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March 10, 1993

Mr. Brian Lamb of "BOOK NOTES"  
C-SPAN  
400 N. Capitol St., NW  
Suite 650  
Washington, DC 20001 (202)

Dear Mr. Lamb:

At times it was almost painful to watch, in part, the repeated showings of your C-SPAN BOOK NOTES interview of Alex Dragnich; primarily, and according to various book reviewers, it is the "worst" of current books on the former Yugoslavia.

But you must be commended because you were able to establish his identity as a Serbian polemicist...and you did well in keeping him somewhat in check.

Of the many misrepresentations given by Dragnich, I will cite first an omission. In answer to your query as to why Scanlon would endorse his book, Scanlon's business connections with the Serbs was conveniently overlooked.

Dragnich used the "The Big Lie Numbers Game" as he repeatedly beseeched historical perspective. For fifty years Serbs have given numbers from half-million to 1.5 million as the Serb victims of Croat "fascists" during WWII. These wildly-exaggerated numbers belie two truths: Overall victims of both Serbs and Croatians are not overly disproportionate...and a major factor was a typhus epidemic.

He identifies Tito as a Croat..."the Serbs fought the Germans" ...as did hundreds of thousands of Croatians in Tito's Partizans. But what does Dragnich's book say about the Serb collaborationist General Nedic as well as the discredited Chetniks?

A closing positive suggestion. An interview with independent photojournalist Martin Sugarman; his new book is now being distributed. Mr. Sugarman is soon to depart on this fourth photographic tour of the war zones. As they say, "A picture is worth a thousand words".

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

P.S. Note the "Jovanovich" in  
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

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Photographs from Martin A. Sugarman's book, "God Be With You: War in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina" (Sugarman Productions, P.O. Box 364, Malibu, CA, 90265). Sugarman traveled in the war zone during the last half of 1992. The title comes from the parting words of an old man who watched the photographer work for three hours at a mass gravesite in Mostar. At the end of the shoot, the man, who had lost his wife and children, told Sugarman, he had just identified his father among the decomposing corpses.

At left, the post office in Mostar. At right below, Sarajevo Zoo. This grizzly bear was the last of 100 animals who starved to death there.

Russell's 824-page book on the Kennedy assassination, published by Carroll & Graf, has recently been optioned by Universal-TV.

not in Dallas. When I started contacting interviews for what (17 years later) became the book, "The Man Who Knew Too Much," Oswald's older friend,

that makes Captain Alvin Karpis look like a well-rounded man). I did not intend for the assassination to preoccupy me for almost two decades.

most popular reason for the attempt profound about the gaping wound in our national psyche. For many, the attempt Please see Page 5



# Blood on the Balkans



A part from one's life—and more journalists have been killed during the war in former Yugoslavia than in any conflict since World War II—perhaps the hardest thing to preserve while covering and writing about what Misha Glenny rightly calls “the Third Balkan War” is one's lucidity. After almost two years of war, the experience of being among the combatants—Serb, Croat and Bosnia Muslim alike (in this respect if in no other there is little to differentiate among the various factions)—is so intense, and the scenes of suffering and devastation so horrible, that the temptation to become a polemicist pure and simple becomes harder and harder to resist. But as books about the war by foreign observers begin to appear, what is surprising is how much objectivity most have managed to retain.

Two of the best works to appear so far are “The Fall of Yugoslavia” by Glenny, formerly one of the BBC's principal correspondents in Eastern Europe, and “A Paper House” by Mark Thompson, a British writer who works for the Slovenian magazine “Mladina.” One of the worst is “Serbs and Croats” by the American academic and former diplomat Alex Dragnich.

The Glenny and Thompson books are exemplary in

David Rieff, whose forthcoming book is “The Exile: Cuba in the Heart of Miami,” has reported on the Balkans for The New Yorker.

## THE FALL OF YUGOSLAVIA

The Third Balkan War

By Misha Glenny

(Penguin Books: \$10; 194 pp.)

## A PAPER HOUSE

The Ending of Yugoslavia

By Mark Thompson

(Pantheon Books: \$23; 346 pp.)

## SERBS AND CROATS

The Struggle in Yugoslavia

By Alex N. Dragnich

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich: \$22.95; 160 pp.)

Reviewed by David Rieff

their intelligence, depth and dispassion. Far from being exercises in taking sides, both writers bend over backward to insist that although the Serbs are more at fault than anyone for the Yugoslav tragedy and, since the war began, have committed the bulk of the atrocities, no side is blameless. Such evenhandedness has earned Glenny almost as much hostility from the Croatian authorities as from the powers that be in Belgrade and Serb-occupied Bosnia.

In contrast, Dragnich's book seems so resolute in its portrayal of the Serbs as the most injured party that it is hard to imagine anyone in power in Belgrade finding fault with it except on the most trivial point of detail. Dragnich has taken such an extreme stance that it is hard to see how his arguments will contribute much to anyone's understanding of the crisis. He claims that Serbs held the key positions in Yugoslavia's prewar governments because “to a large degree this was forced on them,” for instance, and that the Albanians of Kosovo have suffered at least in part because “they are victims of the highest birthrate in Europe, which to no small extent explains their poverty” (as if the apartheid state the Serbs have imposed in Kosovo did not exist).

To a large extent, the Glenny and Thompson books complement each other. “The Fall of Yugoslavia” was written quickly, and, if it has a fault, suffers from Glenny's attempt both to understand the causes of the war and to portray the reporter's experience of covering it. The difficulties inherent in trying to combine these two projects are obvious, and it is to Glenny's credit that the joins between his two narratives are for the most part camouflaged very successfully. In any case, it would have been folly for him to have chosen between his historiographical and reportorial hats.

Few journalists were as well-placed as he during the early days of the Yugoslav break-up, the 1991 battles.

Please see Page 9.

almost 50 years ago!

# Blood on the Balkans

*Continued from Page 2*

between Serbs and Croats and, the following year, the martyrdom of Bosnia. Writers like myself who came later to the conflict—and came without Glenný's erudition in Balkan affairs, or his remarkable bravery—can attest both to the accuracy of what he had written and pay homage to the skill with which he has succeeded in moving from the anecdotal to the analytic, from an account of some encounter with a drunken, homicidal irregular at the front line to shrewd renderings of political jockeying in one of the belligerent capitals.

Glenný has the rare gift of being able not only to make his readers see but also to make them understand. Most reporters returning from former Yugoslavia have had the desperately frustrating experience of being told, even by their best-informed, most politically aware friends, that the war in the Balkans is simply too complicated to make sense of. Now, instead of drawing maps of former Yugoslavia on tablecloths or trying to give an overview of Serbian history at the dinner table, those of us just back from the Balkans can keep our pens in our pockets, and, rather than disrupting social occasions with our baroque, horrific tales, can simply press a copy of "The Fall of Yugoslavia" upon those of our acquaintances who really are curious about what is going on.

Glenný's book is urgent, straightforward and immediately gripping. In contrast, Mark Thompson's "A Paper House" is a leisurely, erudite tour, a sort of political travel narrative, of the

lands that once made up the Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia. Thompson is less interested in describing the war than in giving his readers a sense of what it has been like—both for himself as a foreigner and for the Slovenians, Croats, Serbs and Albanians he has come to know—to watch a national identity crumble (and whatever people now say, there was such a thing as "Yugoslavism," and it was more than a flag of convenience for Serbian hegemony) and to discover that one lives not in a medium-sized European country on the road to prosperity but rather in a fractured, hellish place in which there seems to be less hope and less sanity with every passing day. "How do you see the future?" Thompson asks a Serbian acquaintance in Kosovo. "I don't see it," the man replies curtly, adding, "I'm very sorry to live in such a crazy country, but I can't go to Zanzibar!"

Actually, many Serbs, Croats, Bosnians and Albanians *are* voting with their feet. A quarter of a million Bosnian war refugees have arrived in Germany during the past year, while almost as many have spread out through the rest of Europe. Even the Serbs themselves, whatever the claims made by officials in Belgrade or their apologists overseas, are not immune to opting out. Some are so desperate that they line up for South African visas, assuming, as one would-be emigrant put it recently, that the situation in Serbia is definitely beyond repair, whereas the situation in South Africa is only *possibly* beyond repair.

Thus does the world appear from the vantage point of former Yugo-

slavia. It is a mental condition which the most extreme politics, beliefs and events have come to seem almost ordinary, and in which the ordinary seems like some figment of the imagination. Civil society, like peace itself, has become so psychologically remote over the course of the last three years that many people have a hard time even remembering what it was like, let alone believing that it will ever be enjoyed again.

Thompson's great strength is that he has succeeded in portraying this Yugoslavia that has died, in explicating its contradictions and its strengths and of giving a nuanced sense of just how difficult it was to be a Yugoslav, even in better times, through portraits of figures ranging from Tito's former comrade and later great adversary, Milovan Djilas, to experimental

## BOOK MARK

For an excerpt from  
"The Fall of Yugoslavia,"  
see Opinion, Page 3.

filmmaker Dusan Makavejev, to foot soldiers in all the wars, both ideological and actual, that eventually brought the federation down. The people whom Thompson admires are edgy, demoralized and often cynical, while the true believers, the blind nationalists within every ethnic group, seem to be the only people left with real energy and real confidence. Makavejev speaks nostalgically of the late '60s; Djilas momentarily retrieves the fire of his hard-line Communist youth; Thompson's col-

leagues at "Mladina" indulge in elegant, impassioned anti-clerical and anti-nationalist arguments. In other words, he portrays them vainly decrying exactly those movements and habits of feeling that most of their fellow-citizens have come to cherish above all other beliefs.

For all his commitment to what appears to boil down to a humane social democracy, and his repeated insistence that better times will come sooner or later, there is a smell of dashed hopes and defeat about Thompson's more optimistic arguments and his attempts to make the marginal people with whom he sympathizes stand for what the successor states of the former Yugoslavia still could become. For if ever there was a place that exemplified Yeats' nightmare world in which the best lacked all conviction and the worst were full of passionate intensity, it is Thompson's Balkan "paper house." And somewhere he knows it. Appropriately enough, Thompson ends "A Paper House" with a scene in a cemetery. He has followed a village procession, unsure of its significance, only to discover that the field he has been led to "was a churchyard and the people were mourners, huddled over a grave."

In his book, Glenný more straightforwardly records his apprehension about the future. "There were solutions to the Yugoslav crisis before the war began," he writes, "but these have been

lost amid a mountain of bones. We must continue to search for these lost hopes and perhaps one day we will find them. Until we do, the Balkan peninsula will 'bleed.'"

Glenný's judgment, encrusted as it is with qualifiers and sorrow, is about as optimistic as it is possible to be. Of course in optimistic America, where a new President can come into office insisting that he still "believes in a place called hope," and who can talk in his inaugural address of "forcing the spring" (as if that season would not arrive whatever Americans did or didn't do), even tragedies are expected to teach us something. Perhaps this is why so many Americans have had such difficulty making sense of the war between Serbs and Croats, or of the genocidal war the Serbs in both Serbia and Bosnia have been waging against the Bosnian Muslims.

Such news cannot be rendered as anything but irredeemably terrible. Neither Glenný's book nor Thompson's will change any of this, of course. But at least they afford those who want it the possibility of understanding. That is the most a writer can hope for. The fact that the Bosnians had the right to expect rather more from the people of Western Europe and North America is, of course, another matter. ■



# GOD BE WITH YOU

WAR IN CROATIA AND BOSNIA - HERZEGOVINA

MARTIN SUGARMAN

photo exhibit & booksigning

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A Serbian-born American millionaire called Milan Panić was invited to be the Prime Minister of "Yugoslavia." Someone was needed to negotiate with the Europeans, who loathe Milošević and can't even claim to believe a word he says. Mr Panić threw himself into the job with gusto: he raced from one Balkan capital to another, contradicting himself from day to day, waving his arms and preening in front of the cameras. A sincere patriot, he wants to rehabilitate Serbia and get the sanctions lifted. Hence, at the London conference on former Yugoslavia, he appeared to discomfit Milošević by promising, for instance, that "Yugoslavia" would recognise Croatia in its present borders, if special status is accorded to the Serb enclaves. He also met Ibrahim Rugova—the first top-level contact between the Kosovars and Bel-

Dragnich decried lack of even-handedness of American policy. Example:

PANIC ... Naturalized Serb-American given "dispensation" by American State department to become senior officer of a country under sanctions by the U.S.

Ex-Minnesota Governor Prpic...a native-born Croatian was denied permission to assume a ministerial post in the new, free and democratic Republic of Croatia.

tenegro's leadership, with each blow rendering the federation less progressive, less reformable, and less habitable for non-Serbs. It is entirely apt that the dutiful Čosić should preside over his hideous creation, ready to sink with it beneath the waves.

As for the Serbian opposition, it remains internally divided and radically perplexed by the national war being waged in BiH; Vuk Drašković still wants to be against Milošević and *his* war, without abandoning traditional Serb national goals.

Nor is there yet any sign that the public will either hasten Milošević's long-postponed appointment with democracy, or shake any life into the opposition. Anti-government feeling runs high, seemingly generated more by anger at the prospect of *losing* the war in BiH than



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Back in Belgrade, members of the "Yugoslav" parliament from the Serbian Socialist Party—Milošević's power base—proposed a motion of no confidence in Panić and his federal government. It seemed that the puppet was acquiring a will of his own and needed an admonitory shake. The motion was defeated after the "Yugoslav" president publicly backed Panić's behaviour in London.

Western commentators promptly speculated on the power struggle in Belgrade. As yet, however, there is no struggle: Panić still has no power base of his own, and he cannot challenge Milošević—even assuming he wants to—until a substantial proportion of the SSP defects to him. Perhaps there is a rift between the two men; perhaps not. What does it matter? Serbian policy remains unchanged in all essentials. Besides, Panić has said more than once that the Bosnian Serbs are entitled to keep almost all of the territory they have seized.

The president who backed Panić is none other than Dobrica Ćosić, the solemn novelist and Academician who is universally seen as the father of the nationalist movement in the mid-1980s—the movement that the Serbian League of Communists picked up and wielded as a hammer to smash Kosovo's autonomy, and Vojvodina's, and Montenegro's leadership, with each blow rendering the federation less progressive, less reformable, and less habitable for non-Serbs. It is entirely apt that the dutiful Ćosić should preside over his hideous creation, ready to sink with it beneath the waves.

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eventually be fulfilled and the displaced people will be able to return. After all, the Plan is premised on the principle that Croatia's borders will not change, so the Croats don't have to worry about that. And there are already some indications that moderates in Knin may be gaining an edge over hardliners who insist that the UNPAs will never again belong to Croatia, even if Zagreb can be persuaded by the West to grant them special status.

This logic is long-term, looking beyond the remaining six months of the UNPROFOR's twelve-month deployment. Which doesn't answer the Zagreb government's urgent wish to be able to reassure its traumatised electorate that what was lost in the war will definitely be regained in the peace.

As always in searching for solutions in the arena of former Yugoslavia, one is led ineluctably back to Belgrade. A future for the UNPAs cannot begin to be charted before the rebels accept that Croatia is the only country they have, like it or not. But they won't accept this until the conflict stops in Bosnia-Herzegovina. That won't happen until the Bosnian Serbs drop *their* unrealistic demands. And that, in turn, won't happen until the Serbs of Serbia have kicked out Milošević and his régime, bag and baggage.

\*

In Serbia, nothing has happened to raise anyone's hopes. On 27 April the *Savez Republika Jugoslavia* was proclaimed in Belgrade. It comprises, of course, Serbia and Montenegro. No other state has recognised this contrivance as the successor to the SFRY. Alone among EC states, Greece—which is embroiled in dangerous games of its own, in the south Balkans—would like to.

A fortnight later, with pressure mounting from abroad to pull the Yugoslav Army out of BiH, Milošević purges the senior ranks of the JNA. Thirty-eight generals are ousted, and several admirals. The generals include Blagoje Adžić, the neanderthal Minister of Defence. Milutin Kukanjac, the commander in BiH, is replaced by Ratko Mladić, formerly of the Knin garrison, a fanatic who had opposed the withdrawal of the JNA from Krajina. After this night of long knives, the Yugoslav Army is again the Serbian Army in all but name, just as it was when Yugoslavia was born seventy-four years ago.

One is reminded of those nature films that show a plant swelling and burgeoning beneath a clockwork sun; now the film is playing backwards, yet the plant withers slackly as it shrinks, instead of returning to the fruitful bud.

Serbia is undoing itself, staggering back to its crib self-blinded, cursing the world.

# Events leading to the Yugoslavian Debacle

by  
Borut Prah

**ABSTRACT:** It appears that some very important people in the US State Department invested in the businesses of communist Yugoslavia. These investments would go sour if Yugoslavia broke up. After thousands of dead, tens of thousands maimed for life, and over a million of refugees the investments went sour nevertheless. Here is how it happened.

**1985:** John D. Scanlan succeeds Lawrence Eagleburger, as the US Ambassador to Yugoslavia. Eagleburger leaves the State Department and becomes the president of Kissinger Associates, with Lord Carrington as a co-founder.

**1986:** Yugoslavia proclaims the Yugo car sale to USA the "deal of the century". The deal is arranged by Eagleburger who not only becomes the first owner of a red Yugo in the United States but his New Caanan, N.Y. neighbors observe that his annual salary increased to close to one million dollars.

**Sometimes between 1986 and 1989:** Kissinger Associates form more major new business deals in Yugoslavia. For 270 million dollars, American firm, ICN Pharmaceuticals, becomes 75% owner of Galenika, a state pharmaceutical laboratories in Belgrade. Galenika produces promising but unproven drugs developed by American drug companies that have only been tested on animals. Galenika distributes the drugs through the Yugoslavian health care system. The successful Galenika drugs become valuable statistical foundation for eventual FDA certification. The failures are easily controlled

by the Belgrade government. The president of ICN is Milan Panic, a Serbian immigrant in California. Panic Holding Company also buys 49% of TV broadcasting company in Belgrade and 16% of Jugopetrol, Serbia's only oil refining and distributing company. These huge investments are not financed out of pocket by Milan Panic, who left Yugoslavia in 1960 penniless.

**Spring 1990:** First multiparty free elections are held in two of the republics that make the Yugoslavian Federation, Slovenia and Croatia. Communists lose in both republics and non-communist democratically elected governments are formed, first since 1945.

**Year 1990:** The Yugoslavia federal government adamantly maintains its communist policies and refuses to give any consideration to the democracies in Croatia and Slovenia. All negotiations repeatedly break down. Slovenian and Croatian governments realize that nobody, even USA, has ever been able to negotiate anything with the communists.

**December 1990:** Referendums to create an independent country, first in Slovenia than in Croatia win with over 85% majority. USA opposes any break up of Yugoslavia.

**January 1991:** Yugoslavia has the third largest army in Europe. It includes Soviet missiles with a range of one thousand miles, enough to hit Paris. Called Yugoslavia People's Army, it has one hundred thousand officers, about 80% of them are Serbian nationals. Secession by the two northern republics threaten their job security. A proclamation by the League of Communists, who actually run the Army, that the military will prevent any breakup of Yugoslavia, is read aloud to troops on all bases.

**Sometime in 1991:** John D. Scanlon returns to Belgrade, which he left in 1989 as the US Ambassador to Yugoslavia, and becomes

Vice President of ICN Pharmaceuticals for Eastern Europe. His residency is in Belgrade.

**Spring 1991:** Slovenia and Croatia schedule secession for summer of 1991 with growing fears that Army will intervene. Secession is allowed under Yugoslavia constitution although the Army claims that four-four vote gives it right to take over - a legalized military coup which receives blessing from Bush Administration.

**May 1991:** Although Yugoslavia has a debt of some 20 billion dollars to the West, it has a positive balance of two billion dollars with the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia's defense minister goes to Moscow and buys one billion dollars of additional arms: Mig 29s, heavy helicopters, etc., without knowledge of the Yugoslavian Prime Minister - confirming that Army is in charge.

**June 1991:** US Secretary James Baker III again comes to Belgrade and assures the communist government that USA will support them in keeping Yugoslavia together. The head of Yugoslavia Army tells Mr. Baker that Army can control Slovenian secession in two hours and calls it "The Little Desert Storm". American military attache is sent to Slovenia to observe the action.

**June 25 1991:** Slovenia secedes and the Army unleashes some 400 tanks, hits communications with Mig-29s, but tanks get bogged down in the Alpine terrain and jets violate Italian and Austrian air space. After six days the third largest Army in Europe retreats. Serbian officers consider this a mortal insult from Slovenians who in total had 5000 light arms and one helicopter.

**Fall 1991:** Yugoslavia Army moves the line of attack to areas where their tanks can operate, to eastern Croatia region of Slavonian flatlands. The third largest army in Europe now has more success applying

its Soviet tactics but the balance of armaments slowly starts to shift from captured communist depots to democratic forces.

**1991:** Pat Buchanan repeatedly mentions Eagleburger's connections with the "gang in Belgrade" on press and TV, while Eagleburger continues to conduct US policy in Yugoslavia.

**January 1992:** USA still insists on total embargo of both sides, about which Richard Nixon writes in The Wall Street Journal that it had the perverse effect of helping the communist side. The Army confirms this by stating that they couldn't care less about the embargo, "we can shoot non-stop for a whole year".

**March 1992:** USA reluctantly recognizes Slovenia, Croatia, and, surprisingly, Bosnia. Recognition of Bosnia complicates the matters. Bosnia consist of Serbs and Croatians and of an artificial nationality created by Tito - Muslims.

**June 1992:** Milan Panic, president of ICN Inc., magically arrives to Belgrade despite of the total embargo and is somehow installed as the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia. Panic is also a defense minister of Yugoslavia. He proclaims to call back and disarm the Yugoslavian army and Serbian mercenaries. Press never mentions his investments in Yugoslavia nor his business partners.

**August 1992:** The balance of arms is now about even except for jets which continue to bomb unimpeded with napalm and fragmentation bombs. The Army morale is very low, casualties and desertions are high and Army must resort to mercenaries who earn 50 Deutsch Marks for a weekend of fighting and 100 DM for each confirmed kill.

**September 1992:** United Nations expel Yugoslavia which ceases to exist for all practical purposes.