee status. "It is horrible that those people besides being captured during the bloodshed in Srebrenica had to spend at least another two months in Serb detention camps under dreadful conditions", said State Department spokesman N. Burns. Burns emphasized that **at least 800 men** out of 80 000 people who have been expelled from their homes after the fall of Srebrenica and Zepa had been taken to Serbia.²⁷⁾*

How many more of those "**at least 800 men**" prisoners have been slipped out of the country in a similar "underground" manner is unknown. What is now known is that neither the Red Cross, which has been visiting the prisoners since August, the Tribunal, "in its frantic search for evidence for the "genocide" of Srebrenica and to have someone arrest the Bosnian Serb leaders, nor the Americans have made mention since August 95 of these men being in custody as war prisoners. Why? Are they trying to conceal evidence exonerating the Serbs of the "genocide" charge in connection with alleged mass executions?

The BND (Federal Intelligence Service) of the FRG mentioned in a report about the "Human Rights Violations in Srebrenica", dated Sept. 12, 1995 (made available to the Federal parliamentarians, and the press) the following facts:

"July 23, a group of about 700 persons from Konjevic Polje situated in Uzice, (...) were taken to the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia." It is further explained that "since the end of 1994, there have been indications of the existence of detention camps in the Serb Republic, in which Croatian and Muslim prisoners of the Bosnian Serbs have been taken. There is supposed to

²⁷⁾ S.K., *Another Two Mass Graves - Discovered*, Press TWRA, Jan 19, 1996

be in Aleksinac approx. 5,000 prisoners from Bosnian Herzegovina who are being deployed as forced labor in a coal mine."

The German press - including the press on the left - that reported on this paper, did not mention the "possibility" that the men of Srebrenica may have been taken as prisoners of war. Sometimes the most logical possibility is undesirable when conformity or an anti-Serb chauvinism is the guiding motivation.

In early January, the Muslim authorities unilaterally postponed the scheduled exchange of war prisoners. Was there a connection between this and the underground emigration?

"Demanding an explanation of the fate of thousands of Muslims missing in Serb-held Bosnia, the Bosnian government postponed one of the largest scheduled exchanges of prisoners of war Monday [15.1.96]. The government said the exchange, part of the Dayton agreement, could not go ahead until the Bosnian Serbs provided information about the fate of 24,000 people the government lists as missing."²⁸⁾

"Bosnia's Foreign Minister, Muhamed Sacirbey declared Wednesday in Sarajevo, that it is better to postpone an incomplete prisoner exchange than to write off the lives of those persons still held in labor camps."²⁹⁾

The Muslim authorities and their American backers insisted upon the Serbs releasing all of their war prisoners - even unilaterally. But what about Serb prisoners held incognito in Muslim incarceration:

"A Red Cross official took the unprecedented step of publicly accusing the Bosnian government of holding more prisoners than it has listed for release under the peace agreement. Under the pact, about 900 POWS were to be released by all three former foes in Bosnia. A limited release took place Friday. But Beat Schweizer, a spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross, said that 645 of the prisoners were still being detained by the former warring parties - 318 by the government, 150 by Bosnian Serbs and 177 by the Croats. He said the Red Cross had information that the Bosnian government was detaining in Tuzla prison some Serbs who are not on the list presented to the Red Cross."³⁰⁾

How many others of the Muslim's prisoners are unregistered for release? What can they expect to be their fate in the hands of a government that would stage massacres of members of **its own population** - to provide NATO an excuse to intervene against the Serbs? A government that trains its terrorists in the use of booby-trapped toys, one can expect the absolute worst. If no one knew they were/are there, they are already considered dead by family and friends. This was reported in January, what has happened since, - to the Red Cross official, to the prisoners, to the other unknown prisoners? (The first news of prisoners being slipped out of the country, appeared in the same period.)

One need only consider the number of prisoners held by the 2 sides: Muslim/Croat Federation: **495** to Serbs: **150**. The Muslim/Croat Federation has three times as many prisoners, but one never reads about their conditions of incarceration. The only criminals in this war are the Serbs. This is the double standard that has prevailed throughout the war.

²⁸⁾ Chris Hedges, *Bosnia Delays POW Exchange; They seek Information about 24,000 Missing*, IHT, 16.1.96

²⁹⁾ *mz st, Bosnien/Kriegsgefangene; Bosnische Regierung bleibt bei Bedingungen für Gefangenenaustausch*, dpa, 17.01.1996 - 16:49

³⁰⁾ *US on Alert for Rogue Ex-GI in Bosnia*, IHT (AP), 25.1.96