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U.S. POLICY TOWARD THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

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As long as the Cold War framed the international arena, relations between the United States and Yugoslavia were—for the most part—fairly clear and predictable. Both sides played their assigned roles well in the larger East-West drama. For the U.S., Yugoslavia—after Tito and Stalin split in 1948—was the useful, even reliable, strategically-placed, communist antagonist to the Soviet Union. Certainly, Washington complained at times about Yugoslavia's preference for nonalignment and lamented the fact that it was not part of the Western alliance.[2] The fact that Yugoslavia was indeed a communist state that Moscow could not control, however, more than compensated for these "short comings." As a reward, the U.S. courted Tito, provided economic aid, and paid virtually no attention to how he ran the country—even his brutal rise to power after World War II was of little consequence.

For his part, Tito accepted the courtship and the money. In turn, he provided a bulwark against Soviet expansion to the Adriatic and acted as a nagging burr under Stalin's saddle, all while maintaining his control internally and keeping his distance from the West. Everybody was relatively happy. The system was so well-defined and so well entrenched that it survived a decade after Tito died in 1980—as long as the Soviet Union existed. But with the demise of the Soviet Union and the gathering internal decay that had begun to undermine Tito's system, the relationship between the U.S. and Yugoslavia also began to change. By the early 1990s, Belgrade's strategic position in the unraveling East-West game was no longer important and American largesse declined. Then suddenly, the U.S. was interested—sort of—in the country's internal dynamics.

Unfortunately, America was as disoriented as everyone else after the Cold War and was never able, early on, to form a coherent policy toward the disintegrating Yugoslavia. For the United States, the period since 1990 has been a time of confusion, conflicting signals, arrogance,

[r] The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy of the National Defense University, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

misunderstanding, anomie, and ultimately, failure as successive administrations tried to figure out what American policy toward the Balkans should be. As we try to clear away the underbrush of this period, four distinct periods in U.S. policy toward Yugoslavia can be discerned. Hopefully, understanding those periods will help point the way to a more creative, positive, and successful U.S. policy toward the former Yugoslavia.

Sisyphus[3]

Unengaged Engagement

The first period, which lasted approximately from the end of 1990 to mid-1994, can be described as a period of "unengaged engagement." During this period, both the H. W. Bush and Clinton administrations essentially remained aloof, content to shout from a distance and admonish the countries of Western Europe to do more to resolve the Yugoslav issue. Although the Bush administration "had studiously avoided any major initiative in the former Yugoslavia"[4] during this period, Washington's rhetoric and actions had a significant and negative impact on the course of events in Yugoslavia. It was during this period that the Bush administration endorsed a tectonic-like shift in focus from dealing with Yugoslavia as a whole to dealing with its disintegrating parts as discrete entities. This shift was accepted by the incoming Clinton administration as the organizing rationale for its entire Balkan policy.

Despite language to the contrary, the H. W. Bush administration could not shake the Cold War prism. This prism colored how the administration initially viewed the Yugoslav issue. As events were heating up in 1990 and 1991, President Bush—pretty much in lock step with the European Union and the then CSCE—insisted that Yugoslavia remain a single state. Yugoslavia could not, according to the Bush administration, deviate from the Cold War borders. In fact, in June 1991, Secretary of State Baker, on his now famous trip to the area, "ordered" Slovenia and Croatia to abandon plans for independence. Consistent with that proclamation, the U.S. unwittingly supported President Milosevic's position. The Bush administration never recommended the use of force to hold the country together, but the central government in Belgrade certainly believed that, at the very least, the Bush administration would cast a blind eye on the use of force and, at best, would wink at it. The Milosevic-dominated pro-unification position in Belgrade had every reason to be emboldened by the U.S.—and European—positions.

Then, as the reality of the carnage and the centrifugal forces started to hit home, presidential candidate Bill Clinton began to criticize the Bush administration for its "weak" Balkan policy. President Bush changed course—as did the Europeans. Less than a year after "ordering" Slovenia and Croatia not to declare independence, the Bush administration—following the German lead, which ultimately carried all of the EU—recognized Slovenia and Croatia. In the same time frame, the Bush administration recognized Bosnia and the Europeans followed suit. The recognition of these three former Yugoslav republics as independent states all but doomed any chance to avoid a wider war and put Washington on a collision course with Belgrade. By the end of 1992, President Bush announced his famous "Christmas warning"—threatening Belgrade with retaliation if it moved with force against Kosovo.

In less than a year, for Washington, the necessity of Yugoslav unity ceased to exist and Milosevic was beginning to move away from someone the U.S. could work with, even rely on, ultimately to "brutal dictator" and, a decade later, to indicted war criminal. As it left office, the H. W. Bush administration not only ceded resolution of the broader foreign policy conundrum to the new Clinton administration, it left U.S. Balkan policy in difficult straits. Indeed, the Clinton administration inherited a framework that, among other things, left the future of an ineffective UNPROFOR up in the air and which included the feckless policy of "Deny Flight in place," as well as an unresolved question of whether the whole mess should be left with the Europeans after all.

Despite candidate Clinton's strong denunciation of the Bush administration's Balkan policy, President Clinton did not follow up with a strong, clear, well-honed policy of his own. Indeed, from its inauguration early in 1992 until mid-1994, the Clinton administration demonstrated as much "weakness" and even more vacillation on the Balkans than had its predecessor. For more than two years the Clinton administration stumbled along with a series of well-documented missteps that did nothing to help end the war in the former Yugoslavia. In fact, the Clinton administration followed policies that helped ensure that the wars of Yugoslav succession continued. Most important, it endorsed the Bush-initiated policy of recognizing the various Yugoslav republics as individual states, scuttled the Vance-Owens Peace Plan, and initially supported an embargo on weapons to any country in the former Yugoslavia, thereby, cementing a Serb near-monopoly on the weapons that already existed in the area.

Decisive Engagement

By 1994, the carnage had caught up with the Clinton administration just as it had with the Bush administration almost three years earlier. And, just as with President Bush, President Clinton changed direction. The vacillation, confusion, and lack of direction and action on the Balkans that marked the first two years of the Clinton presidency gave way to a new boldness and toughness. With President Clinton's change, the U.S. entered the second period, that of "decisive engagement." By this time Serbia's wars with Slovenia and Croatia were things of the past, but Bosnia was still engulfed in bloody, terrible, and widespread conflict.

The period of decisive engagement, which lasted from mid-1994 to the end of 1995 in Bosnia, was marked by five interrelated policies. First, blaming the Serbs and differentiating among the parts of the former Yugoslavia as discrete, often unconnected states now became the most important aspect of the Clinton administration's policy and formed the basis of everything it did in the area.[5] Inevitably, then, for the Clinton administration, the Serbs under Milosevic were the aggressors and the non-Serbs had to be protected. While there is ample evidence that Belgrade and its Serb allies in Bosnia were responsible for a great deal of violence and brutality, as a variety of unbiased accounts demonstrate, they were far from alone. But, for the Clinton administration it was much easier to be bold, decisive, and tough by simply identifying one guilty party in a complicated situation.

Second, as early as the spring of 1993, the administration began to discuss the "Train and Equip" program, which ultimately committed hundreds of millions of dollars to supplying and training essentially Muslim forces.[6] "Train and Equip" became such an obsession with the administration that in fairly short time, the Muslims had become stronger than the Serbs and

represented a considerably more serious threat to re-igniting hostilities than did the Bosnian Serbs. Ironically, by this time, Milosevic had become for the Clinton administration the "indispensable devil." He was, in the administration's eyes, the author of so much of the mayhem in Bosnia, yet they also saw him—erroneously so—as the only leader in the area who could "deliver" the Bosnian Serbs. The administration's constant pandering to Milosevic during the early 1990s actually bolstered his hand in the region.

Third, the Clinton administration pushed reconciliation between the Muslims and Bosnian Croats, who had been involved in their own brutal war. After months of trying, the administration was able to forge a military and political agreement between the two warring parties that culminated in the Washington Agreement of 1994. The Washington Agreement was important not only because it ended hostilities between the Muslims and the Croats, but even more so because it extended the concept of ethnic differentiation. It set up an uneasy federation between Muslims and Croats that formed the basis for the Muslim-Croat entity established about a year later in the Dayton Accords. However, under the terms of the Washington Agreement, the Muslim and Croat communities not only were differentiated from the Serbs, ironically, they were differentiated from each other in virtually all institutions and organizations. If the precedent of ethnic separation had been established during the last days of the Bush administration, it was cemented in place as the Clinton administration's Balkan *leitmotif* as a result of the Washington Agreement.

Fourth, the "policy" of ethnic differentiation, as well as that of demonizing the Serbs, was reinforced significantly by the initiation of U.S.-led military action against the Bosnian Serbs in February 1994. The Clinton administration's support in mid-1995 for Operation Storm—Croatia's successful military operation to "liberate" the Krajina from Serbs who had proclaimed their independence from Zagreb—should be seen as part of this process. In a series of coordinated military drives, the newly constituted Croatian army retook the Krajina, culminating a process that ultimately drove approximately half a million Serbs eastward out of Croatia and into Bosnia (most of them have never returned).[7] This move was as much an act of ethnic cleansing as were similar moves by the Serbs to cleanse ethnic minorities out of scores of towns, villages, and cities in the Serb Republic.

Originally, the Clinton administration opposed Operation Storm—not because of moral qualms or any sense of equity, but because U.S. officials did not think it would work. The administration believed that if Croatia attacked, Milosevic's Yugoslav Army (JNA) would come to help the Krajina Serbs and that the combination of the JNA and the Krajina Serb "military" would be too much for the new Croatian forces.[8] Once it was clear that Operation Storm was going to succeed, the Clinton administration endorsed it. Richard Holbrooke quotes the late Robert Frasure's reference to the Croatian Army's action: "We 'hired' these guys to be our junkyard dogs because we were desperate. We need to try to control them. But this is no time to get squeamish about things."[9] The administration had, in effect, endorsed ethnic cleansing conducted by Croatians, while it condemned similar action by Serbs.

Fifth, with the Serbs on their way to defeat, the Clinton administration pushed the three ethnic groups in Bosnia to accept what would become the Dayton Accords. Not only did the Dayton agreement formalize the cessation of hostilities, more importantly, it was a unique effort

at political and social engineering. It provided a constitution for a country that had never existed before as a state in any modern sense of the term. It was a "state" that, for no explicable reason, followed the contours of the old Yugoslav republic and which was comprised of two entities and three ethnic groups, each with their own distinct institutions. What is clear is that the Dayton Accords were vague enough to allow, and even encourage, the locus of power to remain with each ethnic group—something they wanted anyhow—and even contained provisions allowing the Bosnian Croats "special parallel" relations with Croatia and the Bosnian Serbs with Yugoslavia. With the beginning of the implementation of the Dayton Accords and the deployment of 60,000 (20,000 American) troops to Bosnia in December 1995, the period of decisive engagement ended in Bosnia. But, because of the administration's differentiated approach to the former Yugoslavia, the next iteration of decisive engagement waited until 1999.

As the Clinton administration struggled to implement the Dayton Accords in Bosnia, pressure gradually built across the border in Kosovo. Some ethnic Albanians were agitating for greater freedom from Belgrade, others for outright independence. The province's autonomy, which had been established in the 1974 Yugoslav constitution, had already been revoked in 1988-89. After Dayton, when the Serbs clamped down hard, the Kosovar Albanians responded in kind, and an old struggle was re-ignited. In 1998, the struggle between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and what was primarily the Serb Interior Police became international news and, once again, the Clinton administration had a relatively simple answer to a complicated situation. When the Serbs began to build their forces late in 1998 for another round of fighting "terrorists" or "freedom fighters" (depending on your perspective), the Clinton administration picked up on the example of its post-1994 Bosnia policy and acted with boldness, toughness—and decisiveness.

The Rambouillet negotiations, which took place in early in 1999, seemed like a natural next step. But, true to what had become form, the talks at Rambouillet were not negotiations—they were never intended to be. Rambouillet was an ultimatum to the Serbs, one designed to fail because it contained conditions that were impossible for Belgrade to accept. In this, Rambouillet was similar to the ultimatum given to the Serbs by the Austrians in the summer of 1914. In both cases, they were the first acts of war, not the last acts of peace. After 78 days of intense bombing throughout the spring of 1999 culminating in Russian cajoling, the Serbs were forced to withdraw. Once again, decisive engagement had "paid off"—the U.S. had just picked up its second "colony" in the Balkans. Kosovo had now caught up with Bosnia—with the end of the bombing and the deployment of ground troops, the period of decisive engagement also came to an end in Kosovo. Ironically, ethnic separation had become a reality in both Bosnia and Kosovo—a reality that was exactly opposite the intent of U.S. policy.

Inertial Engagement

The third period, which can be described as "inertial engagement," began in late 1995/early 1996 in Bosnia and in mid-1999 in Kosovo. In Bosnia, this was not supposed to be an inertial period; it was supposed to be a period of solid accomplishment, which would allow the administration to announce the withdrawal of U.S. troops in about a year. By the end of 1996 or, at the outside, by early 1997, as the public argument went, Bosnia would be well on its way to becoming a stable, multi-ethnic, economically competent, democratic state that would no longer need the protective cover of international—including U.S.—troops. Most officials who worked on the issue knew

that this optimistic scenario was driven by a concern that events in the Balkans not be allowed to disrupt the President's reelection prospects in 1996. In what became the worst kept secret in Washington, virtually no one believed that U.S. troops would be withdrawn at the end of that first year. After the election, the Clinton administration announced that the troops would come home by late 1997 or early 1998.

When this too did not happen, the administration removed "arbitrary" time limits, arguing that we would withdraw from Bosnia only when certain "benchmarks" had been attained—primarily the establishment of the institutions and procedures laid out in the Dayton Accords. In short, the U.S. would be able to withdraw once the Clinton administration determined that Bosnia was "substantially" on its way to becoming that stable, multi-ethnic, democratic country that danced so hopefully in the imaginations of administration officials. The importance of the decision to move from time-based to goal-based measures for troop withdrawal was little appreciated at the time by the upper reaches of the Clinton administration, but it firmly set in place the inertial nature of the U.S. commitment because the goals became non-specific and elusive—the perfect inertial formula. When the occupation of Kosovo began in mid 1999, the administration had learned its lesson—no time limits were announced.

Disengagement

The Clinton administration left office early in 2000 on the back of inertial engagement. The "benchmarks" had long since been forgotten and the W. Bush administration came to office much less enamored of the Balkans than its predecessor had been. Thus, we enter the fourth and current phase, "disengagement." Even before September 11, 2001, the new Bush administration had not formulated a clear, coherent Balkan policy, and since then even less so, being pulled away mightily by the war on terrorism.

In a sense, we have come full cycle from a decade ago—being prepared to hand the issue off to the Europeans. In April 2002, Secretary of State Powell endorsed EU foreign and security chief Javier Solana's role in brokering a settlement—at least for now—of the issue of Serb-Montenegrin unity, something Washington would never have allowed the Europeans to do just a few short years ago.[10] Moreover, for the first time, neither the High Representatives in Bosnia nor Kosovo have American deputies—it is entirely a European show. At about the same time, the U.N. Security Council "unanimously adopted a resolution" establishing the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) for Bosnia and by endorsing its full operability by the start of January 2003, thereby relieving other international actors—including the U.S.—of police responsibility there. Perhaps even more important, the simple fact that the U.N. found it necessary to perpetuate an international police presence fully seven years after implementation of the Dayton Accords is significant evidence that previous efforts to establish a competent, multi-ethnic, indigenous Bosnian national police force have failed.[11] Then, in May 2002, the European Union granted Yugoslavia $160 million in credits before the U.S. released its heavily conditioned $115 million. Although the European action was done much to the chagrin of several U.S. policy makers and diplomats who are unhappy with the level of Yugoslav cooperation with the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, it signaled European acceptance of a more assertive role in the Balkans.

Finally, although troop levels in Bosnia and Kosovo are dropping for both the U.S. and Europe, the decline is especially precipitous for the U.S.[12] By the end of 2002, American troops will comprise no more than 15 percent of the total, whereas U.S. troops constituted fully a third of the international force when the Dayton Accords were implemented in late 1995, early 1996. Certainly, the absence of sustained violence explains some of the overall decline in forces, but the disproportionate reduction in U.S. troop levels is a clear indication that Washington's attention is elsewhere. The slogan "in together, out together," has less salience now than at any time during the past decade. We continue to cling to the words, but they are little more than a meaningless bumper sticker, a relic from another era—just the way we hold to other outdated rhetorical boilerplate.

What then has been the legacy of U.S. engagement over the past decade? By some estimates, since the Dayton Accords were launched, the U.S. has spent well in excess of $60 billion and has tied up important military and diplomatic resources. And, for all the money and attention we have been unable to get past what might be described as the basic "threshold" projects to the more difficult social, political, and economic problems. To be sure, the former warring parties no longer are fighting each other and the absence of sustained violence has allowed some refugees to return and a lot of buildings to be built. But, this is the easy part, what we might reasonably expect when the violence stops. Unfortunately, this is about all the Western powers can point to. And, as important as peace, moderate returns, and construction projects are, they are neither sufficient nor irreversible and it is no longer acceptable for Western officials to rest on their tarnished laurels and continue to point to these issues as great hallmarks of success. Virtually every other measure that has been an integral part of Western—especially U.S.—policy has gone largely unrealized. The departure and arrival speeches and occasional op-eds by High Representatives for both Bosnia and Kosovo are all strikingly similar. They are confined to glittering generalities and mention "remarkable progress," but point to the fact that there is still "much to do." At the same time, they caution that Western officials are not "miracle workers," but do not hesitate smugly to cover their own tenures with glory.[13] In truth, little of real importance has changed in Bosnia since the end of 1995 and in Kosovo since mid-1999; by some measures, conditions have gotten worse. Both places have settled into a depressing routine that Western policy makers cannot or will not end; they bear sad testament to "benchmarks" unmet and forgotten.

Nearly seven years after the war and the imposition of the Dayton Accords, Bosnia is still comprised essentially of three ethnically cleansed regions. Central government institutions remain weak and ineffective. Separate Serb, Croat, and Muslim militaries remain in place. The economy is in shambles. Indeed, there is almost no integrated "Bosnian economy" and what economy does exist is dominated overwhelmingly by international largesse, corruption, and crime. In what there is of a legitimate economy, official unemployment is about 40 percent and knowledgeable observers say it is even higher in the Republika Srpksa. It is only the "gray" and "black" economies that save Bosnia from complete economic collapse. Moreover, despite an upturn in refugee returns since 2000, not nearly enough refugees and internally displaced persons have gone home—especially to the so called "minority areas"—and most never will. Sadly, the Bosnian "brain drain" has more than offset the gains made in refugee return over the past two years.

Western-ordered and -run elections have been a disappointment because, despite claims to the contrary, they have provided no significant undermining of the power of the nationalist parties. Hopeful arguments that the elections held in November 2000 in Bosnia did indeed provide a breakthrough for non-nationalist parties is mostly wishful thinking. Rather, the outcome of those elections reinforced the durability of the nationalist parties and the ethnically cleansed character of the "country."[14] Efforts by substantial elements of the Bosnian Croat community to "withdraw" from Bosnia in March 2001 bear grim testimony to the failure of the Bosnian experiment. Even in the Muslim community, where the SDA lost some support, Muslim parties and nationalist leaders remain dominant. Moreover, a recent poll conducted by the National Democratic Institute suggests that ethnic separation remains firmly entrenched in Bosnia, a fact that could have important repercussions for elections in the fall of 2002.[15] More significantly, Bosnia's elections have not helped resolve the fundamental issues that face the "country": ethnic separation, political and social institutionalization, and the horrendous economy.

In response to this lack of "progress," a draconian overlord—the "international community's" High Representative—disenfranchises political parties, politicians, and public officials at will—all in the name of democracy—while still having to impose "progress" by "imperial fiat" on even the most mundane issues. Bosnian Muslim politician Haris Silajdzic lamented in mid-2000 that, after five years, Dayton's "vital civilian provisions remain unimplemented." And, about the same time, *The Economist* noted that despite a few flickers of hope, the best we can say is that there is "a sort of stagnant stability" in Bosnia, and even with that there is "no real sign of a state emerging." These observations remain depressingly accurate half way through 2002. A comment by Deputy Minister Rasim Kadic sums up Bosnia's condition: he noted that Bosnia has "a very decentralized government for a nonfunctioning country," an assessment that conflicts fundamentally with outgoing High Representative Wolfgang Petritsch's self-serving observation that Bosnia today "is a functioning country."[16]

In short, after nearly seven years of Dayton, Bosnia is not much closer to being the viable, stable, self-governing, multi-ethnic democracy envisioned by U.S. policy than it was the day the war ended. In what is arguably the most poignant testimony to the failure in Bosnia, was the announcement in April 2002, by Petritsch, of new constitutions for the Republika Srpska and the Muslim-Croat Federation. The new constitutions are supposed to level the playing field by making "Muslims, Serbs, and Croats alike politically equal throughout Bosnia… ."[17] The "need" for such a constitutional shift this late in the game speaks exquisitely to the failure of the Western powers to breakdown Bosnia's ethnic walls. Intended to cap off Petritsch's "reign" as High Representative with a major, positive breakthrough, this pronouncement instead confirms the fundamental truth that attitudes and basic political/social realities have changed very little.

Kosovo reflects the same level of failure. As in Bosnia, Western military forces "keep the lid" on any major, coordinated upheaval. But virtually every goal the Clinton administration announced before the bombing began in March 1999 has gone unrealized—and by all indications, will go unrealized for a very long time to come. Kosovo has become a violent, corrupt, deadly place. It, too, is not moving toward the kind of multi-ethnic, democratic, civil society promised by the Clinton administration. As with Bosnia's three enclaves, Kosovo also has a disastrous economy and has become essentially two ethnically cleansed enclaves. The few

Serbs who do remain are congregated mostly north of the Ibar River and in a few small communities around Pristina.

Moreover, the local elections held in October 2000 and the provincial elections held in November 2001 have taken Kosovo nowhere. They were hailed by international officials as victories for moderation, stability, and democracy. In fact, the elections in Kosovo—as in Bosnia—were meaningless because they confirm nothing and address none of the major problems facing Kosovo: independence, multi-ethnicity, violence, poverty, viable government structures, justice, etc.[18] Finally, the "political well" is so poisoned that the expectation that Kosovo will ever again be an autonomous province of Yugoslavia is so ludicrous a notion that not even the most ardent advocate of intervention believes it is any longer possible. As in Bosnia, the "international community" has hired an overseer to direct and coordinate "progress" in Kosovo. And, as in Bosnia, he moves about like a 19th century "serasker" (Ottoman military commander), attempting to bring light out of darkness and order out of chaos. But he has been no more successful than his counterpart in Bosnia and he, too, is little more than the guardian of the "inertial imperative," with little prospect that "protectorate" status will end anytime in the foreseeable future. In fact, Kosovo may be the closest place on earth to epitomizing what Thomas Hobbes had in mind when he described life in the state of nature as "solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short."[19]

"Unam Sanctum"[20]

How could this have happened? How is it possible that American policy in the Balkans could lead to such dismal ends? After all, the Balkans' move to center stage in 1994 received enormous high-level attention by the most important foreign and security policy makers in the Clinton administration. Large, well-financed, talented teams and task forces were "stood up" in several government agencies and departments to work on the issue. The self-proclaimed stakes were high. The Balkan issue, so the administration announced, was to become the shining, living testimony of U.S. leadership in the immediate post-Cold War world, the major test of the U.S. commitment to enlargement and engagement, the gleaming model of what the new NATO could accomplish in the new world, and a prime example of the U.S. commitment to the downtrodden. So, how could it have gone so wrong?

There are four interrelated reasons.

First, for the Clinton administration, the former Yugoslavia *itself* was never really the most important point. NATO "credibility" was. The distinction is fundamental because policies that were designed to justify NATO were not necessarily the same as those that would deal "successfully" with the issues in the former Yugoslavia (e.g. dealing with the "shards" of Yugoslavia, rather than with the country—and region—as a whole). As so many administration spokesmen have pointed out so many times, our "vital interest" was in preserving the Alliance and vindicating our leadership of it.

In February 1996, for example, the *Congressional Digest* observed that a primary motivation for the Clinton administration's engagement in Bosnia was because it constituted a

"test case of NATO's ability to deal with post-Cold War security threats." And, in July 1998, a State Department (Bureau of European Affairs) bulletin declared that our Bosnia policy was designed to reinforce "the viability of the NATO Alliance." Again, in April 1999, Secretary of State Albright noted that "Belgrade's actions (in Kosovo) constitute a critical test of NATO" and that "we are responding to a post-Cold War threat to Alliance interests and values."[21] The argument that without NATO, the Yugoslav conflict stood a good chance of spilling over into the rest of the Balkans and perhaps throughout Southeastern Europe became the ultimate justification. A former Clinton administration official sums up the point by noting that a "…factor contributing to the U.S. decision to engage in Bosnia was the need to defend NATO's credibility. For over three years, the issue of what to do in Bosnia divided the allies and strained transatlantic relations…. Over time, NATO's failure to end a brutal war on its doorstep had a profound impact on both the alliance's viability and the credibility of the United States."[22]

The former Yugoslavia became the indispensable vehicle to respond to the challenges; it became the tail that wagged the NATO dog, and, thereby, U.S. policy. The intricacies of NATO and NATO enlargement became much more important than the intricacies of the Balkans. The irony was that using the existence and proximity of NATO to justify intervention in the Balkans was less important than using the existence and proximity of the Balkans to justify NATO's existence. Rather than maintaining the Alliance to resolve security problems as we had during the Cold War, security problems now were sought to maintain the Alliance.

The end of the Cold War had called into question the need for NATO. For many, NATO had become form for form's sake. European scholars and officials, especially in France—but also in Germany, began to question the Alliance. Various voices called for Europe to be "more independent" in security matters. During the height of the debate over the Balkans, then French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, for example, noted that "the conflict in Bosnia has shown the necessity to move beyond NATO and American guarantees."[23]

Officials in the H.W. Bush and Clinton administrations reacted reflexively and with inertia. According to these officials, the existence and viability of NATO was not to be questioned—NATO in largely its existing form was assumed to a theological certainty. Some mild accommodation could be made—such as the use of Combined Joint Task Force and a modest European Reaction Force—with the Europeans. But, the NATO alliance was to remain the linchpin of American—and by extension European—foreign and security policy. Our post World War II security logic had been turned upside down. NATO was formed originally because it—as any rational alliance should—protected its members from a real, measurable threat. With the end of the Cold War, the inertial attachment to NATO meant that now the Alliance had to seek, or invent, threats to justify itself.

But, without a doubt, through all the questioning and agonizing over NATO's viability during the mid-1990s, there was never any danger that the Alliance would cease to exist. NATO had become too important as an article of faith and far too deeply institutionalized for that, especially from Washington's perspective. NATO could survive quite nicely from summit to summit, meeting to meeting, and speech to speech. What the incursion into the Balkans did was to help provide purpose for the Alliance and staunch the criticism, at least temporarily.

As the period of decisive engagement gained momentum, the NATO issue took on a greater sense of urgency. First, the battle with the U.N. over the "dual key" had to be won, but once that had been accomplished, the Alliance was free to draw blood, and draw blood it did—demonstrating to the world that it was "viable, capable," and above all, "current" for the security challenges of the post-Cold War world. Unfortunately, the Clinton administration's obsession with "proving NATO" foreclosed—and trumped—opportunities for negotiation, diplomacy, and creativity in the Balkans. This manifested itself especially in the imperative to bomb the Serbs in Bosnia in 1994-95, as well as the virtually unbridled determination in Washington to bomb the rump Yugoslavia in 1999. Ironically, NATO's military action in the Balkans, which was intended to demonstrate NATO's relevancy, has helped to widen the technology gap, and more importantly, the philosophical gap, between the U.S. and Europe and, thereby, further undermine NATO.

Second, as the "New World Order" faded in favor of "enlargement and engagement" the Clinton administration breathed new life into two residual, yet powerful, forces that have become boilerplate for the foreign policy part of our contemporary civic religion. The first of these is a reemphasis of Wilson's post-World War I moralism, so strong that it outstripped Wilson himself. If the Cold War was dominated by a sense of Morgenthau-like realism, it faded rapidly as the decisive phase of Balkan engagement began. The second force is a rebirth of American imperialism—not exactly the way it was practiced in the late 19th century of course, but still carrying with it the same sense of arrogance, superiority, bullying, and use of deadly force.

This contemporary marriage of moralism and imperialism rests on a foundation of cultural and ethical superiority that masks itself as "American leadership." This breeds intolerance of others, especially their faults, and hypocritically dismisses our own faults as irrelevant, nonexistent, or somehow "different." The new moralism rests on the assumption that the movement of social and political history must equate to "progress" (not simply change), while the new imperialism dictates that the U.S., and only the U.S., is the agent of that change. Consequently, each year it was in power, the Clinton administration produced a *National Security Strategy* in which every corner of the world, no matter how remote, was of "interest" to the U.S. In practice, as well as in theory, the Clinton administration promoted a "hegemonic" view of power that gave us the "right" to intervene whenever and wherever we wanted—for the good of mankind, of course, and as long as no American blood was spilled. Marked by a high degree of triumphalism, moral arrogance, and smugness, policy became inflexible, often arbitrary, issues were black and white, there was no gray area, no middle ground, and little room for compromise.

As with any religion, theological mantra justifies action. Questions of international policy are not just issues of difference between and among countries and societies; they become issues of right and wrong, of good versus evil. Leaders we disagree with are Hitler or Stalin reincarnated, states we do not like are rogues or pariahs,[24] and opponents are aggressors. By contrast, our motives are always pure, our actions always just. We are, therefore, the "indispensable nation," the "natural leaders of the world," "the shining city on the hill," the "organizing principal" of the world order, the country "whose leadership is essential to peace and prosperity and which exercises leadership for the greater good."[25] This language, used repeatedly by Clinton administration spokesmen, is strikingly similar to language used to justify

the American marriage between moralism and imperialism in the late 19th century. Fareed Zakaria summarizes that period:

> "The mood in the United States was utterly triumphant. McKinley asked Americans to thank the Lord for this magnificent victory (over Spain in 1898). Newspapers were filled with editorials, articles, and speeches extolling the power, virtue, and glory of the United States." … It was, noted President McKinley, 'manifest destiny."[26]

Those who disagreed with policy during the 1990s were castigated as "heretics" of one sort or another—usually described as "isolationists," "rejectionists," or "defeatists"—all overused and misused historical terms.

The Balkans became the first and most important example of this union between moralism and imperialism in the 1990s, with tragic consequences. Two examples used earlier illustrate the point: the Clinton administration's rejection of the Vance Owens Peace Plan undercut a potential end to the Bosnian war, virtually ensuring that conflict would continue; and, the bombing of Serbia in 1999 *before* large scale ethnic cleansing had taken place. In addition, the Clinton administration's determination from the very beginning that there must be a Bosnian state—however illogical to many participants in the region—and the equally powerful imperative that there could not be a "greater Serbia" or a "greater Croatia" perpetuated the crisis and added to the bloodshed.

Perhaps the most impressive example of the administration's smug approach to the region has been its position on war crimes. Certainly, nasty things were carried out during the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s—by all sides. But, indictments very often have been designed as political tools, used frequently to punish those who opposed U.S. policy or against officials we once found useful and later discarded. War crimes indictments became the ultimate moral vindication of "victor's justice."

The tribunal in The Hague relies heavily—sometimes almost exclusively—on "command authority" as a prosecution tool. So, if indictments have been issued against Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic, and Slobodan Milosevic essentially on that basis, why not indictments against the late Franjo Tudjman, and Gojko Susak, as well as Alija Izetbegovic? Also indicted have been Presidents Momcilo Krajisnik and Biljana Plavsic, who worked with Western—including U.S.—officials. Indeed, for a period of time, Plavsic was the darling of the U.S., with Clinton administration officials (especially Secretary of State Albright) campaigning for her for the post of President of Republika Serpska. Milosevic, Krajisnik and Plavsic are, or were, before the "bar of justice" in The Hague. Who they were, what they did, and with whom they associated before and during the war has never been a secret; the facts have always been public knowledge. If indeed "command authority" is a primary rationale for indictment, does this implicate those Western officials who worked with and supported Milosevic, Krajisnik and Plavsic?

Third, for the Clinton administration, holding democratic elections—as well as establishing free markets—became sort of a universal panacea for all the ills and ailments in the Balkans and elsewhere. As Thomas Schwarz and Kiron Skinner point out, "in the established church of foreign policy, no creed currently commands greater devotion than democratic

pacifism: democracies share a form of government that prevents war between them."[27] Schwarz and Kiron demonstrate quite convincingly that this was—and is—a false, naïve and dangerous assumption. As the logic goes, establish political parties—from the top down if necessary—hold elections, set up banks, shut down old, failing (socialist) enterprises, and the "democratic peace" is sure to follow in fairly short order. Mountains of research show us that democratic institutions—even more so, civil societies and market economies—are the products of specific forces and conditions. They need time, an educated middle class, expertise, and money and wealth. Most important, the intricacies of Western liberal democracy and market economies cannot be forced where they have never existed before. Note what Robert Dahl concludes from his research:

> "I have suggested yet again that certain underlying or background conditions…are favorable to the stability of democracy and where these conditions are weakly present or entirely absent democracy is unlikely to exist, or if it does, its existence is likely to be precarious….Essential conditions for democracy: 1. Control of military and police by elected officials. 2. Democratic beliefs and political culture. 3. No strong foreign control hostile to democracy. Favorable conditions for democracy: 4. A modern market economy and society. 5. Weak subcultural pluralism."[28]

Moreover, a specific, unique, historical context is necessary and has to be respected. There is no handbook of instructions that the U.S. can fax to the leaders of the countries of the former Yugoslavia on how to establish democratic, civil, market-oriented societies. After all, it took the West hundreds of years to get where we expect the former Yugoslavia to be in a very short time. As much as we try, the countries of the former Yugoslavia will never be clones of the U.S. or Western Europe and, when they are not, we arrogantly assume that the fault is with them, that they are somehow politically "retarded" or "child-like" and that more draconian force ultimately will make them see the light. But, what the people and leaders in the former Yugoslavia do is never good enough for the international overseers. They always fall short; they always need to be reminded what democratic "success" is. "Success," however, is always difficult to come by because "democracy" is a moving target. It is a useful moving target precisely because the international power brokers can use it to justify and legitimize their power and discredit and de-legitimize those who never quite "get it." As Schwarz and Kiron state:

> "…we can always save democratic pacifism from disconfirmation by demanding ever higher degrees of fulfillment, by raising the bar of democracy. But every time we do that we shrink the democratic category, and that makes the theory weaker, less stable, less interesting. If we raise the bar so high that there are no democracies or only one, we make the theory vacuous: there can be no disconfirming evidence, but for that very reason there also can be no confirming evidence."[29]

Certainly, the remnants of Yugoslavia can learn some things—even some shortcuts—from countries that have been through the process, but ultimately, they will develop in and through their own historical context. The Balkans have not experienced the same kind of development that Western Europe and the U.S. have experienced. Centuries of imperial domination by the Ottomans, the Austrians, and now us, dampened indigenous political and economic development. In pressing the peoples of the Balkans so hard for immediate results we

are telling them that they "may not develop the way we did, and that they may not take as long as we did."[30]

These are lessons the Clinton administration—and some Europeans—never learned. With the inception of the Dayton Accords, a Western-authored, multi-headed "democratic" system was laid over Bosnia, its entities, and ethnicities. Elections have been held regularly in Bosnia—and now in Kosovo—to try to justify the imposition of this top-down system. These elections often have much more to do with "feeding our own self-righteousness"[31] than they do with fostering the development of political and civil institutions and procedures on the ground. In essence, elections in Bosnia and Kosovo are held to provide self-validation and self-justification for the international officials who run them. As such, holding elections in the Balkans is in and of itself a measure of success. Holding frequent elections, *ipso facto*, is the mark of "democratic progress." What swirls around them is virtually irrelevant. If democratic and free market institutions are going to take root in the Balkans they will do so because people there share "an affinity of material interests …(and)…ideological views,"[32] not because they have yet another imperial power sitting on them. In other words, it is imperative that: "…authority is exercised on the grounds of some readily identifiable shared affinity. The identity of the political community derives from shared kinship, similar religious beliefs, or highly personalistic ties of mutual aid and submission."[33]

Finally, there has been a failure of leadership. Balkan policy in the Clinton administration was set by a small group of highly influential, but intellectually weak, historically uninformed, high level foreign policy officials who never understood or cared to understand either the nature and demands of the post-Cold War world or the intricacies of the former Yugoslavia. For example, comparing Serbia in the 1990s to Germany in the 1930s and Milosevic to Hitler is inaccurate, inappropriate, and sets a dangerous example. This was a leadership that rested on the "triumph" of winning the Cold War rather than on engaging in the very difficult psychological, emotional, and policy work of understanding what this increasingly differentiated world is becoming and how to cope with it. Rather than develop leadership skills that adapt creatively to this new reality, they practiced what Ronald Heifitz calls "maladaptive authority"—the kind of leadership that, "on some pernicious level," simply finds "the next feeding site."[34] It is the kind of leadership that is nurtured by clinging to the glories of the past and is unwilling to confront the "distress" of the current problems on their own terms. Consequently, this leadership finds refuge in incremental, technical, "reduce-the-pain" type solutions rather than in genuine creativity, imagination, and innovation.

Born of the giddiness that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, invoking "American leadership" in the contemporary world had become the primary foreign policy battle cry of all three post-Cold War administrations. "American leadership" became another indispensable "bumper sticker," especially for the Clinton administration's civic religion. The call to "leadership" became an increasingly common justification for U.S. action on the world stage, especially after the period of decisive engagement began in 1994. As the argument goes, the Clinton administration—and increasingly, the second Bush administration—act only for the highest moral reasons and usually, if the U.S. does not act, no one else will, and we will lose credibility. But the concept of leadership is never defined and seldom debated—it is just posited. The practical, hard policy implications really are irrelevant because dealing with leadership aside

from the ethereal, in the context of complicated, real life situations, is hardly the point. What is important for those who "lead" is that the call to leadership is self-gratifying, self-sustaining, and uncomplicated. In fact, for them there is no reason to deal with the nasty, complex, practical realities of a dangerous, jumbled world. The overweening display of power—what the late Senator J. William Fulbright years ago called the "Arrogance of Power"—is enough.

The exercise of this kind of American "leadership" has had devastating consequences for the former Yugoslavia. It is the kind of leadership that insisted not only that Bosnia had to become a state, but that it had to be a state in the modern Western sense of the term—ultimately, one with a centralized bureaucracy, a unified political system, Western-styled political parties and traditional Western sovereignty, complete with what Stephen Krasner identifies as domestic, interdependent, international legal, and Westphalian sovereignties.[35] None of this fits Balkan historical development very well. For example, Bosnia is at best a forced, artificial state, that satisfies the arrogance of American leadership more neatly than it does reality in the area or the context of its history. It is also the kind of "leadership" that, as noted above, was unwilling to confront the Serbs over Kosovo with creative diplomacy, but rather with a predisposed determination for armed conflict. The Clinton team never believed that the bombing would last more than a few days (neither did Milosevic), but when it dragged on, the administration's self-defined credibility became more important than a creative, equitable resolution of the issue.

Buridan's Ass[36]

What then are our choices? There are, I think, three basic options, but only two real choices.

We can simply walk away and disengage precipitously. This might have been an option if we had not been responsible for helping to create so many of the problems the former Yugoslavia now faces. As was true with the Ottomans, the Austrians, and every other great power that has "sat on" in the Balkans, we have left—and continue to leave—our own significant imprint. The history of our engagement in the region has so fundamentally helped shape the reality of life there that we have an obligation to repair some of the damage brought about by past mistakes. If this is so, we have two realistic choices and we should not linger in making up our minds.

First, as we reduce our profile in the Balkans, we can continue supporting the policies that have defined Western engagement since the mid-1990s. For Bosnia, this would mean trying to continue to "integrate" three ethnic communities that have shown over and over again that they do not want to live together in the same sovereign political entity. In other words, they do not share a genuine "affinity of mutual interests" or "ideological views." For Kosovo, this would mean continuing to officially acknowledge a Kosovo remaining within the rump Yugoslavia, while at the same time following a policy that ultimately leads to independence for the "province." Unless there is basic change, it is more likely that the issue of Kosovo's "final status" will continue to be "kicked down the road" for a very long time to come.

Consequently, continuing the present approach—even as a rear guard action—will mean political stalemate, accompanied by sporadic violence and nationalist disenchantment, more

meaningless elections, bickering in the new Kosovo "parliament," the presence of authoritarian international overlords, constant crime, the need for more international largesse, and possibly, unending military occupation. Maintaining the present approach also means continuing to deal with Bosnia and Kosovo as though they were unconnected to each other and the problems of the larger region of Southeastern Europe. This in turn, probably means that borders in several places throughout the area will not hold and that stability really will become an issue over time.

A second choice would lead to a fundamentally different approach—not only for the former Yugoslavia, but also for the rest of Southeastern Europe. It would have to begin with an admission by Washington that the current approach has been a failure and that an entirely new approach to political and economic reconstruction is required. The key to "resolution"—or more accurately, progress—on the "Balkan issue" is, in the first place, for the new Bush administration to abandon the incremental approach of its predecessor and assume a region-wide perspective. The issue is not only the internal construction of the separate parts of the former Yugoslavia, but their relationship to each other and to the Balkans as a whole. The first task would be to tackle political accommodation—the key to political accommodation is ethnic rationalization. It must be recognized that the fundamental issue is not about rights; it is about territory and the clash of national cultures. Economic solutions—including integration—would follow political accommodation.

It might be wise to begin with an international conference. This is not a new idea, but it is one that was never seriously considered by any administration in Washington because it would send a powerful signal to the rest of the world that its policy had failed. Interestingly, the current Bush administration, which is essentially "clean" on the Balkans, is in an excellent position to organize such a conference. If such a conference was held, it would be different from the Congress of Berlin in 1878 when the great powers carved up the Balkans for their own purposes. The great powers would be included this time too, but so would the major power wielders in the region. Initially, the conference could be chaired by the U.N. Secretary General, but it would need the strong support of the major powers, especially the U.S.

There would have to be some fairly stringent ground rules. First, the U.S., European powers, and participants have to agree that everything is on the table—that there are no "sacred cows." Second, the U.S. and its allies have to accept the fact that in this part of the world, for the most part, different ethnic communities do not want to live with each other, and that this does not constitute some uncontrollable security threat or deep moral flaw that we are duty-bound to stamp out of the Balkan mentality. Ethnic integration for its own sake accomplishes nothing and, as history shows, can be dangerous and destabilizing. Third, it also means admitting that, over the long term, current borders in the former Yugoslavia are neither sustainable nor sacrosanct and that we have to stop insisting that borders cannot change. Changing borders is a staple of U.S. and European history. Our arbitrary support of borders that reflect either Tito's priorities and/or a selective interpretation of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act have little relation to contemporary reality and is counterproductive. Fourth, we have to recognize that the "international community" would likely have to support voluntary population transfers—another staple of American and European history and past policy. Finally, such a conference would have to end the West's sanctimonious and hypocritical hectoring on war crimes and democracy. We would have to admit that the ICTY in The Hague has not worked and that perhaps the kind of

"truth commission" formula favored by Yugoslav President Kostunica would work better, thereby allowing the societies of the Balkans to take "ownership" of their own legal and human rights issues. By the same token, we should "allow" local development to proceed at its own pace, while providing "democratic examples," economic aid, and organizational support as needed and wanted.

Such a conference and implementation of its findings would be time consuming, painful, and there would be setbacks. In fact, it could be so painful that only the still worse alternative of continuing to pursue the current failed policies can justify it. But, the chances of success have been enhanced by the new governments in Croatia and Serbia and would be enhanced further by a change of direction in Washington. Such a conference might start by focusing on the following interrelated major questions:

The Serb Issue

The conference participants would have to agree that there is nothing "wrong" with most Serbs wanting to live together in a single state. Such an impulse is consistent with the histories of the U.S. and the European states that have hypocritically condemned the idea of a "greater" Serbia during the past decade.[37] Once the conference participants agreed to the principle, they would have to sort through the difficult issue of where and how the borders of a more inclusive Serbia would be drawn.

Three contentious issues would dominate this part of the conference proceedings. First, how much, if any, of the Republika Srpska (RS) would be included within a larger Serbia—if the people of the RS want that to happen (perhaps through a referendum?). Most likely, all of the eastern RS would be included; the western RS presents a more complicated issue. Second, how much, if any, of Kosovo would be restored *de facto* as well as *de jure* to Belgrade's control? Probably that part of Kosovo north of the Ibar River and a line generally from Kosovksa Mitrovica east to Podujevo should be included in Serbia. The rest of Kosovo would have to be negotiated, but if most of it falls under non-Serb "sovereignty"—which seems likely—special international guarantees have to be made and enforced to protect Serb historical and religious sites that are not under direct Serb control. The Belgrade Agreement, negotiated between the EU and Yugoslavia in March 2002, has laid the groundwork for a permanent settlement of the issues of Montenegro's fate. This agreement, which provides an excellent example of how the process should work, could be extended and finalized as part of a comprehensive conference.

The Croat Issue

Similarly, the proposed international conference would have to respect the will of Croatians who want to live in a sovereign state controlled by other Croatians. Potentially, this would include much—or perhaps all—of the Croat-occupied lands in what is now western Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is not clear how a referendum on this issue would fare in Croatia or western Bosnia, but the people on both sides of the border have the right to express their preferences and those preferences should be respected as much as possible. Probably, Croats in their portion of Herzegovina would be most willing to be included in Croatia proper, while the will of the people in the rest of western Bosnia and Herzegovina might be more problematic.

The Albanian and Macedonian Issues

One of the most difficult and potentially explosive issues the conference would have to consider is the future configuration of an Albanian state or states. Although there are no major disputes about the borders of the current Albania, some citizens in southern Albania might want to rethink their political communities. There likely would be considerable contention with respect to Albanians living in Kosovo and western Macedonia. Again, their preferences could be established by referendums which should heavily influence the conference. It would seem likely that the Kosovar Albanians south of the Ibar River and Kosovska Mitrovica would either opt for independence or inclusion within Albania proper. Opting for independence in the short term should not rule out inclusion in Albania later.

An even more difficult proposition is the fate of the Albanians living in Macedonia. Despite the Ohrid Agreement of 2001, the issues between Albanians and Macedonians are likely far from over. When this issue flares again, it could well call into question the viability of the Macedonian state itself, especially since Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia all have historic claims on portions of contemporary Macedonia. As wrenching as it would be, the question of whether Macedonia should exist as a separate political entity—even in a smaller form than it exists now—would have to be settled by the conference. But, even in a more truncated form, Macedonia could exist if it had sufficient international and regional security guarantees and was woven into a larger regional economic network. It is not absolutely necessary that every political configuration in the Balkans conform to the classical Western idea of a sovereign state.

The Muslim/Bosniac Issue

A similar issue faces the Muslim portion of contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina. What happens if the Serb and Croat lands opt for independence or union respectively with Serbia and Croatia? In fact, the Muslims ultimately might be better off. As it stands now, the two entities and three ethnic groups are not by any stretch of the imagination joined together in a viable, working state. As much as the Muslims want a larger Bosnia to work—so long as they can control it—it is not happening. As with a potentially truncated Macedonia, the key to a secure and viable Muslim political entity would be international and regional security guarantees and integration into regional economic arrangements.

Once these, and attendant political and security issues are dealt with, the conference should turn to regional economic issues. Hopefully, dealing with the political and security issues in a way that makes sense for the Balkans and not for the self-serving interests of Western officials will pave the way for economic reform and integration. This way, economic integration is less likely to be "doomed to fail in the face of local insecurity and political resistance,"[38] because many of the major issues of political insecurity will have been satisfied. As history shows, there is nothing "sacred" about the sequencing of democratic reform and institutionalization. Toward the end of their book on the transition to and consolidation of democracy, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan note that "…historically quite different sequences have in fact worked."[39] It is quite reasonable, then, to proceed with political reform before economic reform. Indeed, once the political and security reforms are accomplished, the borders can become as irrelevant as necessary to accommodate economic reform and integration.

Part of the European Union's Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, which was agreed to in June 1999, provides a useful starting point for economic construction. Unfortunately much of the Pact endorses the failed contemporary political formulas and thereby, reinforces exactly the kind of divisiveness and instability discussed above. But, the intent of the proposals in the "Working Table on Economic Reconstruction, Development, and Cooperation" is on the right track because it aims to stimulate "…economic cooperation in the region and between the region and the rest of Europe and the world; promotion of free trade areas; border crossing transport; energy supply and savings; deregulation and transparency; infrastructure; promotion of private business; and, environmental issues… ."[40]

Noble as these goals are, to date, they have been undermined not only by the political and security reality in the Balkans, but also by unwillingness and inability of the "great powers" to follow through effectively on the kind of massive economic reform suggested in this portion of the Pact. The unwillingness of the Western powers to fund Balkan development usually is categorized as "donor fatigue." In reality, it is a lack of political will and foresight.

In fact, even if the conference can agree on—and over time institute—workable political and security arrangements, if the "great powers" do not follow through with meaningful economic programs, the Balkans will remain poor, disconnected from the rest of Europe, and a source of chronic instability and conflict. In late 1999, Benn Steil and Susan Woodward offered some sound, practical recommendations as to how economic reform—and stabilization—might proceed. The region, they argue, needs to be part of the larger process of "Europeanization," which "…means extending the cross-border monetary, trade, and investment arrangements that already operate within the EU across Europe's southeastern periphery. Upon absorption into enlarged European arrangements, each state must also eliminate corresponding economic barriers with neighbors that have already entered the fold."[41]

To these recommendations I would add a major effort to improve vital transportation and communication networks, which currently do not serve the ends of economic integration as well as they could.

For all intents and purposes, the current Bush administration has decided to withdraw from the Balkans. It has rightly recognized that the U.S. has no abiding, vital interests there.[42] But, it faces a choice—the Bush administration can withdraw in one of two ways. It can withdraw and do nothing to correct the failures of the past and, thereby, reinforce the typical imperial pattern. Or, it can withdraw by breaking with failed policies and, thereby, leave a legacy of positive gain in the region. To do this, the new administration would have to commit to what Heifitz calls "adaptive" leadership:

> "Adapting to human challenges requires that we go beyond the requirements of simply surviving. In human societies, adaptive work consists of efforts to close the gap between reality and a host of values not restricted to survival. We perceive problems whenever circumstances do not conform to the way we think things ought to be. Thus, adaptive work involves not only the assessment of reality but also the clarification of values."[43]

If the new administration adapts, it will not be able to rely on the way we did things in the past or default to the security of comfortable institutions and policies that have outlived their usefulness. Adaptation really does depend on ending the inertia. To get there, this Bush administration first of all has to break the institutional and policy complexity that dominates current thinking. It has to cut that "Gordian knot" that is comprised of the U.S. the E.U., various European capitals, the U.N., NATO, and a whole host of other institutions that are more concerned with their own vested self-interests and organizational survival than they are with the still gut-wrenching issues in the Balkans.

Then, the administration has to jettison the limited-horizon, incremental, "reduce-the-pain" prescriptions that rely on *ad hoc*, disjointed, "quick fix" policies that ultimately do not work. We also need a fresh start with the Europeans, one that moves away from the teacher-student relationship, away from the "we bomb them, you fix them up" mentality, to a genuine diplomatic partnership for constructive engagement in the Balkans. Only then, the Balkans can become fundamentally the European enterprise it should be.

ENDNOTES

[1] This essay focuses primarily on Bosnia and Kosovo because they are the areas where U.S. military power and policy have been most directly applied and tested, although other Balkan examples are used as necessary.

[2] The Tito regime actually discussed the possibility of joining NATO in the mid-1950s and again in 1979, at the time the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. At the same time, Yugoslav strategic doctrine traditionally was directed at NATO more so than the Soviet Union. This dichotomy helped Tito play both sides.

[3] Sysiphus, the crafty King of Corinth, was infamous for his trickery. He was punished in Hades by repeatedly having to role a huge boulder up a steep hill, only to have it roll down again as soon as he reached the top.

[4] Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 222.

[5] Certainly, the Clinton administration—and the Dayton Accords—recognized that Croatia and Serbia had equities in Bosnia. But those equities were always subservient to the fact that Bosnia had to be its own "sovereign" state.

[6] "Train and Equip," which was a follow-on to the abandoned "lift and strike" policy, became operational early in 1996.

[7] According to a recent Croatian survey (14 June 2002) by the Institute of War and Peace, the Serbs dropped from about 12 percent of the population before the war to about 4 percent today.

[8] Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War* (New York: Random House, 1998), 62-63.

[9] Ibid., 73.

[10] U.S. State Department press briefing, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2002/8777.htm, (14 March 2002).

[11] United States Mission to the European Union, http://www.useu.be/Categories/GlobalAffairs/Mara0502UNERBosniaPoliceMission, (5 March 2002).

[12] http://www.nato.int, (12 May 2002).

[13] See editorials by Paddy Ashdown, *The New York Times* (2 July 2001) and Wolfgang Petritsch, *The Washington Post* (2 July 2002); Farewell Address to the Citizens of Bosnia Herzegovina by the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, http://www.ohr.int/ohr-dept/pressso/presssp/default.asp?content_id=8341, (23 May 2002); Farewell Press Conference by the High Representative, Wolfgang Petritsch, http://www.ohr.int/ohr-dept/presso/preeb/default.asp?content_id=8381, (24 May 2002).

[14] There are three interrelated problems in describing these elections as a major defeat for the "nationalists" and a breakthrough for the "moderates." First, most "moderates" are closer on the majority of issues to "nationalists" of their own ethnicity than they are to "moderates" of other ethnic groups. Second, claiming that the "nationalist parties" got less the 50 percent of the vote for the first time since the war depends on the highly arbitrary classification of some politicians as "moderates" and others as "extremists"—designations that change depending on who does the designating. Third, the collapse of the SDA-led coalition after the 1998 election and the merger of the SDP with the Social Democrats-BiH, combined with the fact that about 90,000 fewer people voted in 2000 than in 1998, make it extremely risky to compare the election of 2000 with previous elections and posit a "great victory" for the "moderates."

[15] Pre-Election Poll: Petrifaction of Ethnic Divisions?, *AIM Press* (2 May 2002), http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/trae/archiv/data/200205/20502-002trae-sar.htm.

[16] See the *Financial Times* (16 May 2002) for Kadic's statement and *The Washington Post*, Op-ed section of 2 July 2002, for Petritsch's comment.

[17] "Balkan Report" *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, http://www.rferl.org/balkan-report/2002/04/17-260402.html, (26 April 2002).

[18] Indeed, when the Kosovo "government," in the spring of 2002, tried to exercise real power on the fundamental issue of borders between Kosovo and Macedonia, it was summarily slapped down by the High Representative. Kosovo's politicians, as is true for those in Bosnia, remain basically irrelevant.

[19] See the reports issued regularly for Bosnia and Kosovo by the OSCE and various components of the U.N. for in depth discussions of the conditions mentioned briefly in this essay. These can be accessed on the OSCE web site at http://www.osce.org.

[20] In November 1302, Pope Boniface VIII, in a dispute with Philip the Fair of France, issued this Bull. In an atmosphere of triumphal exclusivity, the Pope said that: "there is only one holy Catholic and apostolic church, outside of which there is neither salvation nor remission of sins."

[21] See *The Congressional Digest*, 75(2), (February 1996): 33; "Summary of U.S. Government Policy on Bosnia," released by the Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs, U.S. Department of State (July 16, 1998); Press Briefing on the NATO Summit and Kosovo, The White House, Washington, D.C. (April 20, 1999); Statement by Secretary of State Albright before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, D.C. (April 20, 1999).

[22] Ivo Daalder, *Getting to Dayton—The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2000), 164.

[23] *The New York Times* (November 12, 1994).

[24] The announcement in July 2000 that the U.S. government had dropped the phrase "rogue states" in favor of "states of concern" does nothing to diminish the underlying point.

[25] From a speech given by Samuel Berger, entitled "American Power: Hegemony, Isolation, or Engagement," delivered to the Council on Foreign Relations (October 21, 1999). In addition to Berger's speech, for examples of the triumphalist, imperial, and moralist approach to foreign policy and characterizations of those who disagree also see: James Steinberg, "A Perfect Polemic," *Foreign Affairs*, 78(6), (November/December 1999): 128-133; Samuel Berger, "A Foreign Policy for the Global Age," *Foreign Affairs*, 79(6), (November/December 2000).

[26] Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 159, 160.

[27] Thomas Schwarz and Kiron K. Skinner, "The Myth of the Democratic Peace," *Orbis*, 46(1), (Winter 2001): 159.

[28] Robert A. Dahl, *On Democracy* (New Haven: Tale University Press, 1998/2000), 146-147.

[29] Schwarz and Skinner, 161.

[30] Comment by Dr. David B. Kanin, Senior Balkan Analyst at CIA, as part of a presentation on the future of the Balkans at a conference in December 2000, Rosslyn, VA.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994) 105.

[33] Ibid., 67.

[34] Ronald A. Heifitz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, Harvard University, 1994), 69.

[35] Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty—Organized Hypocrisy*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 9-25.

[36] Jean Buridan, the 14th century philosopher, logician, and scientist, who posits the allegory of an ass (that actually turns out to be a dog) that is placed equidistant between two bowls of food. They are both so attractive that the ass/dog cannot chose, so he starves to death in indecision.

[37] For example, see the address by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot to the Aspen Institute, Aspen CO (August 24, 1999).

[38] Benn Steil and Susan Woodward, "A European 'New Deal' for the Balkans," *Foreign Affairs*, 78(6), (November/December 1999): 97.

[39] Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 435.

[40] Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, Cologne (10 June 1999). To access the document that was adopted go to http://www.auswaertiges-amt.government.de/_6archiv/inf-kos/hintergr/stabpact.htm.

[41] Steil and Woodward, 97, 98.

[42] NATO will remain an issue for a while, but will fade as the U.S. continues to be distracted elsewhere. Terrorism in the Balkans, because of its connections with terrorism elsewhere in the world, will be a legitimate and important issue for some time to come.

[43] Heifitz, 31.