Chapter 1: On Military Intervention in Bosnia

Dr Lynne Jones and Michael Randle debated the question of military intervention in Bosnia in the pages of the US quarterly *Peace & Democracy News* (Summer 1993, Vol VII No1, and Summer 1994, Vol VIII, No 1 respectively). This was part of a wider debate in the journal involving a number of contributors. The Working Group discussed the initial exchange between Lynne and Michael at a meeting on 16 March 1994 while the Nonviolent Action Research Project was still in the process of formation. This was prior to the publication of Michael's article, and of a further reply from Lynne. This chapter contains Lynne's original article, Michael's reply, circulated to the group in draft form, and the further response from Lynne (which the group had not seen at the time of the meeting). Finally there is an article by Michael Randle which appeared originally in the French journal *Alternatives Nonviolentes*, Issue No 100, Autumn 1996, and subsequently in an expanded version in *New Routes*, Vol 2, No 1, 1997, the journal of the Life and Peace Institute in Sweden, with further reflections on the implications of the wars in the Gulf and Bosnia.

Present at the meeting were Christina Arber, Howard Clark, Bob Overy, Andrew Rigby, Michael Randle.

Text of the article by Dr Lynne Jones

The Moral Failure of the Peace Movement

> 'It is much easier to see a thing from the point of view of abstract principle than from that of concrete responsibility.' - Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, January I943

What to do about Bosnia? For the first time in my life I am faced with a horrifying war that is neither historically nor geographically distant and for which there appears to be no clear or obvious solution. In 1982 I helped to organize a demonstration of 30,000 women outside Greenham Common Airbase. And like many of the others in that circle of hope and empowerment, I became quite skilled at explaining the miseries of a post-nuclear world: the breakdown of law and order, unchecked epidemics, no water, no electricity, operations without anaesthetic, starvation, and freezing cold. I argued in court that such weapons were genocidal and their use would be a war crime.

Yet ten years later the image of encirclement is no longer associated in my mind with that joyous and life-affirming group of women but with heavy artillery that mercilessly bombards a civilian population to death, and I have to recognize that as a peace movement we failed. Not just because nuclear weapons continue to exist, proliferate, and endanger us all, but because in anticipating and working to prevent the imagined holocaust of the third world war, we did nothing to prevent a more limited holocaust on our doorstep.

Perhaps it is not surprising that some sections of the movement respond with silence. In the winter of 1992 the publication of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) had not one word on the Balkans, not even its humanitarian aspects. And I myself have written draft after draft of this piece and thrown them away in despair. Yet if we say nothing because we feel powerless and confused, then we appear to consent to what is happening at the present moment. I do not consent. What follows therefore is an attempt to share my own uncertainties, questions, and ideas with others struggling with this issue.

It is quite clear that a terrible crime is being committed under our noses. If we argue, at this juncture, against military intervention or against lifting the arms embargo imposed on the Bosnian government and its supporters, we have a moral responsibility to come up with alternatives to stop the torture, killings, mass rape, and bombardment. I long to hear what these are, for I can think of none myself, and what I have read so far offers little comfort.

First, there are friends who, in what must be quite unique concordance with the British government, view this as a 'civil war', based on long-standing ethnic animosities, in which all parties are equally guilty and about which nothing can be done, except to offer hot tea, bandages, and 'talks'. There is no doubt that all sides are committing atrocities. But there is also no doubt that the Serbs, in their conflict with most other ethnic groups in the region, are the main aggressor and responsible for the worst crimes. In its 1992 report War Crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Helsinki Watch argues that the failure to specify which parties are responsible for particular abuses has diminished the impact of any denunciations. So I try to puzzle out the attachment to this position. One reason is that if everyone is seen as equally awful, there are no victims in need of protection. More significantly for the peace movement, there is the desire to appear as a neutral peacemaker, fearful that criticism of abuses and acknowledgement of an asymmetry of power will sever links essential for dialogue and peacemaking. I have been here before, when some sections of the peace movement argued that one could not criticize the Soviet bloc countries for human rights abuses because they would stop working with us to get rid of nuclear weapons. (They did not, and they shifted on the human rights issue as well.) My own view is that silence facilitates a dialogue about nothing while the abuses continue with impunity, whereas the real understanding that is the basis of a just peace requires the acknowledgement of uncomfortable truths.

Different Logic

War Resisters' International (WRI) and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) argued, in a June 1992 statement against military intervention in Bosnia, that 'any use of military force introduces a different logic' with the subsequent risk of escalation and creates a dangerous precedent for the solution of conflict in the New World Order. Yet surely a military logic of a very vicious kind has already been introduced, it is already escalating, and the precedent set by allowing the violence to continue and profit unchecked is equally dangerous. They recommended nonviolent social defence, modestly refraining from specifying what such tactics should be. Yet even prominent theoreticians in the field acknowledge the paucity of nonviolent tactics in the face of genocide and mass deportations. The normal 'weapons' of non-cooperation have no meaning in dealing with a group that has no interest in your cooperation but is bent upon your destruction. Escape is, of course, one possibility, but in the siege of Bosnian cities even that option is closed. Interestingly, when in the winter of 1993 the city Sarajevo adopted the nonviolent tactic of an 'aid boycott' - an imaginative adaptation of the hunger strike - in order to expose the hypocrisy of Western relief efforts and to push for effective humanitarian assistance to the besieged in Eastern Bosnia, they were roundly condemned.

WRI and IFOR then list a variety of nonviolent interventions to extend and develop the peace process that fail to address the substantial issue of how to protect a civilian population from slaughter while the 'peace process' continues, or how to enforce its implementation once agreement is reached. My own view of the peace process in its current form is that the 'ethnic' solution being imposed on Bosnia will be a source of endless war and has already provided the impetus and justification for another horrifying round of 'ethnic cleansing', by both Serbs

and Croats. Edward Thompson's approach in the Helsinki Citizens Assembly (HCA) Autumn 1992 newsletter is to blame German imperial strategy for starting the war, arming the Bosnians and Croats, and undermining Lord Carrington's 'talks'. This does not explain why war was raging in Croatia for six months prior to recognition, nor does his complaint 'that it is always easy to call for action when one does not have to act oneself or be acted against' explain why we should ignore the calls for help from those who are indeed being acted against.' It is true that even limited intervention may result in 'flattened villages and civilian casualties', but does this mean that the current flattening and civilian losses should be allowed to continue? Like WRI, he does not say.

The HCA municipal peace conference in Macedonia last November did acknowledge that the HCA demand for the closure of Bosnia's borders and the creation of 'protected zones' requires an effective cease-fire that 'can only be achieved if real political and military pressure be exercised against ALL warring parties in the conflict'. Putting aside the questionable morality and legality of disarming a sovereign government, the HCA does not specify the form such pressure should take. Given the current ineffectiveness of UN 'supervision and control' of heavy weapons, one imagines that these particular goals would require a sizeable ground force. Jeanette Buirski, coordinator of British END (European Nuclear Disarmament) and European Dialogue, writing recently in the *New Statesman*, argues against the temptation to lift the arms embargo because 'this would be an abnegation of responsibility for this conflict as a European problem [...] the European peace movement [is] right to be ashamed of fascism and genocide flourishing and being rewarded in our midst.' However her only solution to what she suddenly redefines as merely 'ethnic conflict' is to call for the drawing up of 'a new pan-European Democratic Charter,' initiating this process with the next Helsinki Citizens Assembly meeting in Ankara in December 1993! I am afraid that most Bosnian Muslims will not be able to participate in this exciting project because if something more effective than the writing of yet another document is not done before December, most of them will be dead or exiled and without means to travel anywhere at all.

In most of the discussions in which I have been engaged, two issues have become entangled. One is about whether it is right to intervene in another country's affairs, the other about the use of force in any circumstances. It is worth disentangling these and considering them separately.

Knee-jerk Anti-interventionism

Some sections of the peace movement have a knee-jerk 'anti-intervention' position that is based on a long experience of observing the continuing catastrophic consequences of superpower involvement in the Third World: we point to Vietnam, Central America, Afghanistan, the Middle East and rightly reject the hypocrisy of wrapping strategic and economic interests in the shroud of a bogus concern for human rights. The paradox is that, preoccupied as we were by the stereotype of this kind of large-scale military intervention, we failed to challenge those political interventions that helped create this mess in the first place. These include: the West's unequivocal support for the maintenance of an integrated Yugoslavia at any price and its failure to support the confederal solution suggested by Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Macedonia; the West's refusal to push for democratization or human rights, thus allowing Milosevic to act with impunity against the Kosovars; the West's continued dealings with the 'federal' government of Yugoslavia as if it represented the whole federation long after all federal institutions had collapsed, and it was clear that it only represented Belgrade; its refusal to impose an oil embargo in time to prevent the worst ravages of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) in Croatia, while insisting on an arms embargo that gives a

definite advantage to the aggressor; its refusal to finance Bosnian President Izetbegovic's plan, presented to the EC peace conference last year, for the peaceful transformation of the JNA in Bosnia from conscript army to professional force, which would have given the army an assured future in that republic and less reason to ally itself with Serbian terrorism; the insistence on the fatal proposal for cantonization, an imposed 'ethnic' solution to Bosnia's problems that actually provided the blueprint for the partition that Karadjic and Boban are now carrying out by force; refusal to recognize Macedonia under its chosen name, thus destabilizing its government and substantially increasing the risk of war in that region. (You will see that I list deliberate inaction as an intervention, for to my mind it is an intervention in favour of the status quo.)

A second paradox is that it is mostly the so-called 'internationalists' who are most opposed to intervention. Perhaps this is because the actions suggested appear to be on behalf of small nation-states, increasingly an anathema to those who regard 'integration' as a virtue in itself, who fail to see the dangers of hegemonic empire or to realize that fascism is not automatically associated with nation building. Internationalism, to my mind, means the acceptance of nation-states. I do not see how there can be constructive relations between nations without them. I have no attachment to the nation as a virtue in itself, but as I argued in the Winter 1992-93 *Peace & Democracy News*, people need some form of reasonably-sized political community in which to function and the nation-state is the best we have at the moment. But internationalism also means upholding those values that transcend national boundaries such as the right to life, political and civil liberties, and a safe environment. This must mean that nations have the right to intervene in each others' affairs when such rights are transgressed.

The irony is that when a small nation state actually called for assistance in protecting those rights and the majority of its population, the West's response was to make the worst intervention to date. This was to delegitimize its multi-ethnic government in the eyes of its people by treating it on an equal footing with the unelected representatives of part of the Serb and Croat communities. Having reduced the Bosnian government to a 'warring faction', some now propose its complete abolition through the imposition of a protectorate by force. The West is very busy intervening to create a stateless people and its own worst nightmare: Muslim fundamentalism in the heart of Europe. Internationalism also requires a sound basis in a universally respected body of international law. This must mean that if we recognize a state on one day, we cannot arbitrarily abolish it the next, however problematic it is. Otherwise we will destroy the trust and legitimacy that is the basis of any international order at all. The fact is that we live in a complex and interdependent global community. Everything we do - the food we choose to eat, the clothes we wear, the form of transport we use - impacts on other nations and constitutes an intervention of sorts; sometimes a fatal one. Isolation from each other's problems is no longer an option. So the question is not intervention, yes or no, but what kind, how, and when.

This brings me to the vexed question for pacifists: should military force be used? The fundamental principle at stake is that human lives are of equal value and that therefore one life cannot be taken to save another. This means one is pushed to develop nonviolent means to protect life and human dignity when they are threatened. However, so far we have failed to come up with a nonviolent strategy to prevent the extermination of a whole people. To do nothing in this situation is to say that these lives are not worth being saved. That is to say that Muslim lives are not of equal value to those carrying out the killing from the hills. My point is not to argue that force must be used to stop this. I simply believe that while we cannot come up with alternatives I have no right to argue against the use of force by others, whether this is in

the form of different kinds of military intervention or through the provision of access to arms for self defence. And it is certainly completely immoral to deny both.

Fundamentalism

A fundamentalist attachment to principle is of no use to me if it gets in the way of the objects such a principle was meant to serve: namely, people's right to life. I am against war; that is why I wish to stop it. The fact is that even limited actions - such as effective sanctions, a genuine air exclusion zone, secure corridors for the delivery of humanitarian relief, or the arrest and trial of war criminals - are impossible without at least the threat of force. And to regard the force necessary to end an aggressive war as morally equivalent to that used to expel or exterminate another human group is a form of moral reductionism of the worst kind. One immediate consequence is that the war of aggression continues. In fact, General Philippe Morillon's stance in Srebrenica this spring showed that defensive, non-provocative military intervention can play a vital role. One cannot call it completely nonviolent, given that his effectiveness as a 'human shield' also depended on the knowledge that the use of force would almost certainly follow any attempt to remove him. But it demonstrates the potential were the UN to shift its stance from that of passive observer to that of genuine protector of besieged civilians.

And what of the long-term consequences? Would the use of force increase the likelihood of future wars by legitimizing military solutions, reinforcing the need for military alliances, and boosting the arms trade? This view reflects the peace movement's fixation on the methods and technologies of war rather than its underlying causes. Our failure to end the arms trade is a reflection of our failure to engage with the economic systems that produce it. Our single success in opposing nuclear weapons, the signing of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Agreement, had as much to do with our work in opposition to the Cold War bloc system as it did with our opposition to one class of weapons. Military solutions can only be delegitimized by demonstrating successful alternatives. So far in Bosnia we have failed to do this. And the demand that we be consistent also applies to those opposing the use of force. What are the long-term implications of saying genocide can continue until we have discovered a morally satisfactory way of stopping it? We have seen that the effect of the management of public opinion through the delivery of humanitarian aid, the attempted imposition of ethnic partition through the form of the Vance-Owen plan, and the constant stream of ambivalent signals - sanctions that are not policed, no-fly zones that are not enforced until the point where enforcement has no meaning - has simply been to reinforce the Serbian aggressors' belief that they can literally get away with murder and to encourage the Croats to follow suit. The conflict has escalated and the slaughter goes on unchecked. The consequences are disastrous not only for Bosnian Muslims but for the rest of the world.

Lifting the Arms Embargo Is Not Enough

Lifting the arms embargo is morally appealing not simply because we have no right to deprive people of the means to defend their lives but because of the moral distance it can create, thus providing comfort to those pacifists who hold the 'I don't approve of their methods but it's not my place to dictate' position. I myself have taken a similar position in the past, but now I am no longer sure that it is not in fact another kind of moral cheating and, on its own, an irresponsible recommendation. This is because, first, it now seems clear that logistically it would be very difficult to get arms to the Bosnian government forces in the places required in the quantities needed for a definitive and speedy victory. Thus what we would actually be

proposing is a long and bloody war of position in which thousands more lives would be lost and the country utterly devastated. Secondly, the West cannot abnegate its responsibility for getting them into this mess in the first place. Thus my own choice would be to offer the Bosnian government military support under their control rather than to offer arms. This would avoid the danger of superpower 'solutions' from outside, with all the attendant risks of creating a fourth side in the conflict and the danger of the intervening force staying longer than wanted. I would also suggest that the genuine threat of confronting a well-organized and clearly superior force might be sufficient to bring about a cease-fire immediately with no further loss of life. I do not know if this would happen, but is this more risky than going on as before?

A New Model for Intervention

Such action could provide a new model for international intervention as a whole that could occur only when states, groups or individuals who themselves complied with international law called on an international force to protect and defend rights guaranteed by that same body of law, first by political and if necessary by military means. Such a force should itself be truly international. The mandatory duties and limits of such action should be set in a clear legal framework. For example UN forces acting under Bosnian government control could not be ordered to commit acts of revenge or war crimes. This is not what happens at the moment, whatever the rhetoric, but the only way to move from imperialist interventions for strategic interest to just interventions on behalf of human rights is not to condemn intervention per se but to try to reform the structures we have available at the moment, most significantly the UN. This is the beginning of a much longer discussion. My main point is that while we do not have the ideal institutions to act on Bosnia's behalf we still have the responsibility, and pushing for a just and limited intervention under their own government's control might help in itself to create the framework and institutions we need. Nor do I believe that saying force may be needed to stop extermination now precludes me from working at the same time for those measures that might prevent such horrors arising in the future: social justice, and regional and global demilitarization. To argue that it does is like saying that support for the right to abortion precludes a campaign for free, safe, effective contraception. There are situations where prevention has failed and the choice between evils is evil. Not choosing is our privilege. We do not have the right to choose for Bosnia.

Note published with the article: Dr. Lynne Jones is a psychiatrist and writer who has lived and travelled extensively in Eastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia in the last ten years. Her most recent book is *States of Change: A Central European Diary* (Merlin, 1990). She is former chair of British European Nuclear Disarmament (END) and is currently working with Bosnian refugees in Slovenia. A shorter version of this article was published in *Tribune* (London).

Bosnian Dilemmas - Michael Randle

In your summer issue of 1993, Dr Lynne Jones takes the peace movement to task for its response to the war in Bosnia-Hercegovina. She advocates placing an international military force at the disposal of the Bosnian government, and sees this as constituting a 'new model' for UN intervention not only in Bosnia but in other trouble spots round the globe. Some sections of the peace movement, she states have been guilty of 'knee-jerk anti-interventionism' which does not take account of the fact that 'nations have the right to intervene in each other's affairs when basic rights are transgressed.'

I do not disagree in principle with this last statement which conforms with traditional just war theory. But this in itself does not settle the issue of whether it is right to intervene militarily in any given instance. Prudence, too, including the careful consideration of the broader consequences of military action and of alternative options, is another and no less important aspect of the just war approach.

Lynne is frustrated by the inability of the peace movement to speak with a united voice on the issue of Bosnia, or to make a significant contribution to solving the crisis. Her frustration is no doubt all the more intense because she has devoted many years of her life to campaigning at Greenham Common and elsewhere against war preparations and in support of 'taking the toys from the boys'. I share her frustration and her evident anguish at the continuing slaughter in Bosnia-Hercegovina. But while not wanting to rule out in principle any resort to military force by the international community, I do question some of her assumptions and lines of argument.

To consider first some of her more general propositions. Lynne states: 'If we argue, at this juncture, against military intervention or against the lifting of the arms embargo imposed on the Bosnian government and its supporters, we have a moral responsibility to come up with alternatives to stop the torture, killings, mass rape and bombardment.' This is to assume that there must of necessity be a course of action that could bring such atrocities to an end in the short term without creating even more victims and an even bloodier debacle. Sometimes, however, there is no such solution and the role of the outside world has to be confined largely to putting pressure and imposing sanctions on the aggressor state or party, attempting to alleviate the disaster through humanitarian aid, and promoting a settlement through mediation, negotiations and other initiatives. Nonviolent intervention and other action by non-governmental organisations may also have a role to play, though at this point in history these cannot be expected to have a decisive effect in most instances.

In Bosnia, it is a matter of judgement whether a massive arming of the government side could have prevented disaster or would have made matters much worse. I am inclined to think that, at least at this point, the consequences would be disastrous. There is, of course, a strong *political* argument in favour of the UN lifting its embargo as a means of indicating its recognition of the Bosnian government's legitimacy - rather than treating it as just another 'warring faction.' How much difference lifting the ban would make to the flow of arms to the government side, I don't know; it clearly has already been receiving some clandestine supplies. But if the likely consequence would be a substantial further re-arming by all sides and the wholesale destruction of the country, this consideration on its own cannot be decisive. Lynne herself, although she was active in promoting the appeal for the lifting of the UN arms embargo and is one of its signatories, concludes in her article that on its own it may be 'an irresponsible recommendation' leading to 'a long and bloody war of position in which thousands more lives would be lost and the country utterly devastated'. But might not a full-scale UN military intervention also have the same consequences? It would surely be irresponsible not to give that possibility the most careful consideration and oppose intervention if this seemed a probable outcome.

Dilemmas of this kind are far from being historically unique. In 1939-40, Britain and France could not halt Soviet aggression against Finland and the - permanent - seizure of part of its territory without being prepared to intervene militarily on Finland's behalf and risk a general war with the Soviet Union. (They did in fact make plans to send forces via northern Norway and Sweden to Finland but were deterred, in part at least, by Sweden's threat to cut off the

electricity supply to the railways in its northern region.) Similarly the West could not prevent the Soviet occupation of the Baltic States in 1940 and again in 1944-5 without going to war against Russia. The consequence of that occupation was the mass deportation of hundreds of thousands of people, many of whom died in Stalin's gulags, and nearly fifty years of Soviet rule. But Western military intervention in or after 1945 would almost certainly have unleashed World War III. I do not for a moment believe that Lynne would say that the West should have gone to war over the Baltic States. But according to her own logic she ought to do so unless she can suggest an alternative solution that would have saved the lives of Stalin's victims in these republics, and the republics themselves from Soviet occupation.

The dilemmas continue down to the present time. The moral argument for a major UN military intervention is probably as strong in Angola as it is in Bosnia. According to a recent report, up to 1,000 people a day are being killed there. An EC arms embargo to the area has recently been lifted to allow supplies to the government, and UN sanctions are threatened against Unita. These steps may help, but they will bring no quick end to the killing. However, a UN attempt to impose a solution by force, which some people are calling for, would require a massive military deployment and risk UN involvement in a prolonged guerrilla war. There are also calls for UN military intervention in the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, where again large numbers of civilians are being killed and the Armenian authorities are carrying out their own version of 'ethnic cleansing' within Azerbaijan to create a broad corridor between Armenia and the enclave of Nagorno Karabakh. In Georgia, threatened with dismemberment by the attempted secession of Abkhazia, President Edward Shevardnadze has appealed for UN intervention and protection. In East Timor, the case for intervention to halt the aggression and acts of massacre by Indonesia has existed for the past 18 years. This is far from exhausting the current list, to which others will certainly have to be added in the coming months and years.

The risks of intervention are clear when one considers those occasions where the UN has engaged in fighting wars (as opposed to engaging in limited peacekeeping operations with the consent of the contending parties) such as in Korea in 1950-53, the Congo in 1960-61, and the Gulf in 1991. Intervention prevented South Korea from being taken over by the communist North, but at a frightful human and material cost. (Some four million people are estimated to have lost their lives during the war, the largest proportion of them being civilians.) In the Congo, the scale of the conflict was much more limited and the UN did prevent the secession of Katanga, though it did not prevent 30 years of brutal dictatorship under Mobutu. In the Gulf war, Kuwait's independence was re-established, but again at a terrible cost. Moreover Saddam Hussein remains in power, his position in some respects strengthened by his defiance of a Western-led alliance, and he continues to threaten the Kurds and to wage a genocidal war against the Shiite Marsh Arabs in the south. In Somalia, it is too soon to make a judgement as to the success or failure of the UN/US intervention, but the problems are only too apparent.

Lynne opposed the Gulf War of 1991, as, for the most part, did the Western peace movement. (I did so myself and participated in the anti-war campaign of the time.) Opposition to the war was based in part on the fact that the West had been prepared to back Saddam Hussein's aggression against Iran, had helped to arm him and continued to give him support even after incontrovertible evidence that he had used chemical weapons against the Kurds. It was clear, too, that the West was at least as much concerned about the security and cost of its oil supplies as about the rights of the people of Kuwait. In a sense, however, US and Western motives are a side issue. Saddam had invaded and occupied Kuwait in contravention to international law, and his forces were engaged in atrocities there, as of course they were in Iraq itself. It was not Bush's motives which made the war so costly in human terms but the scale of the conflict and

the way it was conducted. (There was even a nuclear element in the conflict since the Western forces used armour-piercing shells hardened with uranium which released radioactivity upon detonation.) Whether the war could have been waged successfully with greater discrimination and without, for instance, destroying much of the country's infrastructure and causing over 200,000 civilian casualties, is a moot point.

If one sanctions a military intervention against a well-armed adversary, it would be irresponsible not to face up to the possibility, or probability, that casualties will be of this order of magnitude or even greater. One of my own criticisms of some of the proposals coming from within the peace movement and elsewhere for limited military intervention in Bosnia is that they are based on optimistic assumptions about the possible scale of the conflict and how long it would last. Intervention might bring - or at any rate, might have brought at an earlier point - a quick cease-fire with few casualties. But anyone proposing it must be committed to seeing it through to the finish, even if it turns out to require massive forces, a prolonged war, and, perhaps huge civilian casualties.

The distinction Lynne attempts to draw between just interventions and interventions motivated by strategic and economic interests is rarely that clear cut. Calculations of national interest tend to dominate in the foreign and military policies of all governments, but unless one takes a totally cynical view, it is reasonable to suppose there is sometimes an element of genuine concern on the part of some government leaders to end bloodshed and find a just solution to problems. However, governments are much more likely to intervene militarily, and to carry their populations with them in doing so, where the self-interest of the country is clearly involved. That situation would not change, even if the institutional reforms Lynne favours were to be adopted.

Lynne criticises the joint WRI/International Fellowship of Reconciliation statement of June 1992 opposing military intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina. To the argument that ‘any use of military force introduces a different logic’ she responds by saying that a ‘military logic of a very vicious kind has already been introduced into the situation’. But this is simply a debating point. In most cases where the UN is called upon to perform a peacemaking and peacekeeping role there is, or has been, a military conflict, and in that sense the military logic has almost by definition already been introduced into the situation. The role of UN peacekeeping forces, however, is to try to halt the bloodshed, or prevent it recurring, and enable humanitarian relief to be brought to the victims of war. It is quite another matter for the UN itself to become involved as a major military protagonist. The paragraph in question in the WRI/IFOR statement was making the obvious, and I think incontrovertible, point that once one sanctions military action by UN forces, escalation to a full-scale war *with the UN as one of the protagonists* becomes a real danger.

It is true that the statement, as Lynne observes, does not spell out the tactics of nonviolent social defence that might be effective. That is a valid criticism, though, as Lynne is aware, members and associates of WRI and IFOR have been spending time in various parts of ex-Yugoslavia over the past couple of years co-operating with human rights, and anti-war groups and helping to develop appropriate strategies of resistance, mediation, and reconciliation. (She too is involved in such work and indeed we are both members of a committee attempting to co-ordinate conflict resolution training in ex-Yugoslavia and elsewhere). She continues: ‘Yet even prominent theoreticians in the field acknowledge the paucity of nonviolent tactics in the face of genocide and mass deportations. The normal weapons of non-cooperation have no meaning in dealing with a group that has no interest in your cooperation but is bent upon your destruction.'

The first problem with this is that genocide - in the literal sense of systematically annihilating a population, the sense clearly implied in the last sentence above - is not the same as mass deportation, even though the term genocide in international law covers both, and morally there is not much to choose between them. It does appear that the Serb war aim is to carve out a continuous block of territory, cleared of Muslim and Croat populations, as a move towards setting up a Greater Serbia This is quite horrendous enough but it still needs to be distinguished, when we are considering how it might be resisted, from say the Nazi 'final solution' aimed at the total elimination of Europe's Jewish population.

Non-cooperation could have some leverage in resisting mass deportation, as could public protests, fasts, hunger-strikes and so forth. Indeed it is not even true to claim that non-cooperation and other nonviolent methods have 'no meaning' at all even against genocide. Jacques Semelin has shown in his important study *Unarmed Against Hitler*[1] that the effectiveness of Hitler's final solution in occupied Europe depended to a considerable extent on a) how far local and national administrations were prepared to stand up to anti-semitic policies or, on the contrary, to co-operate in the rounding up and deportation of Jews; b) how far an anti-semitic culture already existed in a country prior to occupation and thus how far public opinion approved of the persecution, and c) how far the social networks within the society were prepared to provide active assistance and protection to the Jewish population. Within Germany itself, Gene Sharp cites an incident in 1943 in which 6,000 non-Jewish women demonstrated in Berlin outside the prison where their Jewish spouses were being held and succeeded in securing their release.[2] I don't want to read too much into that one incident, only to point out that one should be cautious about saying that civil resistance could have absolutely no role in such situations.

Nonviolent civil resistance has been employed with some notable successes in various parts of former Yugoslavia over the past several years - in Kosovo, for example, and in Belgrade itself where in March 1991 mass demonstrations came close to unseating Milosevic, and perhaps preventing the slide to war. But clearly in the middle of a war when towns and villages are been levelled by gunfire, and massacres are an almost daily occurrence - increasingly committed by every side - the opportunity for this kind of action dwindles if it does not altogether disappear. Thus while acknowledging the courage and self-sacrifice of the Bosnian defenders of Sarajevo and other cities, I do now question whether it might not have been more effective for the Bosnian government to have abjured military resistance in the face of overwhelmingly superior Serb and JNA forces - as the Czechs and Slovaks did in face of Soviet aggression in 1968 - and relied instead on the use of strikes, demonstrations, mass-sitdowns and other forms of civil resistance, giving priority to winning or maintaining the allegiance of Bosnian Serbs and Croats.

The militarisation of Yugoslav society during the Tito period would have been a major obstacle to the implementation of such a policy, as would the widespread availability of arms and ammunition, both of which were a consequence of the policy of in-depth defence and preparation for guerrilla warfare. This legacy made it natural for Izetbegovic to mobilise the territorial forces when Bosnia came under threat. It also facilitated the slide into civil and inter-state war throughout former Yugoslavia once the federation began to break up. A further obstacle in Bosnia-Herzegovina to any possibility of implementing an effective national civil resistance on the model of Czechoslovakia was the development of party politics along 'ethnic' lines and the failure to develop a party that straddled the ethnic divide.

This brings us to some of the crucial political issues underlying the conflict. Although Lynne rejects the suggestion that the war in Bosnia is a civil war, it has some of the characteristics of such a war. This was true, too, and more clearly so, of the wars in Slovenia and Croatia which followed hard upon their declarations of independence in June 1991. At that time Yugoslavia still formally existed as a UN member state, and thus in international law the wars would have to be classified as civil wars up to the point that Slovenia and Croatia were granted international recognition and UN membership - after which they would be considered international wars. In Bosnia, the period between the government's request for international recognition and the granting of that recognition by the international community (1 March to 7 April) was shorter than had been the case in Slovenia and Croatia, though again the interim was marked by serious violence, particularly between the Yugoslav JNA and the Croat militia aligned to the HSP - the Croatian Party of the Right. Thus these were not straightforward cases of one already established sovereign state invading another, but closer to the situation which would exist if say Catalonia declared its independence and the Madrid authorities sent in their forces to re-establish control. The parallel would of course be closer still if Catalonia had developed democratic structures and declared its independence during the Franco period and been faced with military intervention and repression by the central fascist government.

The conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia have the character of civil war in a still more crucial respect, namely that in both Croatia and Bosnia, one or more of the main protagonists form part of the country's own population, the Serbs in Croatia, especially in the Serb dominated Krajina area, and Serb and Croat communities in Bosnia. In the referendum on Bosnian independence in on 29 February-1 March 1992, 99 per cent of the voters supported independence. But the turn-out at the referendum was only 64 per cent, and the Serb population overwhelmingly boycotted the poll.

This raises the broader question of whether it is practicable to seek to establish a newly independent state in a territory in which a substantial section of the population is adamantly opposed to such a move. A united independent India, for example, incorporating the whole of the subcontinent which had been ruled as one country by Britain was not a viable proposition in 1947 once the Muslim political leaders rejected such a solution . Nor could the issue have been decided by a simple majority decision in a referendum in which the mainly Muslim north-west and north-east would have inevitably been outvoted. Any attempt to impose a solution in this way would have led to a bloody and prolonged civil war.

I accept that Milosevic bears the brunt of the responsibility for the crisis that led to the break-up of Yugoslavia, and that this must of course be taken into account in weighing the arguments. In particular, he was responsible for illegally incorporating the formerly autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina in 1989-90. (Lynne and I both supported a campaign calling for international pressure to be applied to reverse the incorporation of Kosovo.) Milosevic also, as Lynne notes, rejected the proposal put forward during presidential discussions on the constitutional future in 1990 by presidents Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Gligarov of Macedonia to transform Yugoslavia into a confederation of states, a proposal endorsed by the other presidents.

The British journalist Misha Glenny states that the Slovenian president, Kucan, was half-hearted in his support for the proposal and indeed blames the inflexibility of all the presidents except Izetbegovic and Gligarov for the failure of the talks.[3] This may be to put too much blame on Kucan personally since the tide towards independence in Slovenia was by that time running so strongly that he may have had little choice in the matter. But if that is the case, then

the confederation plan never did have much chance of being adopted. Milosevic, at all events, saw in the breakdown of Federal institutions - which he himself helped to sabotage - the opportunity to pursue his ambition to create a Greater Serbia, and, for the same reason, he fanned the flames of nationalist fervour and revolt in Croatia and Bosnia.

Yet the problem of the Krajina Serbs demand for the establishment of a sovereign Croatian state existed independently of Milosevic. It was exacerbated by Tudjman's policies after he came to power in April 1990, notably by the wholesale expulsion of Serbs from positions in the police and civil service. These policies raised fears among Serbs that they were witnessing a resurgence of fascism, fears fuelled by Milosevic's propaganda machine but also by the memories of massacres of Serbs by Ustashe forces during the last - and only - time that Croatia existed as an 'independent' state during World War II. Indeed if Milosevic is the main villain in the Yugoslav tragedy, Tudjman ranks a close second, especially in relation to the war in Bosnia. In March 1991, he met Milosevic in Karadordevo, a town in Vojvodina, to discuss the carve-up of Bosnia. And in July of that year, at the very time Germany was citing the principle of a people's right of self-determination in its campaign for the recognition of Croatia, Tudjman was publicly proclaiming that Bosnia should be divided between Croatia and Serbia in violation of that same principle.

Lynne castigates the Carrington proposals for the cantonization of Bosnia on 'ethnic' lines, arguing that this provided the blue-print for what Karadjic and Boban are now attempting to achieve by force. ('Ethnic' is strictly speaking, a misnomer though it has come to be used as a kind of shorthand for the separate national/communal identities which do exist based on language, religion and other factors rather than ethnicity.) But there is all the difference in the world between a mutually agreed cantonal system which Carrington was working for - such as the one which has provided Switzerland with 170 years of peace in a multi-national, multi-linguistic, federation - and dividing up a country by military aggression, massacres and mass expulsions. The nationalities problem existed in Bosnia prior to anything Carrington proposed because from the outset the majority of the Bosnian Serbs and their elected representatives opposed the creation of an independent Bosnian state, just as the Krajina Serbs had earlier opposed the creation of an independent Croatian state. Carrington in proposing a federal solution for Bosnia on 'ethnic' (i.e. national/linguistic/religious) lines was not introducing some new reactionary principle into the heart of Europe. Such 'ethnic' considerations were the main basis for the creation of most of the states of central Europe as the Ottoman and Habsburg empires declined and ultimately, at the end of World War I, collapsed altogether. Naturally as the communities had intermingled in varying degrees none of the states were 'ethnically' pure - though Slovenia comes close to being so. For the same reason, there were rival territorial and national claims which led to the first and second Balkan wars in the early years of the century, and to the First World War itself. The postwar Yugoslav federation represented a compromise which was broadly acceptable to the national minorities within the republics but probably only so long as the federation itself remained intact.

Like Lynne I support, the right of Slovenes, Croats, Bosnians, or any other national group, to have their own state, if that is their wish, always provided the rights and legitimate claims of other national groups are respected, and also - most importantly of all - the human and political rights of all citizens within any newly created state. Slovenia is in a stronger position than, say, the Serb dominated Krajina within Croatia to claim the right to declare its independence because the territory was a republic within the Yugoslav federation with a constitutional right to secede. Nevertheless I do not see how Lynne can proclaim the absolute right of Slovenes to break away from the Yugoslav federation and declare their sovereign

independence while maintaining - as she appears to do - that Serbs and Croats in Bosnia have no right even to the limited form of self-determination represented by autonomous areas or cantons within a federal structure, and that merely to discuss that approach represents a betrayal and an incitement to ethnic cleansing.

The nationalities problem hardly exists in Slovenia because of its relatively homogeneous population. Unfortunately, however, Slovenia's decision to go for independence precipitated similar moves by Croatia and Bosnia where the problem was critical. Thus while recognising the rights of national groups to self-determination, I have become increasingly aware of the importance - for them and for their neighbours in a given region - of the way in which they stake their claim and go about achieving it. In the spring of 1991 when I indicated to a colleague my sympathy for Slovenian claims to independence, he said if this were to occur it would totally de-stabilise the region and lead to war. I hoped and believed he was wrong. Unfortunately, he was not. I now wonder - and it is purely hindsight on my part - whether it might not have been wiser for Slovenia, Croatia and the other republics to have continued to press and work for the confederal solution which Milosevic was obstructing (and to which the presidents of both Slovenia and Croatia, if Glenny is correct, gave only half-hearted endorsement), rather than striking out at that point for full independence. Izetbegovic, to his credit, was the most assiduous in pressing for a confederal solution to Yugoslavia's problems, but once Slovenia and Croatia had opted for independence his government felt it had no option but to do the same.

The problem of arriving at a solution based on relative autonomy for the three main ‘ethnic’ groups is particularly acute in Bosnia because of the way the communities are dispersed. Hence, of course, the drive to create ethnically homogeneous areas through mass expulsions and massacres. However, the Swiss system is precisely designed to allow for the establishment of a patchwork of federated cantons, and permits the creation by plebiscite of new cantons, or for part of an existing canton to join up with a neighbouring one. Thus, by consent, and following several referendums at various levels, including one in the country as a whole, the new canton of Jura was established in 1979. I understand also that there is an established system of mediation to prevent tensions within and between cantons from leading to violence or the imposition of economic sanctions. It is hard, therefore, to see why Lynne is so set against even the exploration of a solution along these lines.

The most disturbing aspect, indeed, of Lynne's piece is that she does not indicate, except negatively, what political solution she favours in Bosnia-Herzegovina. If there is large-scale military intervention, what political goals will it be seeking to achieve? She ‘rejects the peace process in its current form’ (the Owen-Stoltenberg approach), arguing that the ‘ethnic’ solution being imposed on Bosnia ‘will be a source of endless war.’ She criticises the Helsinki Citizens Assembly campaign for UN protected areas - though I am not clear whether she is against the proposal as such or is simply critical of the HCA's approach to it and in particular its vagueness about how it might be implemented. She also states that ‘some now propose [Bosnia's] complete abolition through the imposition of a protectorate by force’ and - understandably - rejects that. But if she is referring to the proposal emanating from the HCA, she seriously misrepresents it. The proposal, as presented by Mary Kaldor, Jeanette Buirski, and Mient Jan Faber, is for a UN *Transitional* Authority for Bosnia established with the consent of the Bosnian government and of Bosnian Serbs and Croats, and aimed at restoring full Bosnian sovereignty as soon as possible.[4] (I can't myself see the Bosnian Serbs and Croats consenting to such a plan, but that's a separate issue.)

Lynne proposes that an international force in Bosnia should act, within prescribed limits, under Bosnian government control. This seems to imply that it would be the instrument for the realisation of the Bosnian government's political aims, namely the restoration of its full control over all those areas within Bosnia-Herzegovina now controlled by Serb and Croat forces and militias. Is that what she is proposing? If so, it is quite unrealistic for her to cherish and hold out the hope that such an intervention and show of force 'might be sufficient to bring about a cease-fire immediately with no further loss of life.' Moreover the type of defensive, non-provocative military operation by which General Philippe Morillon successfully defended Srebrenica last spring - which Lynne refers to - would be quite beside the point. The intervening force would be engaged in a major strategic offensive. And if the UN took on such a commitment in Bosnia, it is hard to see how it could refuse to put a similar force at the disposal of the Croatian government to restore that country's territorial integrity.

The peace movement has been uncertain and divided over what to say or do about Bosnia, but, whatever about the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Britain, organisations like the HCA, WRI, and IFOR have not ignored it and have been prepared to shift away from long held positions in exploring possible solutions. That does not represent moral failure but a careful response to a complex and intractable problem which most of us - certainly including me - knew little about when the war started. Some of Lynne's comments on WRI/IFOR, the HCA and Edward Thompson presuppose that she has a solution which would bring an immediate end to the killing and which they are ignoring. But the solutions she proposes are quite as fraught with ambiguity and danger as those she criticises. Nor does a reluctance or unwillingness to sanction military intervention imply that Edward Thompson or WRI, or any section of the peace movement, thinks that 'the current flattening [of villages] and civilian losses should be allowed to continue' in Bosnia - any more than in Angola, Armenia, East-Timor, Iraq and other places. The question is how best to bring the slaughter to a halt rather than creating even more havoc and bloodshed.

I agree with some of Lynne's criticisms of Western failures and misjudgments in relation to Bosnia, in particular its failure to respond positively to Izetbegovic's proposal to transform the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) from a conscript to a volunteer force. I am less certain about others, including, for reasons noted earlier, her criticisms of the Carrington plan. It is not true to say that the West made no efforts at all to promote democratisation or respect for human rights. The EC laid down as a condition for the recognition of emergent independent states in former Yugoslavia that they should guarantee democratic rights for all citizens. It failed to follow this through in the case of Croatia, in part at least because of the pressure exerted by German recognition in December 1991. However, if I understand Lynne's position correctly, she is not opposed to the EC's decision to recognize Croatia when it did. She also dismisses too easily Edward Thompson's criticism of Germany's role in this matter. It is true that by the time Germany formally recognized Croatia the war had been going on for about six-months. But Germany had been actively campaigning for recognition to be granted much earlier than this - including back in July 1991 when Tudjman of Croatia and Milosevic of Serbia had made clear their intention of carving up most of Bosnia between them.

Finally, on this point, it is setting the UN a godlike task to demand of it that it should know precisely how and when to intervene in a diplomatic, political or military sense in every crisis or incipient crisis all over the world, especially if one is to count any decision not to act as a form of intervention in favour of the status quo. Frequently it is far from self-evident what the effect of a given course of action will be and it may remain a matter of conjecture afterwards what the effect of a different approach would have been.

I remain uncertain in my own mind as to what should be done. A few of months ago I inclined to the view that the Bosnian government might do worse than accept the Owen/Stoltenberg proposals, or some modified version of them. This would have been a bitter pill for it to swallow and would have meant rewarding both Serbian and Croatian aggression. However, the longer the war went on, the worse the situation of the Bosnian government, and the Muslim population as a whole, was getting. Moreover, it was quite clear that the re-establishment of a unified Bosnian state with a single central authority was simply not going to happen, however long the war continued.

Subsequently the situation has changed again to some extent, with the focus of the war shifting for a time to Central Bosnia, and with Bosnian forces making significant territorial gains at the expense of Croats - and incidentally carrying out some ruthless 'ethnic cleansing' on their own account. Even so, assuming that the Bosnian government has control of its forces in the field, there is still a case for it to accept a settlement along the lines of the Owen-Stoltenberg proposals.

This would not represent a just solution. But it might - just - be an acceptable one provided the UN insists that Bosnia-Herzegovina, within its pre-war boundaries, remains a member state of the UN, and that the international community is prepared to invest in a major re-construction programme, and exert continuing pressure on all parties, and at all levels of government and administration, to observe the human and political rights of all citizens, including the right of those who have been forced out of their homes to return or be given compensation.[5] (One ominous recent developments has been a statement by David Owen conceding the possibility that parts of Bosnia might be annexed respectively by Serbia and Croatia. This represents a disgraceful retreat. The UN might not be willing or able to impose a solution by military force, but it could at least insist that there will be no international recognition of annexations achieved by military aggression.)

Democracy and human rights are in the final analysis more important than state boundaries as such, and this is an area where outside pressure and inducement can make an effective contribution over time. Moreover, transnational economic and legal structures - such as the EC, for all its faults - can contribute to making national boundaries less important. Meanwhile, too, non-governmental organisations inside and outside the states of former Yugoslavia have a vital contribution to make to the struggle for human rights and the task of reconstruction and reconciliation.

Discussion

The Challenge to Pacifism and Nonviolence

Several people noted the relevance of the debate to our work. Christina said she felt for Lynne when she said at the beginning that she had gone through draft after draft of her article and torn them up in despair. No-one, Christina said, had been able to come up with detailed proposals for tackling the situation in a nonviolent way. She wondered also to what extent the discussion had been overtaken by events. NATO had resorted to a limited use of force and this had not as yet led to escalation.

Walter Stein's commented (via Michael as he could not attend the meeting himself) that he was

sympathetic to some of Lynne's points, though he thought she tended to overstate her argument. If you took away the overstatement, there were points of substance there. He felt that the situation had changed radically from the period of the Cold War when a kind of pragmatic commitment to nonviolence was justified because of the strategic situation. At that time the use of military force carried with it the immediate risk of escalation to nuclear war. Given that, there was an overlap between the ideological and pragmatic commitment to nonviolence. But today, although the nuclear threat had not disappeared, there was not the same immediate danger of escalation - for example in Bosnia. It was not enough, either, to state in general terms that intervention was sometimes justified; one had to spell out in detail what military action one was prepared to support. The grounds for opposing military action in situations like Bosnia could be a) that it was likely to lead to an even more disastrous war or b) that there was a feasible nonviolent alternative. Western military intervention in the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia after World War II would very probably have led a third world war and it was right on those grounds to oppose it even though one did not have a nonviolent alternative. In other circumstances one had an obligation, as Lynne argued, to spell out concretely a nonviolent alternative if one was going to oppose military intervention.

Andrew said he thought Lynne was looking for the 'grand slam' that would solve the whole problem and end the killing. He thought that we in this group would support such a solution if we thought it existed - even if it involved the use of military force. But we had to take on board the fact that there is no such grand slam solution - not a nonviolent one, and not a violent one either. In that sense what one needed to be looking at were those smaller things that made some difference. He added that there were situations - as for instance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - where a completely just peace was no longer historically feasible. We had to talk about a workable peace. Demanding a just peace in those situations as a kind of nationalist rhetoric was not conducive to peacemaking in any way. Obviously people who put forward that demand had a point which needed to be borne in mind all the time when people had suffered historically, but the ideal solution was sometimes not a possibility.

Christina said the recent military action did seem to have marked a turning point in Bosnia. The question this raised for her was whether it would have been better for NATO/UN to have taken such action in 1992..Andrew thought the circumstances were now different in that the Serbs had more to give away. Howard said there were many other non-military things which could have been done earlier. You could say that if Mitterrand wasn't the only head of state to have visited Sarajevo, if the UN commanders had acted earlier as Morrillon had done in Srebrenica last summer, and so forth, the situation might not have deteriorated in the way it had. Bob said he did not think we were making any grand ideological claims for the effectiveness of nonviolence in all situations. One wanted to see nonviolent intervention where this was possible; where it was not he would tend to withdraw. Andrew said that although nonviolence was for him a personal commitment akin to religious faith, we should recognize that we would not get very far in discovering how nonviolence could be more effective without studying each individual situation.

Who should intervene

Lynne, in discussing a new model for intervention, had argued that an international force should comprise of troops supplied only by states which themselves abided by international law. Howard commented that this raised a fundamental point about who was a legitimate intervener in any situation. One should not judge the situation simply in terms of what was happening in Bosnia, one should judge it in terms of what was happening in the world. Thus,

given the dirty war that the Turkish army was fighting against the Kurds, it should not be given a shred of legitimacy by being allowed to participate in the UN operation in Bosnia. One could make very similar points about most armies. However, he did think that the recent military intervention had been effective. This was the first time there had been a moderately consistent policy over Bosnia. For instance, only Libya had set up an embassy in Sarajevo. Previously Owen had been told to go naked into the conference chamber. When he came up with a peace proposal, the response from the various governments was that it was completely unacceptable and yet they were not prepared to do anything to change the situation and put pressure on the Serbs.

Bob said that even Rose's efforts were very limited in extent and geared to assisting the humanitarian effort. But if the UN intervention in Sarajevo were successful, the Bosnian government was not going to be satisfied at that. There was a tendency for people who felt powerless in the face of a situation like that in Bosnia to hope for some intervention from somewhere which would solve the problem. Generally this was wished onto the UN. However, most of the time it was quite unrealistic. His 'knee jerk' reaction was to say that it was not going to work so one should not go for that option. And yet, as Howard was very honestly recognizing, in limited circumstances, and when handled in a careful and strategic way, outside military intervention could be effective.

Howard said the Bosnian government had wanted world military intervention since April 1992. At that time you didn't need the strike forces. If you had had, at the moment Bosnia declared independence, a significant international presence - even if only a presence of the kind that now exists in Macedonia - the situation would not have developed as it had done. The Bosnian government hinged its whole strategy on getting UN or NATO military intervention, but it had proved a disastrous miscalculation. It was mainly CNN that had managed to produce a military response through its coverage of the market massacre. Also over the past couple of years all the US liberal press had been pouring out articles supporting intervention and arming the Bosnians.

Constitutional Possibilities

On constitutional possibilities, Michael the limited agreement brokered by the Americans between the Bosnian and Croatian governments involved the establishment of cantons. A *Guardian* correspondent described it as a constitutional arrangement that borrowed from both the Swiss and Belgian models. He was not clear why commentators were treating this as totally different in principle to what Owen, Stoltenberg, Vance - and before them Carrington - had been trying to broker. If the agreement held, there would be cantonization and a federal structure within Bosnia, and possibly a confederal structure with Croatia. Some kind of federal structure had always seemed to him to be the only way out of the impasse, rather than attempting to create an independent centralised Bosnian state.

Andrew suggested that if the Bosnian government had not attempted to set up an independent state when a third of it population refused to take part in the referendum on independence, the disaster might have been averted.

International Sanctions

Michael reported that Walter had raised the issue of sanctions, and noted that they hadn't been effective against Serbia; there was indeed evidence that they had been counterproductive. This

rather undermined the strategy we had discussed in earlier group meetings where civil resistance undertaken internally against aggression was viewed, in part at least, as a way of triggering international pressure, mainly in the form of sanctions. One of the interesting comparative studies we might undertake would be between the effect of sanctions in South Africa and Serbia, to uncover why they had apparently had a positive effect in the former but seemed to have been largely counter-productive in Serbia.

Bob said that a few years ago one would have been hard-pressed to claim that the sanctions against South Africa were politically effective. Perhaps over a longer term sanctions would also prove effective against Serbia. Howard said that there had been no calls internally within Serbia for sanctions, whereas in South Africa the main opposition organisations had supported them, and indeed Archbishop Tutu had said that sanctions were the last hope of avoiding a bloodbath. In Serbia, sanctions had consolidated the Milosevic gangsterism. Andrew said that this was an appropriate area for us to be considering and that there were a number of books and studies on the issue of sanctions to which we could refer. According to the *Financial Times*, the real hurt to the South African economy came from disinvestment; there was just no influx of capital for development. We might make the question of sanctions the topic for a future meeting with someone introducing it and referring to the findings of various studies. Michael said that although sanctions had not worked against Serbia, several commentators had suggested that the threat of extending the sanctions to Croatia had been a significant factor in getting its government to sign up the recent accord with Bosnia.

Howard said the application of sanctions had been totally mismanaged. For example, the US had been using sanctions as a means of denying a green card to Kosovo Albanian university lecturers. There was an inconsistency and a failure to think through consequences at all sorts of levels.

Subsequent discussion of nonviolence and pacifism.

At a meeting in September 1994, Walter Stein returned to the issue of violence/nonviolence. Below is an extract from the minutes of that meeting:

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Walter said that the question which particularly interested him, was the scope of nonviolent action, especially strategic nonviolence. He did not think anything had changed dramatically in the last few years as far as the use of nonviolent methods in internal situations was concerned. But things looked very different now for strategic nonviolence from four or five years ago. Eventually one of the things we should aim at was to define for ourselves what areas of application nonviolent action realistically had as of now. He was thinking especially of situations such as Bosnia and Rwanda. What was the conceptual situation of nonviolence in relation to issues of that kind? To put it another way, what was the status of traditional pacifism today, if by pacifism we meant an ideological commitment to nonviolence in all circumstances? The pay off of this was that if you concluded that you could not apply nonviolence in all such situations, you incurred an intellectual and moral responsibility to answer the question of what in each situation ought to be done. For a traditional, ideological

pacifist the question answered itself: you didn't do anything if a nonviolent intervention was not possible. By confronting the problem you opened up the possibility of a more empirical, as opposed to an *a priori*, approach to the ethics of intervention, and of defining the type of intervention which you were willing to advocate or tolerate - rather than contracting out of because it didn't fit into a pacifist ideology.

Howard said he was somewhat resistant to raising questions about fundamental belief systems because it was so difficult to change them. There were alternative ways of posing questions which could be fruitful. One proposal that War Resisters' International was hoping to implement the following year was to get people involved in armed struggle movements to a consultation to consider the question of what they hoped to gain by armed struggle that they felt they could not get without resort to arms. In Northern Ireland the IRA had finally decided to declare a cease-fire, something which Martin McGuinness and Gerry Adams had wanted to do for a long time. They had had to engineer the situation so as to get their organisation to accept that point of view. In South Africa, people no longer had to hide behind the old rhetoric and could actually talk about trying to get out of the trap of warfare and armed struggle. Debates that hinged around something like a commitment to pacifism were difficult to take anywhere. He would not deny certain successes for military action, such as that of General Rose in Sarajevo earlier in the year. But in all these situations you had to be looking for the question that would open up room for manoeuvre between people. One reason that he personally would never advocate military action was that you would be initiating something which you could not reverse. Consequently he had to find smaller things to do in such situations.

Walter said that the last point could be an interesting contribution to the debate. Howard had given a major rationale of his position. He said he took the point, too, about the risk of sterile confrontations if you made a topic too overtly ideological. However, it could with luck have the opposite effect in the sense of helping to bridge the intellectual gap between the pacifist and what he would term the ‘peaceseeker’. In the first world war pacifism was relevant in an obvious and undiluted way that was not true of the Second World War, or of the situation today. During the Cold War period he considered himself a nuclear pacifist - which meant not merely that you would not support nuclear war, but also that you ruled out any form of action which was likely to end in a nuclear war. And, in the Cold War context, this meant any major military action because escalation was built into the situation. Thus in practice it was possible for peaceseekers and pacifists to collaborate closely. Assuming that one were now to agree empirically that there were some situations where it was necessary to sanction violence, or at any rate to tolerate with understanding its endorsement by non-pacifists, you might actually make what was most essential to the pacifist communicable to non-pacifists, and to a wider public. And pacifists themselves, if they accepted it was the case that there were conflicts, such as that in Rwanda, where a completely nonviolent kind of intervention wasn't possible, might want to add a footnote at least to their normal categories.

Text of Lynne Jones’ response to Michael Randle, published in *Peace & Democracy News,* Summer 1994

Upholding the rule of law

I want to start with a domestic analogy: I would like to live in a world where men do not beat

up women, but while they do I want to be able to get an injunction from the courts to keep a violent partner out of my house. If he breaks it, I can at present summon the police to get rid of him. This does not give the police the right to occupy my house or take over my finances. Biased and corrupt as the judiciary and police in this country are, I do not at present want either abolished, I want them reformed. And I want the continued protection of the law.

Similarly, while I would like to live in a cooperative, culturally diverse, equitable and peaceful global community without borders, until it exists I would like the relations between the state in which I live and other states to be governed by a just system of international law. The debate for me is not about intervention or not, it is about whether we are committed to upholding the rule of law and whether we can acknowledge and act upon our responsibility to provide assistance to those who suffer when those laws are broken.

As Branka Magas makes clear in the winter 1993-94 issue of *Peace and Democracy News*, international law pertaining to the situation in Bosnia is quite clear. Article 51 of the UN Charter gives Bosnia the right as a recognised state to self defence and to call for assistance when subject to aggression. The genocide convention mandates its signatories (which include Britain and the US) to prevent and punish the crime of genocide and the World Court has agreed (April 1993) that Serbia has a *prima facie* case to answer on this issue. In addition, Security Council resolutions constantly reaffirmed the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of the Republic of Bosnia- Herzegovina; identified Serbia as the main aggressor; condemned ethnic cleansing; called for the lifting of sieges of Bosnian towns; and declared the creation of safe havens which should be ‘ free from armed attacks and from any other hostile act’ and demanded ‘any necessary measures to respect these safe areas’. (Resolution 824, May 6, 1993.)

Reverberations

It is the failure to uphold these laws that I find one of the most terrifying aspects of this situation. And in the reverberations from the CIS states to Rwanda and Angola. For if we tear up the rules of a game in which we ourselves are one of the participants what protection is there for us in the future? It is now open season for anyone with enough Kalashnikovs, howitzers, SAM missiles, nuclear or chemical weapons, take your choice, to intervene wherever and whenever they like and commit the crime of genocide with impunity.

There seems to be a generally held view that one must be for or against intervention ‘in principle’, and that support for intervention in one situation must mean support for it in others. Secondly there is an assumption that there is a clear and easy distinction to be made between military and non-military intervention. And thirdly that there is a truly neutral, do-nothing, position which sends no signals and has no political or military effects.

To my mind to be for or against intervention is not a principled position in the way that to be for or against genocide, human rights, torture, sexual discrimination or slavery are. Intervention is a tactic to be used or abjured in order to achieve certain principled goals. Thus there can be no hope of consistency because the political, social and psychological context will differ in every case. The consideration as to whether to intervene must depend upon judgement (and it can only be a judgement) about this context and the consequences of both action and inaction. Thus in East Timor for example, the initial response in 1975 should have been to protest both the military intervention/ invasion by Indonesia and the political signals of non-intervention by the US, Britain, and Australia that allowed it to happen. Then to demand

an end to another kind of military intervention - arms sales, that have made continuing occupation possible and called for political intervention in the form of trade sanctions, particularly against receiving stolen goods in the form of East Timor oil. None of these things have happened and it could still be that a consistent and firm application of these measures would force Indonesia to comply with UN resolutions and force it to allow the investigation of human rights abuses and war crimes.

Naive and Unrealistic

I hold to my point that in the global village in which we now live deliberate and less deliberate intervention goes on all the time, and I agree with Shalom [one of the other contributors to the debate in *Peace & Democracy*] that the military ones are mostly bad (arms sales and occupations), although I wonder if he includes U.S. intervention in the Second World War in this category? And l agree with Randle that most are self-interested. But I actually think a general call to stop intervention is simply naive and unrealistic and sends a political signal of indifference and isolationism that is extremely dangerous. Moreover there is no evidence that it is easier to achieve than attempting to show how good interventions might in the long term serve self-interest.

In the former Yugoslavia the opportunities to promote political interventions and actively oppose bad ones were repeatedly missed. The most significant was not the question of recognition of Croatia. This was a side issue to the main one of whether the West continued the attempt to hold on to nonexistent Yugoslavia by allowing the illegally constituted, Serb-dominated federal presidency and all its international representatives to act as though it were the federation, and the Serb-dominated Yugoslav National Army (JNA) to act as if it were a disinterested armed force instead of a major player on the Serbian side. In the ceasefire proposal made by leading intellectuals from the region in November 1991 for which many of us campaigned, the call was for delegalization and demilitarization of the federation and a moratorium on independence. This would have reduced Serbia to what it was, an equal partner in negotiations to all other constitutive parts of the former Federation and might have nipped the plans for territorial acquisition in the bud.

What has followed in Bosnia is not a benign policy of inaction and disaster relief as Randle suggests but a mixture of politico/ military interventions of the worst kind: in particular the continuation of an illegal arms embargo against the Bosnian state that knowingly gave enormous military advantage to the aggressor; a succession of unfulfilled military threats that reinforced Serb and later Croat beliefs in invulnerability; the imposition of partition plans that rewarded territorial aggression and fuelled ethnic cleansing (I will come back to this point below); the imposition of sanctions on Serbia against the advice of the Serbian democratic opposition, many of whom argued that military intervention would be more effective, punish the right people and cause less suffering; and the use of humanitarian aid as a deliberate policy to reframe the conflict as some kind of natural disaster, divert public opinion from its political origins and which, through the use of troops merely to police the convoys that had to stand by while atrocities occurred in front of them, sent a clear political message that such acts could be tolerated. The political nature of humanitarian aid has been made quite clear by the repeated threat of withdrawal, now that much of the population depends upon it, in order to force the Bosnian government into submission. The reason that many of us involved in the region for a long period argued for military intervention was that we made a psychological and political judgement that the Serbs would respond to such pressure. The evidence over the last two years shows that the Serbs have only made concessions when frightened of action by the

international community. Recent evidence is that the credible threat of force did result in a real ceasefire and reduction in the killing, and the creation of a non-ethnic federal Muslim-Croat state that could be a sign of hope for the future. What followed in Gorazde is the result of 'a military intervention against military intervention' as Christopher Hitchens eloquently expressed it at a recent Campaign for Peace and Democracy conference. The Pentagon statement in the first week of April that there would be 'no air strikes' was an open invitation to the Serbs to attack Gorazde and the West's unskilled and feeble response - the worst of all possible combinations - a half-hearted use of force in conjunction with pleading for ceasefires and negotiations from those who, as President Clinton says, lie and mislead and engage in 'flagrant aggression and inhumane actions.' (*International Herald Tribune*, 'U.S. Renews Call for Diplomacy in Bosnia,' Paul F. Horitz, April 19, 1994.)

Randle argues that anyone proposing intervention must be committed to seeing it through whatever the cost. He is right but he does not add that making a clear and credible commitment can itself deter escalation (as happened in Sarajevo and Maglaj) whereas uncertainty and vacillation will almost certainly provoke it. Moreover, Randle's recommendations of mediation, humanitarian aid and sanctions has done nothing to prevent and almost certainly contributed to the escalation that has continued unabated for two years. Prior to the NATO ultimatum and Sarajevo ceasefire there already was full-scale war. CSCE missions had been removed from Kosova and Vojvodina. The Ukraine had at one point used Western indifference as an excuse to hang on to its nuclear weapons; a resurgent nationalist right is gaining strength in Russia. Meanwhile the only agency for global international cooperation that we have - the UN - was losing credibility just as the League of Nations did over Ethiopia[6] preluding the Second World War.

Sometimes it does appear for those of us committed to nonviolence that good means can produce bad ends and bad means can produce good ends. For example, it would appear that the long-term imposition of sanctions on Iraq is anything but nonviolent in its effect and is doing nothing to undermine Saddam or protect Kurds or Marsh Arabs (nor are arbitrary revenge bombings by the US). At this point in time I see no alternative but concerted international action to create properly policed safe havens to save these peoples' lives and what remains of their habitats.

A Role for Nonviolence

Randle is right to point out that nonviolence does have some role in challenging genocide. The press has recently reported a Croat community refusing to allow their Muslim neighbours to be 'cleansed'. Draft resistance continues on the Serbian side, yet it is difficult to see how these tactics alone can counter those of siege and bombardment. But while what is going on in Bosnia is not the same as the organized attempt at a final solution attempted by the Nazi regime (yet)[7] there is a great deal more going on than mass deportation. Namely the consistently reported accounts of internment, torture, rape, and summary execution and the systematic destruction of the physical basis of Muslim culture.[8] And the tactics suggested by Randle - such as public protests and fasts, as he acknowledges, are not the appropriate ones to counter death by siege, that is bombardment, sniper fire and the slow strangulation of starvation, cold and disease.

Moreover given our own governments' failures to take the nonviolent initiatives that could have prevented this war, it seems inappropriate to criticize Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic for not abjuring military resistance when his own actions prior to the outbreak of war focused

on demilitarization, negotiation and conciliation.[9] Firstly by pushing the option of confederation, then by reluctantly agreeing to the cantonization plan and thirdly, by allowing, in the autumn of 1991, the federal army to confiscate the weapons of the Bosnian territorial defence. Given that these weapons were immediately passed on to Serb paramilitary groups, it is not surprising that the more common criticism is rather of his failure to prepare for war. Perhaps lzetbegovic's major mistake was to assume that the West, having recognized Bosnia, would abide by its own rules and give it the support and protection due to a fully-fledged member of the UN when Karadzic reneged on his own commitment to a federal state and declared the Serb republic of Bosnia as a constitutional part of Serbia in April 1992.

What is impressive is that nonviolent resistance has persisted since then carried out by the thousands of citizens who have refused to leave the besieged cities and do their best to maintain the fabric of normal daily life in the most terrifying circumstances. This is exemplified by the 7,000 who braved sniper fire and stood outside the city hospital to donate blood after the bread line massacre, by those who returned to the site of that bombing to sign the book of remembrance, by the insistence on theatres and concerts as grenades fell. However, to assess the value of additional military defence one should look at the experiences of Vukovar, where Croatian civilians were slaughtered after the city fell, or Prijedor where local Muslims decided to offer no resistance and handed over their weapons to the JNA. After Serb paramilitaries entered the area, what followed was the established pattern of terror, arrest, and detention in notorious concentration camps such as Omarska - rape, torture, summary execution, and deportation. I would argue that it is the military defence of Sarajevo that has protected it from such a fate.

As to whether the conflict is a civil war. There is no clear evidence that ‘a substantial section of the population’ were opposed to independence, as they did not vote. What is known is that this may well not have been a voluntary boycott. Serb paramilitaries were active prior to the referendum, Ballot boxes were prevented from reaching some communities by barricades, and Federal army planes leafleted communities.[10] What is also known is that there was not a longstanding nationalities problem in Bosnia prior to recognition. Bosnia was an integrated, rather than plural, society in which the majority in a 1987 census - 69.6 percent - felt that national divisions were harmful.[11] All three national parties were, prior to independence, able to form a governing coalition and citizens had equal civic rights. And however one defines Serbian orchestrated and JNA aggression prior to independence,[12] once the international community had recognized Bosnia, it was entitled to its legal rights, as I argue above. And blaming the victims for provocation seems rather like blaming a rape victim for walking alone at night - provocation or not, both rape victim and small, new independent states are entitled to the protection of the law. It is in our own interest to provide it.

Vexed Question of Self-Determination

Which brings me to the vexed question of self-determination. It is a broad term that includes both the rights to individual and communal human rights and statehood. But the right to statehood does not belong to communities because they are ethnically homogeneous but because they are already constituted political communities, as was the case with the states of the former Yugoslavia. To equate the rights of Bosnian Serbs to those of Slovenia to form a state is like saying the Jewish community scattered through North London has the same right to statehood as Scotland or Wales.[13] It is also to continue the dangerous fiction that nation state is synonymous with ethnic state. For the most part it is not. Most modern states today are

multi-ethnic. And it is not an accident that the ethnic community that had a 'blood and soil' definition of nation - Serbia - was the one state not demanding self-determination. What Serbia wanted was a 'Reich' in which one ethnicity had hegemony. That failing, it has engaged in a destructive war against states. And it is the West's collusion with that policy - by equating the construction of a democratic state with a genocidal policy of territorial expansion; by labelling both as 'nationalism',[14] and the whole as 'civil war'; and by insisting on ethnic partition as a solution - that has undermined the concept of statehood on which our political order rests, prevented us from confronting the real evil of fascism, and done nothing to protect the human rights of any ethnic group.[15] That Serbian war aims had little to do with protecting Serbs and everything to do with territorial gain is evidenced by the bombardment of their own people in the besieged cities and the capture of large parts of Croatia in which Croats were the majority.

And it was the context of the war in Croatia and the stated policies of the Serbian regime that made the policy of cantonization so dangerous. It is not that I am against cantonization per se. But Switzerland was not a unitary state upon which outside powers attempted to impose ethnic partition. Two integrated and one unintegrated cantons came together voluntarily to form a state. The process begun with the Lisbon talks in 1991 was completely different. The degree of integration of Bosnian society made the drawing of any lines of partition completely arbitrary, which is why Izetbegovic proposed non-ethnic criteria. Karadzic, however, was negotiating in the knowledge of the clear backing of the JNA and Belgrade[16] and could push for an ethnic division which of necessity had to mean the forcible exchange of population, and the experience of Croatia had already demonstrated what such an exchange would entail. The Vance-Owen plan similarly provided the Croats with the opportunity and justification for breaking their alliance with the Muslims and beginning their own round of ethnic cleansing. That is why I argue that Western partition plans boosted the confidence of those wanting to tear the republic apart by force.

Where Do We Go From Here?

So what to do now? At the time of writing, there is no question in my mind that the citizens of Gorazde cannot be saved from massacre without the use of force and that not to save them will have implications far beyond the Balkans.

The arms embargo has to be lifted, for all the moral and political reasons given by Harrison and others, and two years ago this might have been sufficient. However, to make clear my argument about responsibility: I meant that it is not enough to allow them to actually stop the genocide and defeat the aggressors; we have an obligation to do more. And at this moment in time I cannot see how it will be enough.

Current events bear out my warning of the dangers of adding a fourth side to the conflict, particularly the provocative (from the CIS point of view) use of NATO. What is needed is immediate international multilateral assistance to the Bosnian government. It has to be the UN; there is no other body and the situation is too urgent to wait for a perfect one to be created. In any case pushing for the right action by an imperfect agency may be part of the process of transformation. Randle fears that this would be a commitment to a long-term major strategic offensive. I believe a clear distinction can be made between providing military assistance to stop genocide and providing such assistance to *retake* territory. In fact the most recent statement by the Bosnian government makes this point, asking for further acts of aggression to be stopped; for the new green lines not to be 'frozen,' and for economic and

political sanctions against Serbia, Montenegro, and Serbian-controlled territories to deny them legitimacy and 'choke' the Serbian war machine. ('The Next Step in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Suffocate the War and Feed the Peace,' Statement from the Bosnian Mission to the UN, April 1994). Their major concern is peace and reconstruction and it is clear that there are many non-military means available - particularly the refusal of recognition that can make a small statelet unviable.

And even as we disagree about tactics I would hope the transnational peace and human rights movements can at least come to an agreement as to what is the basis of a just and stable peace in the region. Their demands must include: no impunity for war crimes; no acceptance of territory acquired by force; the right of all refugees to return to their homes; and no use of humanitarian aid for political purposes.

As to how we prevent the NATO/UN intervention setting a dangerous precedent, I see no alternative to three long-term and difficult campaigns. The first must be the continuing ones against the arms trade and weapons of mass destruction. The second is to drop the fruitless debate on intervention/no intervention and concentrate, as transnational movements, on identifying human rights abuses early enough to campaign for the right intervention at the right time. Third, I start from the pragmatic assumption that it is easier to transform institutions than abolish them, and that having the UN as the one agency with the possibility of giving force to international law is better than nothing at all.

What we need in the long run is a force representing the global community, not the Western alliance, at the disposal of a reformed United Nations, to carry out injunctions made by the World Court if other political pressures fail. Is the hope of creating some just system of intervention under collective international and juridical control really more naive than the hope of preventing malign interventions altogether?

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Strategic Nonviolence post Bosnia - *Michael Randle*

Are nonviolent modes of action pertinent in all types of conflict situation - or might they become so given sufficient research? It is an appropriate moment to reconsider this question, particularly in relation to 'strategic nonviolence' and civilian defence.

At the beginning of the decade strategic nonviolence appeared to have come of age historically in the wake of the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe, the defeat of the anti-Gorbachev coup in 1991, the collapse of apartheid in South Africa, and developments during preceding years in several other countries, notably, the Philippines, Chile, and Korea.

The ending of the Cold War also provided space for countries formerly locked into the East-West confrontation to reconsider their security needs, perhaps even to assign a significant role to nonviolent civilian defence (social defence). The United Nations could also be expected

to play a more dynamic role in strengthening international security now that it was no longer stymied in major crises by the predictable veto of one or other of the superpowers.

Today the outlook is grimly transformed. The end of the Cold War did not usher in a stable New World Order but an era of bloody conflicts. Moreover, most of these conflicts do not readily lend themselves to effective nonviolent action. Civilian defence as a result has become still further distanced from practical politics. Today the countries of Eastern Europe where civil resistance played a key role in the overthrow of Soviet hegemony are queuing up to join NATO. What is true of civilian defence applies to some extent to the whole alternative, non-nuclear, defence strategy pioneered by the peace movements in the 1980s. Non-offensive defence was the key element in the strategy, to be adopted either unilaterally or jointly with potential adversaries. It implied a configuration of forces and armaments that would be strong in defence but would have only a limited capacity to project force at a distance. In some versions, notably that of the Alternative Defence Commission in Britain, it would be supplemented by preparations for territorial defence and/or civilian defence. Usually a corollary of the non-offensive strategy was an unconditional renunciation of military intervention coupled with the strengthening of the UN as a peacekeeping rather than as a war-fighting force.

The Gulf war and Bosnia between them exposed the weak points in these proposals and split the peace coalition mainly responsible for promoting them. Whatever the ambiguities surrounding Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait, and however mixed the motives of the anti-Iraq alliance formed to combat it, some vigorous response was clearly called for by the international community when one UN member state occupied another and announced its demise and incorporation. However, it required the deployment of the largest offensive strategic force since the end of World War II, and the use of the most modern offensive weapons, to drive out Saddam Hussein's forces. Moreover those alternative defence commentators who predicted that the Iraqi army, because of the thoroughness of its defensive preparations, would take months or perhaps even years to dislodge were shown to have been mistaken. To acknowledge this is not to suggest that the whole concept of defensive defence has been discredited. As an agreed confidence-building measure between potentially antagonistic states or alliances it can play a valuable role. But there are limits to its applicability at the level of global security. In Bosnia the UN adopted a peacekeeping rather than a war-fighting approach - and suffered in consequence a humiliating defeat. There were, of course, other factors involved here; political error was even more responsible than military weakness for the debacle. At all events, the European and US peace movements and the left generally were divided over what should be done. Some called for the arms embargo on Bosnia to be lifted and/or for full-scale military intervention. Others, myself included, feared the latter could lead to a prolonged Vietnam-type war, especially if the aim was to establish by force a unitary sovereign state which had never been acceptable to the majority of Bosnia's Serb population. It remains the case, however, that when a solution of sorts was accepted in principle by all parties, it took NATO's war-fighting approach to push it through and end Bosnian Serb prevarication and continued aggression.

NATO intervention, coupled with the US rearmament of Croatia, had of course other consequences including enabling the Croatian army to expel several hundred thousand Serbs from their homes in central Bosnia, the Krajina and Western Slavonia. Nor is it at all clear whether the precarious truce ushered in by the Dayton Accords can lead to a stable peace. But my point is that the UN peacekeeping force, defensively armed and operating within strict

limits, was unable to halt the bloodshed. This occurred only when the NATO guns began firing.

A further important point is that when the mandate of IFOR (the Implementation Force deployed to secure the observance of Dayton) expired, it was felt necessary to retain an international military presence. To have decided otherwise would indeed have been irresponsible and almost certainly led to renewed bloodshed. Every informed observer I have talked to accepts this - not excluding pacifists and nonviolent organisations working in the area.

Sanctions against Serbia did play a role and this should not be forgotten. Milosevic had to curb his expansionist ambitions and distance himself from his maverick allies in Bosnia and Croatia. But the experience also underlines the fact that economic and political sanctions are slow-acting and cannot normally bring a swift end to an ongoing conflict, whereas military action sometimes can. Not always, of course. Sometimes even well-intentioned interventions can lead to a more prolonged and bloody conflict. However, we cannot assume a-priori that this will be the result. In Bosnia, as in Haiti, military intervention has made a difference. It might have made a difference, too, in Rwanda, if the UN had reacted in time to the genocide which is estimated to have cost the lives of a million Tutsis. Courageous attempts by outside peace groups to interpose themselves between the combatants in former Yugoslavia, or between the military and their civilian targets, proved ineffectual. More to the point have been the efforts of groups like Otverene Oci, the Balkan Peace Team in Croatia, who have made a longer-term commitment to work in the area in close cooperation with local peace and nonviolent groups. In the end it is such indigenous organisations in ex-Yugoslavia that are the key to effective nonviolent action there. Significantly many of these supported military intervention to halt the bloodshed and I doubt if any of them would now want the international force to be precipitately withdrawn.

In Kosovo the situation is different and it represents something of a test-case. The majority Albanian population has employed non-cooperation and other forms of nonviolent action to resist Belgrade's steady erosion of the province's autonomous status from 1988 on, culminating in the suspension of its constitution in 1991 and the outlawing of the Albanian language for official purposes. But while war has been avoided, political success has thus far largely eluded the campaign, chiefly because the Serb authorities are not particularly dependent on the cooperation of the local inhabitants, and because the international community has failed to take up the issue. At the time of writing (mid-February 1997) Milosevic is threatened by civil resistance within Serbia proper. For three months an alliance of opposition groups has staged courageous and imaginative demonstrations against the annulment of local elections won by the opposition in Belgrade and other cities. This has finally forced Milosevic to instruct the Serb Parliament to pass a law reinstating the victors.

There are other signs too that Milosevic is losing control. His attempt to stage a mass counter-demonstration flopped. Few things could more dramatically underline his waning influence than this failure, for Milosevic built his power, and furthered his expansionist ambitions, on a demagogic appeal to nationalist sentiment and the orchestrating of emotional mass rallies. Now some of his former colleagues, sensing the way things are moving, have begun to reveal details about his complicity in the aggression, massacres and ‘ethnic cleansing’ in Croatia and Bosnia, including his control of a group of policemen who freed thousands of convicts to join Serb militias.[17] An independent police officers’ association has also appealed in a newspaper article for officers to stop taking orders from ‘those using inquisition methods’

against the opposition.[18]. It would befitting indeed if Milosevic, the arch manipulator of the mass rally, were ultimately to fall to a genuine manifestation of people power.

Whether Kosovo could expect a better deal from any new government formed by the opposition is a moot point: Vuk Draskovic, its main leader, has a record of strident nationalism, including an insistence that Kosovo is an integral part of Serbia. However, at one of the Belgrade demonstrations he called for a minute's silence in protest against the killing of an Albanian teacher in Kosovo by Serb police, a move which has led some people to speculate that his position may be shifting.

That issue aside, the important thing to note is the greater leverage available to the opposition inside Serbia proper as compared to that in Kosovo. Milosevic would probably like nothing better than to see the back of the last ethnic Albanian in Kosovo, but it is another matter when his own population begins to turn en masse against his regime. Milosevic's undemocratic behaviour also brought international censure and a threat by the US to renew sanctions if the victors in the local elections were not reinstated or if he resorted to bloody repression to crush the demonstrations. This brings us back to the original question. Clearly nonviolent modes of action are more effective in some situations than others. Sometimes they will not be effective at all, at least within the required time frame. They are more likely to successful where the opponent depends ultimately on the cooperation of those engaged in the struggle, and where he or she is constrained by other factors from using extreme violence such as the uncertain loyalty of the army or the police, or the evident determination of other countries to apply punitive sanctions. They are least likely to be effective where the aim of the opponent is 'ethnic cleansing' or even genocide and the perpetrators of such outrages command the loyalty of fanatical armed followers or of a sizeable proportion of an ethnic group, as in Rwanda. And unfortunately it is conflicts of this nature that are now becoming more common as multi-national states like Yugoslavia or the Soviet Union, or the states carved out by colonialism in Africa and elsewhere, fracture and fall apart. Further research and action may reveal how to make nonviolent action more effective in a wider range of situations. However, simply to call for further research whenever a nonviolent solution appears beyond reach can be a way of evading the hard political and moral choices that have to be made in the world as it actually exists. One implication of this is, I think, that we should not view nonviolent action in isolation from initiatives at the diplomatic, political, and sometimes even, regrettably, the military level. We need also to recognize that in some circumstances there is a role for conflict resolution and mediation, approaches which have tended to be dismissed in the past by the proponents of more radical nonviolent action.

To conclude on a positive note, the strategic successes of nonviolent action over the last ten or fifteen years are not to be brushed aside. While there may be little scope for nonviolent action in the height of a war, or against a genocidal regime, its use at an early stage can sometimes determine whether a situation deteriorates to such extremes. In Burma and Nigeria today, civil resistance offers the one slim hope of avoiding all-out civil war and new killing fields. It is praxis, in these critical situations, carefully analyzed to draw out its implications, that will in the end convince or fail to convince people about nonviolent action and determine the limits of its effectiveness.

[1] Jacques Semelin, *Unarmed Against Hitler: Civilian Resistance in Europe 1939-1943*, Praeger, Westport, Connecticut, 1993. (Translation from the original French).

[2] Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Alternative Defence*, Porter Sargent 1973, pp.89-90.

[3] Misha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia: the Third Balkan War*, Penguin, 1992, p.86.

[4] See Mary Kaldor and Mient Jan Faber, 'A UN Transitional Authority for Bosnia-Herzegovina'in *HCA Newsletter* No. 7, Summer, 1993.

[5] For a more extended discussion of these points, see Howard Clark, 'When this bloody war is over', *Peace News*, September 1993.

[6] See Ian Williams, 'Learning (Little) from History', *War Report*, February 1994.

[7] Initial Nazi policies also focussed on the creation of *Judenfrei* lands by mass deportation and expulsion. The definite decision to implement the final solution was partly in response to other nations's reluctance to accept large numbers of Jews. One might speculate what solutions our similar disregard for the security and safety of Bosnian Muslims might lead to if the war continued unchecked. See Robert Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, (Macmillan, London I986) p.162.

[8] See Helsinki Watch, *War Crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, Vol II, (Human Rights Watch, New York, 1993)

[9] Alan Fogelquist, *Handbook of Facts on the Break-Up of Yugoslavia, International Policy and the War in Bosnia-Herzegovina,* AEIOU Publishing, Michigan, 1993, p.18ff

[10] Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia, A Short History*, p.231

[11] Silva Mesnaric, 'Bosnia and Herzegovina: Selected Background Data and Analysis on Refugees, Migration and Development', *Journal of Ethno-Development, Vol 1*, 1993. Mesnaric uses the term plural to mean a society 'deeply divided by religious, cultural, linguistic and ethnic cleavages'.

[12] For a good analysis of the role of Milosevic and the JNA in instigating the war in Bosnia see MarkMazower, *The War in Bosnia*: *An Analysis*, (Action for Bosnia, 1992).

[13] I realise this point does not resolve the problem of the formation of *new* states, by groups who may not yet have established themselves as political communities, indeed they may have been denied the chance to do so. But I would still argue that while ethnicity entails cultural and communal rights, the right to statehood should rest in part on the willingness of the group to create a *non*-ethnically based state with equal rights for all who live in the geographical region.

[14] Note that the Slovene state has made no territorial claims to those parts of Austria and Italy where Slovenes live.

[15] For a longer discussion on this issue, see Tomaz Mastnak, 'Civil Society in War', unpublished paper, 1993

[16] As cantonization plans were being discussed in Lisbon, Bosnia's northern border was already being shelled and fighting between Serbs and Croats was already occurring in Western Bosnia. See Fogelquist, p.23.

[17] For details see Julian Borger, 'The President's Secret Henchmen', *The Guardian*, 3 February 1977.

[18] Jovana Gec, *The Guardian,* 12 February 1997