

by Srdja Trifkovic

Kosovo Crisis Becomes Global

The unilateral declaration of independence by the Albanian leadership in Kosovo on February 17, and the subsequent recognition of the new entity by the United States and most E.U. countries, crowned a decade and a half of iniquitous U.S. policy in the former Yugoslavia. By recognizing "Kosova," the White House has made a great leap into the unknown—one that is comparable to Austria's July 1914 ultimatum to Serbia. The result will be equally devastating.

Aiding and abetting Muslim designs in the Balkans, in the hope that this will earn us some credit in the Islamic world, has been a major goal of U.S. policy in the region since at least 1992. The failure of this policy to yield any dividends has only prompted its architects to redouble their efforts, as Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns proved on February 18, a day after Kosovo declared independence. Noting early recognitions of Kosovo by Turkey and Afghanistan and "a very strong and supportive comment by the Organization of the Islamic Conference," he reminded his audience that

Kosovo is going to be a vastly majority Muslim state, given the fact that 92 to 94 percent of their population is Muslim. And we think it is a very positive step that this Muslim state, Muslim majority state, has been created today. It's a stable—we think it's going to be a stable state.

If Washington thinks it "a very positive step" for a "vastly Muslim state" to be created on European soil that has been ethnically cleansed of non-Muslims and is filled with the smoldering ruins of Christian churches and monasteries, it stands to reason that Washington will be equally supportive of an independent Sanjak that would connect Kosovo with Bosnia, or of any putative Islamistan from west-

ern Macedonia to southern Bulgaria to the northern Caucasus.

It is worth noting that the Organization of the Islamic Conference statement, to which the State Department referred so approvingly, declared that "There is no doubt that the independence of Kosovo will be an asset to the Muslim world and further enhance the joint Islamic action."

Far from providing a model of pro-Western "Islam Lite," Kosovo is already the breeding ground for hard-line Islamists who have built 300 mosques during the past nine years of NATO occupation, mostly with Saudi money. Kosovo is visibly morphing from part of Europe into part of the Middle East. In the end, as former ambassador John Bolton predicts, "Kosovo will be a weak state susceptible to radical Islamist influence from outside the region . . . a potential gate for radicalism to enter Europe," and a stepping stone toward an anti-Christian, anti-American "Eurabia."

Instead of enhancing regional stability, this will encourage two distinct but interconnected trends: Greater Albanian aspirations toward Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece, and rump-Serbia; and pan-Islamic agitation for the completion of the Green Corridor—an Islamic belt anchored in Asia Minor and extending across the Balkans into the heart of Central Europe.

"[W]e don't see the independence of Kosovo as some kind of precedent," Burns reiterated on February 18, but ethno-religious separatists around the world were quick to challenge his assertion. Pandora's box is wide open, and Israel may be among the first to feel the consequences.

The Palestinians "should follow Kosovo's example and unilaterally declare independence" if peace talks with Israel fail, Yasser Abed Rabbo, a top aide to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas declared on February 20. "Kosovo is not better



than Palestine," he added. If the United States and the majority of the European Union "have embraced the independence of Kosovo, why shouldn't this happen with Palestine as well?"

Dr. Rice, Mr. Burns, *et al.* would reply "because we say so," but Israeli analysts are not impressed. Col. Shaul Shay, an expert on Islam at the Begin-Sadat Center at Bar-Ilan, notes that, when the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina ended, terrorist infrastructures remained there and served as a base for Islamic terror activities in Kosovo:

Today, the Balkans serve as a forefront on European soil for Islamic terror organizations, which exploit this area to promote their activities in Western Europe, and other focal points worldwide . . . Islamic penetration into Europe through the Balkans is one of the main achievements of Islam in the twentieth century.

The primary danger, as some Israelis see it, is that the U.S. recognition of Kosovo endorses the principle that a solution to an intractable political and territorial quarrel can and should be imposed by outside countries, even if one of the parties rejects the proposed solution as contrary to its vital national interests. While Israel's future accommodation of Palestinian aspirations remains an open question, the notion of a solution imposed from outside is anathema. Applied to Israel, that principle might affect not just the West Bank but even Galilee and the Negev, where Arabs have, or

may eventually acquire, local majorities. Israel's Muslim population is just above 20 percent, roughly the same as Serbia's with Kosovo included. If Albanian Muslims can demand separation from Serbia today, citing alleged past mistreatment, Israel's Arabs will do the same tomorrow.

Alarm bells are ringing in India, too. Five days after my colleagues and I enjoyed his hospitality at the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi, of which he is director, Bharat Karnad wrote in the *Wall Street Journal India* (February 19) that "one can never tell when the self-serving American approach against Serbia . . . will be transferred to Kashmir."

Kosovo can easily become the precedent for breaking up other countries that have inherent diversities ending in, say, a Muslim Mindanao separated from the Christian Philippines, the Muslim state of Patani in the southern part of Buddhist Thailand, etc. Or indeed Kashmir, if not as part of Pakistan, then conjoined to the Pakistani portion of Kashmir, as an independent state . . . firmly in Washington's geostrategic grasp.

The principle on which Kosovo is founded is antithetical to an inclusive democracy such as India, he concludes:

Messrs Thaci, Cheku & Co. are rogues leading a pariah state they have obtained by the foulest means. Kosovo is already emerging as the "crime central" and the Al Qaeda HQ in Europe, a haven for rabid Islamists, international terrorists, drug peddlers and gun-runners. . . . In the coming years, Nato members will have plenty to curse the US for, even as the Americans decamp leaving, as they always do, a mess for others to clean up.

The mess is spreading far and wide. China warned the United States that recognition of Kosovo would "consti-

tute a serious challenge to the fundamental principles of international law." Taiwan's government welcomed the move, drawing a quick rebuke from China and causing fresh tension between Beijing and Washington.

South Ossetia and Abkhazia, pro-Russian breakaway provinces of NATO candidate Georgia, cited Kosovo as strengthening their case for recognition. South Ossetian leader Eduard Kokoity said the two territories had "more political, legal and historical grounds for claiming sovereignty" than Kosovo does.

The government of Transdnistria, a Russian-speaking self-governing region within the borders of Moldova, hailed Kosovo as "a new model for conflict settlement" leading to the international endorsement of Transdnistria's 17 years of *de facto* independence. In reply, Moldova—which normally counts on U.S. support in resisting separatist demands—declared Kosovo's action illegal.

Another would-be ally in the former Soviet Union, Muslim Azerbaijan, flatly rejected Kosovo's independence announcement, while the foreign minister of the (Christian Armenian) Nagorno-Karabakh administration said he was confident Kosovo's recognition would strengthen his people's position.

Spain also deemed Kosovo's declaration illegal, and as of this writing, the European Union is far from united, with at least a dozen member-countries withholding recognition for reasons of principle as well as self-interest.

The bad news is that, contrary to Mr. Burns' expectation of "a period of stability," U.S. policy has destabilized the Balkans and divided the world. The good news is that the polarization will finally debunk the myth of the "international community." If roughly half of all sovereign states, accounting for more than two thirds of the world's population, are not on board with the United States on this issue, the result will be a long-overdue and welcome loss of face and credibility by the global-hegemonist "foreign-policy community" inside the Beltway.

The flames in the U.S. embassy in Belgrade were easy to put out, but Serbian anger is deep, and the people's resentment of America, abiding. President Boris Tadic's narrow victory (51 percent) in the second round of the presidential election on February 3 was entirely the fruit of his claim that, as a pro-Western reformist, he could obtain less brutal treatment for Serbia from Brussels and Washington than his "nationalist" opponent. But Mr. Burns misinterpreted his victory as a sign that the Serbs were throwing in the towel. Instead, Tadic's victory was the last chance for the United States and the European Union to stop the train wreck. The Serbs' anger against both will now translate into a well-deserved electoral demise for Tadic's Democratic Party at the next parliamentary election, which is imminent.

Kosovo will linger on for a few years—an expensive albatross hung about the necks of American and European taxpayers, who will spend a few billion on it per year. It will continue developing, not as a functional economy but as a black hole of criminality and terrorism. The ever-rising and constantly unfulfilled expectations of its unemployable multitudes will eventually turn the monster against its maker. There will be many Fort Dixes to come, over there and at home.

In the end, the U.S.-led Kosovo policy will prove to be a blessing in disguise for Serbia. Only by not joining the European Union or NATO can she preserve her identity, her traditions, and her faith. Only by forging a strong alliance with a resurgent and still recognizably European Russia will Serbia avoid the clutches of a postmodern American Empire devoid of a single redeeming feature.

God works in mysterious ways. Kosovo remained Serbian during five long centuries of Ottoman darkness, to be liberated in 1912. It is no less Serbian now, the ugly farce in Pristina notwithstanding. It will be tangibly Serbian again, when the current experiment in Benevolent Global Hegemony collapses and when the very names of its current leaders are consigned to the recycle bin of history. ☞

THE OLD REPUBLIC

Lincoln, Diplomacy, and War

by Joseph E. Fallon

In the tumultuous six months between his election in November 1860 and the outbreak of the Civil War in April 1861, Abraham Lincoln rejected all diplomatic efforts to resolve the deepening crisis peacefully. In the political dispute with the newly constituted, but militarily weak, Confederate States of America, there would be no meaningful negotiations. No compromise would be offered or accepted. Instead, tensions between the two governments would be heightened, and the passions of the American public inflamed, by Lincoln's provocative and deceptive rhetoric.

Lincoln's words were a reflection of his unflagging desire to wage total war on the South. It was to be a war that would last until the enemy agreed to unconditional surrender and U.S. public officials and private contractors had made a financial killing. In 1878, Henry S. Olcott, special investigator for the U.S. War and Navy Departments, estimated "at least twenty, if not twenty-five, percent of the entire expenditures of the government during the Rebellion, were tainted with fraud." We could call this the Lincoln principle of diplomacy—a principle that was followed by the Clinton administration in Bosnia and the George W. Bush administration in Iraq.

Lincoln's ideological view of politics equated progress and patriotism with support for a high protective tariff, internal improvements, and a national bank. Capturing just 39 percent of the popular vote, Lincoln considered his election a democratic mandate to pursue his agenda. A rejection of his economic program by the political leadership of the South, therefore, would

be a rejection of democracy. Lincoln's program depended on the tariff, and the tariff depended on the South remaining in the Union, as did the survival of the Republican Party. For that reason, Lincoln initially pledged his support for the Corwin Resolution, which had been adopted in the waning days of the Buchanan administration. This was the original Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. It made the institution of slavery perpetual in the slave states. It had been passed by the House and the Senate, and signed by President Buchanan, but it was never ratified, because, by then, many Southern states had decided to secede. The fact that the South withdrew from the Union despite the passage of this amendment indicated other issues besides slavery motivated their secession. Foremost was the South's embrace of free trade, the antithesis of Lincoln's economic agenda.

In an attempt to prevent the impending disunion, there was a flurry of activity to reach a compromise by the Senate Committee of Thirteen and House Committee of Thirty-Three. The Crittenden resolutions and amendments were introduced to resolve the status of the territories. A Peace Convention was convened attended by 21 states, a "body [which] . . . not only [was] respectable in the standing and talents of its members, but comprised many names highest in leadership."

As his secretaries John G. Nicolay and John Hay wrote in *Abraham Lincoln: A History*,

It is evident that Lincoln was at this time not without serious apprehensions that the threats and movements of secession might induce some of the less sturdy Republicans to appeals for concession . . .

In letters written between December 13, 1860, and February 4, 1861, Lincoln anxiously lobbied Republi-

cans to reject all compromise:

Prevent as far as possible, any of our friends from demoralizing themselves, and our cause, by entertaining propositions for compromise of any sort, on slavery extension. There is no possible compromise upon it, but which puts us under again, and leaves all our work to do over again.

Indeed, he continued,

Whether it be a Mo. line, or Eli Thayer's Pop. Sov. it is all the same. Let either be done, & immediately filibustering and extending slavery recommences. On that point hold firm, as with a chain of steel.

In a letter to Secretary of State William Seward, he wrote:

[A]ny trick by which the nation is to acquire territory, and then allow some local authority to spread slavery over it, is as obnoxious as any other. I take it that to effect some such result as this, and to put us again on the high-road to a slave empire is the object of all these proposed compromises. I am against it.

In that same letter, he declared:

On the 21st. ult. Hon. W. Kellogg, a Republican M.C of this state whom you probably know, was here, in a good deal of anxiety, seeking to ascertain to what extent I would be consenting for our friends to go in the way of compromise . . . I am for no compromise which assists or permits the extension of the institution on soil owned by the nation.

Lincoln was successful in his efforts to rein in his fellow Republi-