

Washington's cowardice risks a new war in Bosnia

by Umberto Pascali

A tragedy was narrowly averted in Bosnia during the Sept. 14 elections, and the danger is far from over. On the basis of electoral fraud, dirty tricks, and irregularities, the candidate of Radovan Karadzic's Greater Serbians, Momcilo Krajisnik, was almost "legally" elected to become the new President of Bosnia. Krajisnik, suspected of and investigated for war crimes, received, according to the official results, 690,373 votes, while President Alija Izetbegovic received 729,034 votes.

Izetbegovic's margin of victory was small, but the plan had been to reduce his constituency by fraud and "bureaucratic mistakes," and then to split it with the other Muslim candidate, former Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic. And thus, the mechanism of the Dayton Accords, which calls in principle for a united, sovereign, multiethnic Bosnia, would have brought a butcher into the Presidency!

The legal blitzkrieg

A Krajisnik victory would have forced the Muslim population, the majority in the country, into desperate reactions. Bosnian Ambassador-at-large Nedzib Sacirbey described what happened with the few Muslim Bosnians who were allowed to vote in their own towns, now in the hands of the aggressors in the "Serbian entity." "When the Serbs and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe [OSCE] choose to locate the polling place across from a mass grave, when the Serbian policemen who accompany the Muslim refugees to vote, are the same who kicked them out during the 'ethnic cleansing,' then this is a form of intimidation," he said.

Under these conditions, in which an accomplice of the mass murderers would have won the election, a confrontation could have easily ensued and the Anglo-French "puppet mas-

ters" would have then proclaimed the "clear necessity" for a partition of Bosnia.

This would have led to a more violent spiral of aggression and violence. The genocidal plans for which the Greater Serbians had been originally deployed, had been momentarily frozen by the Dayton Accords. In this way, those plans would have been made operational again; this time, it would have been almost impossible to stop them.

Fortunately, an opposition coalition in the Serbian "entity" within Bosnia (the so-called Republika Srpska), put up a candidate, Mladen Ivanic, who received 305,803 votes, thereby blocking Krajisnik's designs on the Presidency.

The forces that were the string-pullers behind this "legal blitzkrieg" are easily identified: the usual suspects, such as Henry Kissinger and George Soros, who had the whole George Bush apparatus and the dwarfs of London and Paris behind them. But this is not the whole story. The perfidy of the enemy is never an excuse for defeat. The other necessary element is the stupidity and cowardice of "our army."

In this case, the tragedy almost occurred because the U.S. government, or relevant parts of it, determined to have the elections, regardless. According to sources, there had been an ongoing debate inside the White House over the elections. The dangers implied in that decision were known, but the decision was taken anyway.

The OSCE committee, under U.S. Ambassador Robert Frowick, which organized the elections, was forced to postpone the municipal elections, also scheduled for Sept. 14, because of the incalculable number of Serbs who had been fraudulently registered to vote (including dead people, citizens of Serbia, etc.). Still, the elections for the Presidency, and the national and local parliaments, were kept on schedule. In vain, Izetbegovic's party, the SDA, and others, asked for

assurance that the elections would be “free and fair” according to the Dayton criteria.

One week before the elections, on Sept. 8, Kissinger came out with an ultimatum for the partition of Bosnia, in an op-ed in the *Washington Post*. With his usual perverted logic, Kissinger argued that the “present electoral travesty in Bosnia should be abandoned,” because it would lead the United States “into participation in a civil war in Bosnia.” Not so strangely, Kissinger was forecasting a re-explosion of the civil war after the elections.

Kissinger stressed that the results of the aggression must be accepted as a *fait accompli*, because the “ethnic cleansing” had been successful. “With extensive ethnic cleansing, only the most insignificant remnants of other groups [i.e., the victims] are left in each area,” he wrote. Indeed, the genocide had achieved stability, he said, and thus “to force these now ethnically homogeneous regions [!] into a common entity, guarantees another round of ethnic cleansing in order to reverse the consequence of the last round.”

“Crimes such as the Serb slaughter of Muslim prisoners in Srebrenica are despicable,” he said. “The case could have been made, in the early stage of the conflict, that Serbian conduct was so egregious a violation of our moral convictions that response to it was clearly necessary. But that moment was permitted to pass.” And so now, partition has to be accepted. According to Kissinger’s logic, the fact that the Nazis had conquered and “ethnically cleansed” Poland, should have been accepted on behalf of “stability.”

Kissinger, the Republican Party’s foreign policy cult figure, states clearly that a partition of Bosnia must be accepted, and the elections will show that there is no other way. Indeed, the election of Krajisnik to the Presidency, would have vindicated Kissinger.

Kissinger’s recipe? “Realistically, a separate Muslim entity may be the best achievable outcome. It would be a solution most compatible with the principle of self-determination and most conducive to long-term stability. The other ethnic groups should have the same option or join their mother countries. . . . Once ethnic lines are given international status, the cease-fire will be much easier to enforce.”

De Charette’s ‘new President of Bosnia’

As if to show that Kissinger’s scenario was the only possible solution, on Sept. 16, two days after the elections, while the votes were being counted and the enormity of the fraud in Republika Srpska became evident, French Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette, in a public announcement, endorsed the victory of Krajisnik. While talking to journalists about the coming meeting in Paris of President Izetbegovic and Serbia’s Slobodan Milosevic, the French minister said that “they could be accompanied by the new President of Bosnia.”

While De Charette was recognizing the coup that did not take place, the British propaganda machine was preparing the world to accept a shocking victory of the Greater Serb

candidate. Reuters news agency began to issue wires on how the “gap” between Izetbegovic and Krajisnik was being quickly narrowed. There were moments of drama and possibly panic in Sarajevo, but also in Washington.

Izetbegovic: ‘Unity and justice!’

But the plot failed. On Sept. 18, President Izetbegovic announced: “The results of the elections show that I have been elected, by the highest number of votes, President of the future Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency. I would like to thank all the citizens who voted for me. I am totally aware of the responsibility imposed by this nomination. I would like to repeat once more what my political aims are. In the short term, they are: unity of Bosnia, and justice.”

Ambassador Frowick, as head of the Temporary Electoral Commission, stated that it had been established that, in the Republika Srpska election, there were 170,000 more votes than registered voters. But, incredibly, the statement did not lead to any request for the cancellation of the election results there.

The fight of Izetbegovic’s party to stop the electoral fraud had started long before the elections. But the President had been put in a terrible situation. He was under heavy pressure from the U.S. representatives to go along with elections that he knew could spell terrible consequences for his country. At the same time, he kept stressing that the United States must be considered the key ally of Bosnia. These two crucial elements—the need to protect his country at any cost, and the need to preserve Bosnia’s friendship with the United States—risked a policy failure. In a statement issued after meeting U.S. envoys Richard Holbrooke and John Kornblum, Izetbegovic stated:

“We thank all the participants of the international community . . . for their efforts in support of the elections process. In many parts of the country, the elections provided Bosnian citizens with a real opportunity to express their democratic will. . . . In some areas of the country, specifically the Serb entity, there were reports of serious irregularities in the conduct of the election process. Some of our political parties have already expressed their grave concern. The Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina will also present its concerns as the facts are further ascertained and will submit the relevant evidence to the proper forums for the necessary response. We wish that all efforts be undertaken to correct any serious deficiencies and irregularities.

“We remain committed, with the necessary contributions and efforts of the international community and other parties, to the full implementation of the Dayton Agreement and to ensure that the necessary preconditions for free and fair elections are achieved. . . .

“The U.S.,” he concluded, “has a particularly key role and decisive responsibility in this effort. The U.S.A. and Bosnia are committed to working together in the post-electoral period.”