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Bosnia and Herzegovina and Terrorism

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ABSTRACT

The author describes the causes and roots of terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, all of which are deeply rooted in the former Yugoslav system. Yugoslavia, often idealized in the West as a model for today's multi-ethnic ideology, supported, trained, and even gave refuge to terrorist groups around the world. Yugoslavia earned approximately 700 million dollars a year selling weapons to "non-aligned" countries.

In addition to its problematic activities in the area of foreign affairs, the Yugoslav communist government committed terrorist acts against its own citizens in the diaspora who opposed Yugoslav policies. Between 1945-1990, it organized the murder of 73 Croatian emigrants.

With the disintegration of Yugoslavia, five new states emerged. One is Bosnia and Herzegovina. The author describes the birth and development of terrorist groups in this country, placing emphasis on today's most dangerous form, Islamic terrorism, which is supported by the Muslim government in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thousands of "mujahedeen" who arrived during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina to fight for Islam. Since the end of the war, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a undeclared protectorate.

The international community holds the most power, but also carries the most responsibility for the situation in this country. Many terrorism issues have not been resolved, often because political problems are concealed in order to maintain the image of an ideal multi-ethnic community and create the impression that the creators of the Dayton Agreement have succeeded. The author warns that such a view toward terrorism is extremely dangerous, and that political trials such as the Leutar case are unacceptable in the democratic world.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was, until its independence and international recognition in April 1992, one of the six republics of the Socialistic Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ). Thus, in order to explain the phenomena of terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is necessary to first explain the relationship between Yugoslavia and terrorism, considering that this later strongly affected Bosnia's position toward terrorism. Up until the disintegration of the Socialistic Federative Republic, Yugoslavia had been repeatedly accused of supporting international terrorism, and at the same time of directly using terrorist methods on their citizens in emigration. Yugoslavia responded to the accusations with counter-accusations, charging that the (western) countries accusing them utilized double standards towards terrorism.¹

In order to address the problem of "double standards", the definition of terrorism being used at that time in Yugoslavia needs to be considered. In the Yugoslav Military Encyclopedia of 1975, there was no definition of the word "terrorism". Terror is defined as "a violent action (system of government) whose goal is frightening or destroying the opponent, etc."² In 1986 in Belgrade, "The Security Lexicon" was published, in which terrorism was defined as "planned and systematic use of acts of violence to spread fear among people who are a members of government institutions



New York, September 11, 2001.

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BOOK REVIEWS

or organized groups for the purpose of reaching certain political goals."3 In the Criminal Law of SFRJ, international terrorism is addressed in section 155a, and: "whoever with the intention of harming a foreign country, liberation movement, or international organization performs the kidnapping of some person or some other type of violence; creates an explosion or fire, or performs a generally dangerous act or uses generally dangerous means endangers a person's life or property of value, will be punished...", etc.4

The General Encyclopedia of the Lexicographic Institute of 1982 makes a distinction between terror and terrorism and presents both definitions. Terror is defined in the same manner as in the Military Encyclopedia: "use of violence whose goal is to frighten or destroy the opponent". Terrorism is defined as "a way for individuals, political groups, and organizations to fight against the existing social-political orders and political systems based on the use of organized violence...".5 The Yugoslav Military Lexicon defines terror as "the use of violence to frighten a political opponent and break his resistance...", while terrorism is defined as "organized and sustained use of violence with the intention to destroy by provoking fear and personal insecurity among the citizenry the authority of the state or to achieve certain political goals".6 There is a certain politicization in regard to these definitions, especially if they are considered in their entirety. Nonetheless, Yugoslav theory considers terror to be violence committed by the state (violence from above), and terrorism to be violence committed against the state (violence from below).

A problem arises with the definition of international terrorism taken from SFRJ law, where the significant, ambiguous construction "liberation movements" appears. Here terrorism enters the political, ideological sphere and there is no longer a consensus on its definition. Those who for some are freedom fighters are for others terrorists. These definitions are not intended to explain the concept of terrorism; they serve only to enlighten readers about how the term was understood in former Yugoslavia. Terrorism is difficult to define in final terms because political changes also alter the definition of words, and nobody refers to himself as a terrorist anymore. The concept has been replaced by less objectionable designations: fighters for freedom, justice, human rights and so forth. It is important to provide some of the newer definitions of terrorism so that they can be compared with what former Yugoslavia considered terrorism and what is today considered terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the rest of the world.

One of the better definitions of terrorism is that of the American FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation): "an illegal use of force and violence against persons or properties in order to frighten or force the government, civil society, or any other part of society to do something, their goal being the promotion of their own political or social goals".7 The American State Department uses a definition of terrorism found in Chapter 22 of the USA codex, section 2656: "Terrorism is politically motivated violence with premeditation which is performed against non-combatants by sub-national groups or secret agents, usually with the intent to influence public opinion".8 The Ministry of Defense of the United States of America defines terrorism as: "an illegal use or threat to use force or violence against individuals or properties in order to frighten governments or societies, frequently in order to reach political, religious, or ideological goals".9 So it is clear that different services of the same state institutions define terrorism differently, depending on their area of activity and authority.

As mentioned, Yugoslavia has been accused in the past of supporting or participating in international terrorism: condoning the presence of known terrorist "Carlos" in Yugoslavia; the arrest but failure to extradite four members of the Baader-Meinhof group; connections to the Italian Red Brigades; and the failure to extradite (protection of) the Palestinian, Abu Abbas. In 1978, Austria's "Die Presse" accused the Yugoslav government of protecting (hiding in their territorial waters) a Lebanese ship which was transporting "Arrow" anti-aircraft missiles produced by the Soviet Union for the "Red Brigades".10 The Yugoslav government responded to these accusations with counter-accusations that western "reactionary countries" supported and tolerated anti-Yugoslav emigrant terrorist organizations. At the same time, Yugoslavia was accused of using terrorist methods to eliminate its emigrant citizens.11 As a defense against these ever-increasing accusations, Yugoslav terrorism theorists proposed the use of all resources at its disposal, as well as the nonaligned movement and the international community as a whole, to achieve a redefinition of liberation and revolutionary movements and thus invalidate the indictments against Yugoslavia.12

A short review of former Yugoslavia's relationship toward liberation-terrorist movements can serve to illuminate certain past events and issues.

By command of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of SFRJ, November 17th, 1995, the Educational Security Center was formed in Pančevo, which included the School of Security and School of Military Police, and later the school for members of foreign armies from nonaligned, friendly countries and liberation movements.¹³ The School of Security was renamed the Intelligence-Security Education Center (OBŠC) in 1975.

As part of the same structure, the Inspectors School of the Second Federal Administration for National Defense (SSNO) was formed in Kovin in 1964, as well as the School for Diversionary and Anti-diversionary Activities.

In the 1988/89 school year, 36 regular classes were offered in the OBŠC (courses lasted thirty days for reserve and three months for active officers) and three seminars (which lasted from 5 to 10 days). The training of the second generation of officers undergoing the year long program in the intelligence-security courses KŠŠT KoV and final schooling (4 years) of the Military Academy (VA) and military high-school (SVŠ) KoV, special units course, was thus achieved. 1339 auditors and military-school students finished, and the average grades were very good.¹⁴

Between 1960 and 1986 Pančevo, over 800 foreign auditors from 10 countries and 4 liberation movements were educated in OBŠC.¹⁵ Members of liberation movements were also trained in Yugoslav military schools to become helicopter pilots, commanders of low and higher level units, and officers in various special areas and services.¹⁶

Yugoslavia assisted in various ways almost all "liberation and revolutionary movements", including: MPLA - Angola; FRELIMO - Mozambique; PAIGC - Guinea Bissau; SWAPO - Namibia; the Patriotic Front ZAPU and ZANU in Zimbabwe; ANC in South Africa; the Liberation Committee OAJ; the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO); the NR in Angola; Tanzania; the National Unity Front of Chile;¹⁷ and others. Even though this assistance to the liberation and revolutionary movements was offered with no strings attached, it still brought large material profits. As a result of its policy of nonalignment and benevolence toward these movements, exports of Yugoslav artillery and military equipment to foreign (nonaligned) countries increased considerably. In 1974 alone, there were more export agreements reached than there had been during the past 20 years. 66 Yugoslav companies received contracts worth approximately 713 million dollars. The full capacity of the military industry was engaged for years into the future.¹⁸

In addition to military institutions, assistance and training of the "liberation and revolutionary movements and organizations" was also provided by institutions which were a part of the Federal Secretariat of Internal Affairs; specifically, the federal services of state security and the Security Institute, which was formed by the Federal Secretariat of Internal Affairs.¹⁹

These activities, or indications that they existed, gave foreign countries on the other side of the ideological curtain the ammunition they needed to accuse the Yugoslav government of supporting terrorism. It was also accused of using terrorist methods to eliminate its citizens in emigration.

Partial investigations were undertaken in the Republic of Croatia after it gained independence in 1991; they revealed that the Yugoslav government, through its intelligence-security services, had liquidated 73 Croatian emigrants, of which five are still missing.²⁰ In a book by Božo Vukušić, secretary of the "The Commission to Certify Postwar Victims of the Communist System Abroad", and the "Committee to Certify War and Postwar Victims", it is written that agents of the Yugoslav secret service killed 69 Croatian emigrants throughout the world between 1946-1990, while eight are listed as missing (their disappearance is assumed to be connected to actions of the Yugoslav services). Also, 24 unsuccessful assassinations are recorded, the victims having survived after suffering various degrees of injury or aftereffects. Three emigrants were kidnapped, and four kidnap attempts failed, as the victims succeeding in saving themselves.²¹

On the other hand, ?uro Rebić, a former employee of the Federal Services of National Security who was for most of his working career responsible for clerical matters and

internal communications,²² and later acted as a publicist for the SDB, writes in his book *Spies, diversionists, terrorists* about numerous terrorist attacks by emigrant organizations against Yugoslav objects. Rebić claims: "The extreme pro-fascist Yugoslav emigration performed between 1946-1985 about 400 terrorist actions in the country and abroad which resulted in the death of 102 and wounding of 330 persons". Among other things, Rebić claims that the "Croatian Revolutionary Brotherhood" alone (founded in 1961), performed 120 terrorist attacks during the first year after its creation, in which 53 persons died and 118 were wounded.²³

It is interesting to note that Rebić, true to Yugoslav communist policies towards emigrants, and especially Croatian emigrants, labels all the emigrant organizations fascist, criminal, and terrorist, although the majority was not. This was done in order to politically disqualify them.²⁴ Rebić's text represents the official political stance and thus serves as an accusation directed at the "western" governments: "A complete symbiosis of reactionary-bourgeois elements and the dregs of defeated fascism and its collaborators has come into existence. Unanimous in their attitude towards socialism, they differ only in the methods of struggle they employ to destroy it, though in time these differences are becoming fewer."²⁵ It is indicative that in Rebić's and similar books and articles, the deaths of Croatian and other emigrants are rarely even mentioned, except when attempts are made to disseminate disinformation, arouse suspicion and provoke discord in emigrant circles, or disguise Yugoslav secret service operations. In such cases, it was claimed that the victims died as a result of disagreements between various emigrant organizations.

The true state of affairs is illustrated clearly by a trial that took place in 1981 in the western Germany city of Saarbrücken, after which three Yugoslav secret police agents were sentenced to a total of 35 years in prison for planning and organizing the murder of at least one Yugoslav (Croatian) emigrant.²⁶ At that time, the German weekly paper "Der Spiegel" quoted the prosecutor in the trial: "While the government in Bonn is negotiating with Yugoslav politicians about containing international terrorism, Yugoslavia itself is violating the spirit of these negotiations and committing acts of terrorism on foreign territory intended to "liquidate" political refugees from Yugoslavia living abroad". The "activities" of the Yugoslav government were also harshly attacked by the Canadian press (The Vancouver Sun) in 1979 and in the Swedish "Parlament" on October 14th, 1980.

Two years earlier, the American publicist Jack Anderson published sections from the secret report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States Senate, which alleged that the Yugoslav secret service in the USA was "probably committing murders". Senator McGovern requested a thorough investigation, but everything was quickly hushed up.²⁷ Temporary political pragmatism had apparently taken precedence over long term security.

Terrorism as a declaration of war

Bosnia and Herzegovina's struggle for independence began with a literal bang. In the months prior to the outbreak of war, explosive devices were planted, kidnappings occurred, and the first human victims fell. The situation was worst in Herzegovina; that is, in Mostar, as this was where the largest concentration of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina was located. They, along with many Muslims, were unwilling to accept Serbian domination, as it was clear to them what was being planned for them in Yugoslavia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The situation worsened when the war escalated in the Republic of Croatia, Serbian reservists marched on Herzegovina, and the Serbian army attacked Dubrovnik.

Between January 1st 1991 and February 25th 1992, when neither war nor peace reigned on the territory of Herzegovina, 72 explosions were recorded in areas which were under the authority of the Center of Security Services, Mostar, 28 of which took place in the city of Mostar itself; within the next month, six more explosions occurred in Mostar.²⁸ In addition, there were also several kidnappings and murders.

The counterintelligence service of the Federal Secretariat for National Defense (SSNO), which operated inside the JNA (and was known as KOS) played a significant part in the preparation of aggression on Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Almost all the leaders of the rebellions in Croatia officially collaborated with this service, which directed, armed, trained, and protected them from the police forces. In the

beginning, this protection was represented as "dividing parties at war", work for which they solicited tactical and often strategic assistance. For the most part, the JNA simply protected positions the Serbian paramilitary forces had overtaken. These paramilitary units later became official units of the joint Yugoslav, that is, Greater Serbian, armed forces.

In addition to equipping the paramilitary units, the counterintelligence service also planned terrorist actions which were part of a wider plan to politically compromise and block the newly formed republic government.

The operative group "Opera", which was formed in conjunction with the War Air Force Command and Anti-aircraft Defense (RV and PVO) of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) is an example of this. Its role was to conduct propaganda-subversive action, and it was comprised of members of special services within the Central Committee of the Federal Communists of Croatia (CK SKH). The group conducted a series of terrorist actions, including: the rocket attacks on the Banski dvori (the then Presidential palace) which were intended to result in the murder of the Croatian president, and the mining of the Jewish district and cemetery in order to compromise the Republic of Croatia and discredit the government. Members of this group were tried in Belgrade and Zagreb, indicted for a variety of offenses. In addition to terrorist actions, they devised and performed numerous psychological-propagandist actions; for example, organizing a campaign against Herzegovinans specifically, and Croats in general throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. They also were also the first to introduce the thesis of a parallel chain of command in regard to the functioning of the government in the Republic of Croatia, which was later used to bolster the claim about a parallel chain of command existing in the Croatian army, etc.²⁹

At the same time, the intelligence-security services of the JNA in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the assistance of the majority of the Serbian personnel in MUP and other institutions, conducted diverse, even terrorist, actions. Following the example of the Jewish district bombings in Zagreb, the Partisan cemetery in Mostar was mined. This was only one of a series of explosions based upon a plan to "create controlled panic"; that is, controlled terror,³⁰ in order to frighten the local population and incite it into promoting a change of government by means of protests and capitulation to the "Yugoslav forces". As a response to the aggression, the Croatian and Muslim sides formed defense groups and then units, which initially lacked clear and firm organization. This resulted in isolated acts by individuals or small groups which could be characterized as terrorist, but these were exceptions and should be viewed within the specific situation; that is, the struggle for survival.

The European Union recognized Bosnia and Herzegovina on April 7th, 1992, and on the same day it was recognized by the Republic of Croatia as well. From that day on, the ex-JNA and Serbian paramilitary forces changed its tactics and began to use military force instead of violence. The limited attacks on Croats and to some extent Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina became an all out aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina.³¹

Terrorism and war

When it was fought in cities and villages, especially in the beginning before the front lines were established, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina produced a horrendous number of civilian victims. Large territories were occupied by force, around 70% of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the territory was ethnically cleaned by means of terror and violence. Protected objects and individuals were systematically destroyed (civil population, cultural and religious objects) in order to eradicate the identity of the enemy.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina's case, it is clear that the aggressor (the ex-JNA, assisted by Bosnian and Herzegovinian Serbs from the Serbian Democratic Party) executed these policies of terror by utilizing military strategy, and, even more tragic, alternated these policies with those of genocide in attacks on protected zones.³²

In response to the aggression, defense groups were organized on the Croatian and Muslim sides, units which lacked a strong organization and themselves resorted at first to terror (mining, kidnapping, and so on). However, this should be viewed as a specific situation in which a struggle for sheer survival was being fought.

As an outcome of the Greater Serbian aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina and the occupation of a larger part of the territory, the social and government structures collapsed and the ethnic balance on the still free territory was changed, which led to conflicts between the Croats and Muslims. During this conflict, which was characterized by crime as well, the policies of terror were also used, most frequently in the form of military strategy. Still, it is important to note that there was an escalation of terrorist actions after the war in the Croat-Muslim (Bosnian) Federation, and that the perpetrators of those actions were predominantly members of radical Islamic organizations who had arrived during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina to assist the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In order to understand the ultimate goals of this assistance, it is necessary to analyze the relations between the Islamic world and Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Political Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina

At the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, political Islam became more active and organized in international politics, in part as a result of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. At the end of 1969, an international, independent political organization of Muslim countries, the Organization of Islamic Conferences (OIC), was constituted.

Even though this organization was primarily religious, it was also an ideological, economic, and cultural organization of Islamic countries, which supported the idea that Islam was not merely a religion, but also represented a specific view of the world and organization of society. The first OIC conference on a ministry level was held March 23-25, 1970, in Jeddah. At the third ministerial level conference of the OIC, February 29-March 4, 1972, also in Jeddah, the by-laws of the OIC were adopted in the presence of representatives from 30 countries, the operating principles affirmed and the general secretary and three assistants appointed. It was decided that their headquarters would be in Jeddah until such time that Jerusalem was liberated; thereafter, the headquarters would be relocated to Jerusalem.³³

At the third conference of the OIC in Taef, January 25-28, 1981, in Saudi Arabia, there was an increased focus by the OIC on Muslim minorities throughout the world; that is, on countries which did not officially belong to the Muslim community. Particular interest was shown in the Muslim (Turkish) part of Cyprus, and a decision was made to assist the Muslim community in Cyprus both morally and materially. At the OIC conference in Niger in August, 1982, a resolution was adopted to research and examine the positions of Muslims in countries which were not members of the OIC. In that context, the position of Muslims in Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sandžak, Kosovo) was also addressed.

At an OIC consultation in Cairo (August, 1982) on the tasks of "political Islam", Islam in Yugoslavia was one of the topics and a comment was made that the dissemination and activation of Islam in Yugoslavia would facilitate closer contacts with the Muslim minority in the Balkans and the dioceses in western European countries.³⁴

On March 23rd, 1983, members of the national security service of the Secretariat of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina broke into Alija Izetbegović's apartment with a search warrant. After a detailed search, Izetbegović was brought to the service headquarters and was placed in detention. A large group of people was arrested along with him; Izetbegović and four others were brought to trial in the late 1940s and early 1950s for their membership in an illegal group, "Young Muslims".

The indictment was based on Izetbegović's book *The Islamic Declaration* which presents the principles of the Islamic movement. Izetbegović was sentenced to 14 years, and the others to a total of 90 years.

In his final statement, Izetbegović said: "I was a Muslim and that is what I will remain. I considered myself a fighter for Islam in the world and I will feel this way for the rest of my life. Islam was for me a symbol of everything beautiful and noble and represented a promise or hope of a better future for the Muslim nations, for a dignified and free life; in other words, everything worth living for."³⁵

Izetbegović was released from prison on November 25th, 1988, after a ruling by the Presidency of Yugoslavia. A year later he began to organize a Muslim party, the basis for which had been formulated in the Foča prison, and introduced it at a press

conference in Sarajevo on March 27th, 1990. The party, "The Democratic Action Party" (SDA) was defined as a party of Yugoslav citizens with Muslim cultural-historical ties. For the party's flag, the "Spanish Muslims" design was adopted: a white flag with two light green horizontal stripes on the edges and a half-moon of the same colour in the middle. The Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina organized politically around this flag.³⁶

On the day that the first press conference of the newly founded party was held, the National Security Service of Bosnia and Herzegovina,³⁷ the same service that had arrested Alija Izetbegović seven years earlier, pointed out in their internal newsletter the growing Palestinian displeasure with the normalization of relations between Yugoslavia and Israel, and warned that certain radical Palestinian organizations might initiate terrorist actions within SFRJ as a result. There was also a negative reaction from the Arabic (Islam) countries on an economic level.

The service also called attention to an increase in Iranian nationals in Yugoslavia and reported that the number had grown to 606 in 1989. They also claimed that there were promoters of militaristic Shiite fundamentalism among them who had come into being as a result of contacts with Afro-Asian (Islamic) nationals and like-minded Yugoslav nationals.³⁸

Four months later, in July, 1990, the service recorded a strong reaction to the normalization of Yugoslav-Israeli relations, which they propagated as a result of pressure applied by the Serbian leadership. Arabic sources warned that Yugoslavia, as chairman of the non-aligned movement, must condition normalization of relations with a change in Israeli policies towards the Arabic; that is, the Palestinian world. Arabic sources were especially upset by the organization of "Serbian Week" in Israel and the publicity afforded this event in Serbia and Yugoslavia. Some Islamic countries, such as Libya, Iraq, and Jordan, reacted in terms of economical measures against Yugoslavia, and especially Serbian companies. At the same time, an Iraqi diplomat announced as a "precautionary" measure that more attention and interest would henceforth be devoted to the Muslim issue in Yugoslavia by Islamic international organizations and countries, for they were aware of the position of Muslims in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Service again warned of possible terrorist attacks by radical Islamic groups.³⁹

Earlier, in January, 1990, the National Security Service of Bosnia and Herzegovina noted an attempt to form branches of the "Muslim Brothers" organization in Tuzla, in north-eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mustafa Kemal, a Palestinian from Gaza and a student of the Faculty of Civil Engineering in Zagreb, came to Tuzla as a special delegate of the leadership of the "Muslim Brothers" of Eastern Europe. In addition to propaganda activities, Kemal also introduced the possibility of military training in 1990 for members of the organization, and proposed that Mahmud Fudžami, a Jordan national and student at the School of Electrical Engineering in Tuzla, attend. A suggestion was also made to add several names to the leadership of the Eastern Europe "Muslim Brothers": Abdul Hakim Ismail, a student of the School of Dental Medicine in Priština, and Halid Marei and Ali Taib, students of the Medical Faculty of Zagreb. In the estimation of the service's best information sources, Ali Taib who was at that time in Sudan,⁴⁰ was most likely to be elected president of the organization. Already in March, 1982, the leader of the "Muslim Brothers" in Egypt, Hasan Naser, son of Gamal Abdel Naser, the ex-president of Egypt and one of the founders of the non-aligned movement, arrived in former Yugoslavia (through Zagreb to Belgrade). He brought with him the "Ihvan", younger members of the "Muslim Brothers", who applied to study at Yugoslav universities but rarely completed their degrees. The Egyptian government learned of Naser's arrival and made an inquiry to the Yugoslav government, which denied the report; in other words, concealed Naser's presence.⁴¹ At the first democratic elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in November, 1990, the SDA won 86 of 240 parliamentary mandates. Three of seven members of the presidency were SDA candidates, and this explains how Alija Izetbegović became President of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and politically the most influential person in Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴² Democracy was soon thereafter replaced by war, and with the first shots directed at Bosnia and Herzegovina "assistance" also arrived. One such form of "assistance" for Bosnia and Herzegovina were the numerous "humanitarians", who soon revealed themselves to be mujahedeen, fighters of Allah's path, fighters for Islam.

Mujahedeem in Bosnia and Herzegovina

"We did not invite the mujahedeem; Croats opened the door to Bosnia and Herzegovina!" Alija Izetbegović stated at his last press conference as the president of the Democratic Action Party on October 12th, 2001. He said it was the Croats and not the Bosnians who should explain why they allowed the Mujahedeem into Bosnia and Herzegovina. Izetbegović conveniently forgot his open letter to the President of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, sent from Geneva on January 28th, 1993, at a time when Croat-Muslim relations were extremely volatile. The letter is a response to Tuđman's letter of the previous day. Izetbegović first acquaints Tuđman with various offenses committed by Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina; for example, the arrest of two directors of the Islamic humanitarian organization "Igasse" in Busovača, Galib es Sufi and Abu Hasan Alija, and the theft of their money and belongings valued at half a million German marks. Izetbegović also complains about the general extortion of humanitarian aid and refers to a statement by the secretary of the Humanitarian Aid Association in Zurich.⁴³

The identity of the two directors and the justification for their arrest and imprisonment in Busovača prison is clear from a report by the HVO Military Police, which states that on December 18th, 1992, they stopped a Mitsubishi all-terrain vehicle at the control point, driven by Ali Muhammad, born 1944, a citizen of Great Britain (passport number 700192046) and Pakistan (passport number H407904). In addition, Ali also had an identity card from the Bosnian-Herzegovinan Army and a gun with a permit. His fellow-traveller Galib Ali Elsofi, born 1966, a citizen of Sudan (passport number R 12078) also had an identity card from the Bosnian-Herzegovinan Army. His residence visa for study in Bosnia and Herzegovina had expired and his presence in the country was therefore illegal. After having been stopped, both became violent and broke the official police vehicle's windshield.⁴⁴ The names of the "humanitarians" were spelled incorrectly in Izetbegović's letter, but it is obvious that it was the same two individuals. About twenty days earlier on November 28th, 1992, the Defence department HZ HB had warned MORH in Zagreb about the activities of the Kuwaiti humanitarian organization "Igass" in connection with procurement of illegal arms and military equipment in Croatia. Representatives of the Islamic community, Salih efendija Eolaković, and the head imam of the IZ committee, Prozor Elkaz efendija Hidajet,⁴⁵ were directly involved in these activities. On November 9th 1992, the HVO Military Police discovered nine nationals from Islamic countries during a Split-Kiseljak bus control who were carrying military equipment and propaganda materials praising Islam and inviting others to join the holy war for Allah.⁴⁶ Twenty packages of propaganda flyers and instructions for waging special war were also found.⁴⁷ "We invited the mujahedeem to Bosnia", said Mustafa efendija Cerić, the Resiu-l-ulema of the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina on OBN's contact show "Telering" in February 1999. "We invited them in from Algeria, Qatar, Afghanistan, and other Islamic countries because we were endangered and needed help. We should all be grateful to the mujahedeem", added Cerić.⁴⁸

It is a fact that the mujahedeem came through Croatia; that is, through Zagreb, with the cooperation or at least tolerance of the Croatian government. The SDA itself originated in Zagreb, in the Islamic Cultural Center where a large group of Muslims led by Salem Šabić and Šemsudin Tanković regularly gathered. It was here the SDA platform, developed by approximately fifteen like-minded people, came into existence.⁴⁹ On April 8th, 1993, the new Resiu-l-ulema of the Islamic community of Bosnia and Herzegovina arrived from Zagreb: Mustafa Cerić, the former imam of the Zagreb mosque. Also coming to Bosnia and Herzegovina through Zagreb was a transport of Iranian artillery and military equipment, a fact about which Peter Galbraith, the American ambassador to Croatia at that time, was called to testify before the U.S. Congressional Foreign Affairs Committee.⁵⁰ As a matter of fact, all the aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina passed through Croatia. This is the route taken by the mujahedeem, who came under the auspices of several of the 33 Islamic humanitarian organizations active in Croatia at that time (1992-1995) and who later moved to Bosnia and Herzegovina, where in 1996, 216 foreign humanitarian organizations were registered.⁵¹

One with those with the closest ties to the Muslim government in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is, to Alija Izetbegović, was the "Third World Relief Agency" (TWRA). Its founder and director is El Fatih Hassanein from Sudan, a former

medical student in Sarajevo. The co-founder is Derviš ?ur?ević, one of those who stood trial with Izetbegovic and the others in Sarajevo,1983. He later moved to Vienna after he had served his sentence.⁵² The TWRA was active in Vienna until the Austrian services uncovered illegal activities and broke into their premises on September 5th ,1995.⁵³ The TWRA provided many kinds of assistance for Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but especially in supplying artillery and military equipment and transferring mujahedeen to Bosnia and Herzegovina. During 1993, TWRA money in Vienna was handled by its founder and director, El Fatih Hassanein; one of the chairman of the SDA, Hasan Eengi?ić, who was later the Minister of Defense of the Bosnian and Herzegovinan Federation; and one of the ideologues and founders of the SDA and former President of the Parliament of Islamic Communities of Croatia and Slovenia, Salim Šabić. About 350 million American dollars passed through this organization.⁵⁴ After searching the premises, the Austrian police determined that the TWRA was also connected to Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, a radical Egyptian imam sentenced to life in prison in the United States for planning various terrorist attacks against American targets.

There were connections to other Islamic militants as well. Hassanein himself stated in an interview for an Islamic magazine in 1994: "Bosnia must be Muslim in the end because if that does not happen, the whole war makes no sense and will have been waged in vain."⁵⁵

Ties between Zagreb and the above-mentioned groups should also be sought among Izetbegović's close friends from the Croatian government of that time; that is, those he mentioned by name in his "Memoirs".

Upon their arrival in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Islamic volunteers formed the El Mujahid unit, which was part of the third corps of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina, headquartered in Zenica. In August 1995, an interview with the commander (Emir) of the El Mujahedeen unit, Abu el Ma ali, appeared in the Croatian media. The journalist estimated that the unit, which in the words of the commander had come to Bosnia and Herzegovina to offer assistance to the Muslims, had about 2000 members at that time. Abu el Ma ali said he was certain that Islam would rule the world and that he was dedicated to this cause. At that time, Bosnian politician Haris Silajdžić expressed his intention to summon volunteers from all over the world to fight "Serbian fascism", and Abu el Ma ali stated that their stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina had confirmed such a need, and that many more would come were it not for the interference of the Herzegovinan Croats.⁵⁶ The mujahedeen from the "El Mujahid" unit and other units in Bosnia and Hercegovina represented a significant military strength, and their presence was decisive in the raising morale of the Bosnian-Muslim army. Support from Alija Izetbegovic and the Muslim government signified to the sponsors of BH Islamization that the government was "on the right path", and that their investment and engagement was justified. On the other hand, Bosnia and Herzegovina served as their refuge and provided them with a training site for the handling of diverse weapons and explosive devices. Their presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina also enabled Sefer Halilović, chief of staff of the Supreme Command of the Bosnian-Herzegovinan Army at that time, to vow in the Spanish newspaper "El Pais" (January 1993) that "no kind of negotiations, not even those in Geneva, can destroy the idea of Bosnia as a united and sovereign country. They can sign whatever they want in Geneva! If those negotiations lead to a unitary Bosnia, we will embrace them. If not, we will realize this kind of state on the battlefield. If Europe doesn't change its attitude, we will take action and bring terrorism to its territory. Many European cities will be in flames."⁵⁷

During the war, a stream of terrorist attacks was committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but that is not the topic of this study. In order to shed light upon the murders of Croatian military commanders Ivica Stojak, Vlado Šantić, four soldiers from Živko Totić's company, and Živko Totić's kidnapping, more time and space is required, since this occurred during the war with the Serbs, and in the period of the Muslim-Croat alliance. It is therefore difficult to determine whether these were actually war crimes or acts of terrorism.⁵⁸

The signing of international agreements in November and December 1995, which will here be referred to simply as the "Dayton Agreements", put an end to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. But the issues of reconstruction, damages, and healing the wounds of war still had to be addressed. An incident in February 1996, however,

showed that the restoration of peace would be a difficult process. Members of the international forces - IFOR - broke into the former hiking lodge on the Pogorelica mountain near Fojnica and discovered a secret training camp of the AID (Muslim Intelligence-Security Services). The instructors were Iranian intelligence officers, members of the MOIS, three of which were arrested during the operation.

In addition to the Iranians, eight Bosnia-Herzegovinian Muslim AID members were arrested as well. Not only were they being trained for intelligence but also for terrorism.⁵⁹ This scandal resulted in the replacement of the director of AID. Six weeks later, the chairman of the Presidency, Alija Izetbegović, stated during an interview to a newspaper with close ties to his party: "What happened in Pogorelica near Fojnica was a very big mistake on our part."⁶⁰ On September 28, 1996, in Sarajevo, the Assistant to the Director of AID, Nedžad Ugljen, was on his way to visit someone he had called beforehand to announce his arrival when he was killed in front of his building.⁶¹ Shortly before his death, Nedžad Ugljen had spoken with Izetbegović, said he feared he would be killed, and identified to Izetbegović the individuals who posed a threat to him.⁶²

In 1997, terrorists acts were committed almost daily. In the first ten months, 35 explosives attacks occurred, and over 90% of the attack targets were Croats. Other targets included 10 private residences, 8 Catholic churches, 5 apartment complexes, 3 infra-structure objects and 2 mosques. Two (Croats) were killed, and many others injured, seven severely.⁶³ By the end of the year, four more Croats had been killed. During 1998, the number of terrorist attacks rose to 132, and once again the majority of the victims were Croats. Only in 25 cases were the perpetrators caught.⁶⁴ It was later discovered that the terrorists, who had been accused of attacks on Croatian emigrants and who were being sought by the Muslim (Bosniac) police were former members of El Mujahedeen forces then living in a police-owned apartment.⁶⁵ In addition to these attacks, three other terrorist attacks show particularly clearly the extent of the terrorism problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of the most important events in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially for its Catholics (Croats), was the announcement of the arrival of Pope John Paul II to Sarajevo. On the day of his visit, April 12, 1997, the Ministry of the Interior's Anti-Terrorist Protection Department (KDZ) of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina discovered during its third inspection of the area a large amount of explosives ready to be activated by remote control under a bridge on the Miljacka river, placed placed along the route Pope John Paul II would be traveling that day. The KDZ deactivated the explosive device and eliminated the threat.⁶⁶ At the same time, a Muslim citizen (Bosniac), Husein Barjaktarević, noticed a large explosive device in a sewer on the Kiseljak-Sarajevo road. He stopped an SFOR vehicle, and the SFOR soldiers then removed the explosive. It was determined that it was set to be activated by remote control, but SFOR later announced it was an explosive left over from the war, although they themselves had checked the entire route the previous day to ensure against diversionary activities and found nothing. The following day, April 13th, the police picked up Barjaktarević in his cottage near Kiseljak after which was then taken to the federal police station in Sarajevo where he was questioned about the circumstances surrounding his having found the explosive. After the interrogation, which was attended by KDZ department head, Mirza Jamaković, Barjaktarević (a Muslim) was given a rosary and pictures of Catholic saints by the Muslim police officers who had questioned him. They told him that they were gifts from the Pope. Barjaktarević then reported this to the Kiseljak police station, while at the same time the family home in which he had previously lived was set afire in the village of Tulice.⁶⁷ The KDZ department head of the Ministry of the Interior, Mirza Jamaković, was arrested on September 25, 2001 for illegal weapons trafficking from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Kosovo. After five days imprisonment, he was transferred to the prison hospital.⁶⁸

On January 22, 1995 an accident occurred near Travnik involving a Nissan. Three automatic rifles, two bombs, two guns, and a large amount of ammunition and military gear was found on the driver, a citizen of Saudi Arabia, Ahmed Zuhair, son of Zeda. He was born on October 16, 1965, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and also carried a Saudi passport, number A216281, and an official identity card, number 0000914 issued by the Croatian Ministry of the Interior, which he had received as a member of the humanitarian organization "Charitable Community for Orphans". He also had an official military declaration from the BH army allowing him freedom of movement,

which was certified with a stamp from the chain of command of the reconnaissance and diversion battalion of the seventh corps of the BH army, and a travel order from the El Mujahedeen units. Husnija Kubur, a Muslim Bosniac from Eajnić was also in the vehicle with Zuhair.⁶⁹ After the tape on Zuhair had been broadcast on television, a fifty-year-old woman (FB) from Vitez recognized him as being a member of the mujahedeen unit which had attacked her village on September 18, 1993. She specifically recognized Zuhair because he had tried to kill her son (M.B. 14 years old), who was a minor, with a knife. Zuhair sent a letter from prison to "his brothers in the high Saudi Commission for Abu Yaqubo" requesting that the letter then be forwarded to Basim Al Atas. Zuhair stated that he was working for Walid Saati in a humanitarian organization assisting orphans, and was thus seeking their assistance. The addressees were asked to obtain for Zuhair documents from the UNHCR to show that his presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina was for humanitarian purposes.⁷⁰ He was released in May 1997. Four months later, on September 18, 1997 at 11:40 p.m., a highly-destructive car bomb exploded near an apartment complex in the western part of Mostar. Three people were severely injured and forty others suffered minor injuries from the explosion. Ninety-four apartments were damaged, along with 96 automobiles, and 13 offices and garages. Haris Silajdžić was among the first to comment on the explosion, accusing Croats of being the perpetrators. Several journalists with links to the intelligence underground immediately accepted this theory and thus a whole campaign was launched in support of it. Yet the perpetrators were ultimately identified as Ahmed Zuhair, a.k.a. Handal, and Ali Ahmed Ali Hamad, a.k.a. Ubeid. They had been assisted by Saleh Nedal, a.k.a. Jemen and Vlado Populovski, a.k.a. Macedonian. in the planning of the explosion. A few days later, Nedal warned Zuhair that the police were looking for him and that he should go into hiding.⁷¹ Ahmed Zuhair and Ali Ahmed Hamad had initially come to Mostar on September 11, 1997, in order to research the situation and confirm where they would plant the car bomb several days later.⁷² The same day their co-conspirator, Saleh Nedal, was issued a passport, no. BA584607, by the Ministry of the Interior of BH in the district of Sarajevo, and he registered his address as 8 Džamijska, Sarajevo.

A year later, on September 8, 1998, deputy district attorneys Dr. Paolo Giogavoli and Dr. Maria Vittoria De Simone of Bologna, Italy, issued an international warrant for a group of criminals responsible for a series of crimes in Italy, among them terrorist acts. The eighth individual on the list was Saleh Nedal. Italy requested his extradition and on April 13, 1999, the district court in Travnik arrested him based on Interpol's request of December 14, 1998. The Investigating Croatian Judge, Mirjana Grubešić⁷³ and the County District Attorney in Travnik, Croat prosecutor Marinko Jurčević, asked the County Court in Travnik to comply with the Italian request to extradite Nedal.⁷⁴ The county court in Travnik presided over by Judge Senad Begović (a Muslim Bosniac) ruled on July 12, 1999, against the extradition of Nedal to Italy.⁷⁵

The same judge then signed a decree which terminated Nedal's imprisonment and released him.⁷⁶ The Supreme Court of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina affirmed the decree, which was signed by Judge Nazif Sulman (a Muslim Bosniac) on August 19, 1999.⁷⁷ After being warned by Saleh Nedal, Ahmed Zuhair fled and thus avoided standing trial before the County Court in Zenica which began on September 18, 1998, the anniversary of the explosion. The accused Ubeid had admitted committing the crime during the police investigation and made the same admission before an investigating judge, only to deny it all during trial and state that the police had coerced him by promising a quick trial followed by his release.⁷⁸ The accused was not charged with terrorism, but rather, as the court in Zenica classified it, constructing a car bomb, "a criminal act endangering the general safety of people and property", and as a result, all the accused received lighter sentences. The longest sentence, eight years in prison, was given to Ali Ahmed, since Zuhair's ten-year-sentence would never be served.⁷⁹

The legal explanation used by the defense attorney, Almin Dautbegovic, was interesting. He claimed that in a terrorist indictment based on (BH) regulations, it is necessary to prove that the perpetrator had hostile motives towards BH during the perpetration of the crime. In other words, that there existed a subjective desire on the perpetrator's part to commit this crime so as to harm or destroy the country, BH. Based upon this, it would be very difficult for a prosecutor to prove that individuals who had come to BH in order to fight for its survival had committed these heinous crimes in order to harm the country.⁸⁰ The judge accepted this definition of terrorism.

It is also interesting to note that, according to Article 168 of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Penal Code,⁸¹ international terrorism is defined as: "Intentionally harming a foreign country, liberation movement, or international organization...."⁸² It would also be interesting to explore what the legislation meant by the term "liberation movement". Therefore, according to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's laws, the car bomb plot in Mostar was not a terrorist act, because Zuhair "only wanted to take revenge on the Croats", while those responsible for the murder of Anwar el Sha'abana (Abd Al Rahman, international terrorist who was a member of at least one international humanitarian organization, although he had originally come in order to defend BH in the war) could conceivably be prosecuted for terrorism.

The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Deputy Minister of the Interior, Jozo Leutar, reacted many times to the burlesque of trials and investigations, once in a letter to the International Police Force (IPTF) in November 1997, in which he pointed out the presence of Abu Hamze and Karai Kamil Bin Alia in central Bosnia, in spite of a warrant having been issued for their arrest. Many others who had warrants against them were also walking around freely in many areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁸³ On March 16, 1999, shortly before 8:00 a.m., a bomb which had been planted beneath Deputy Minister of the Interior Jozo Leutar's official automobile, which had been parked in Alipasian Street in downtown Sarajevo near the American embassy, exploded. The bomb was activated while the car was in motion. Leutar suffered severe physical injuries, while his driver, Željko Aosić, and the passenger, Ivo Rezo, sustained lesser physical injuries.

A month later, on April 16, 1999, Mounir Hanouf, Muhamed Abu Gazali, and Murat Bas, a.k.a. the "Igman Group" were arrested. Objects were found on them connecting them to the terrorist attacks. During a police search of Abu Gazali's apartment on July 12, 1999, police found another series of objects directly linked to the terrorist attacks. Muhamed Abu Gazali had come to Bosnia and Herzegovina one day before the attack on Leutar, on March 15, 1999. Problems immediately arose at the beginning of the investigation. First, the investigating judge tried to remove Croatian police officers from the investigation, and evidence on the Igman Group gathered during the investigation was hidden from the Croatian police officers. Alija Izetbegović commented publicly about the Leutar assassination, stating: "This was either done by our (Muslim Bosniac) fools or by Croatian extremists." He also added that the assassins of Kennedy, Palme, and Alda Mora had never been identified, implying that this case would also never be solved. The media complicated matters further, fueling speculation. Anyone who got in the way of the influential politicians was charged with something. Politics was apparently controlling the investigation.

Soon thereafter, U.N. Mission Chief in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jacques Klein, compromised himself by stating that he had certain evidence and that the guilty parties would soon be brought to justice. The tragedy was then used for pre-election campaign purposes and a wave of indictments was issued. After a superficial and disgraceful investigation, Klein seemed to have lost much of his self-confidence. In an interview on November 23, 2000, he said he had only reported things which had been told to him by the Federal Ministry of the Interior.⁸⁴

On April 6, 2000, the Investigating Judge, Idriz Kamenica, issued an indictment against six Croat suspects believed to be implicated in Jozo Leutar's murder, Deputy Minister of the Interior and HDZ (Croatian Democration Union) president in the county of Sarajevo. According to the prosecution theory, the suspects had committed the crime in order to cause the collapse of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby qualifying them as terrorists.⁸⁵

The charges in the indictment are comparable to the propaganda that was issued from the Serbian side after the Markale market massacre in Sarajevo. They claimed at the time that the Muslims had themselves committed the massacre in order to shift blame to the Serbs. The entire indictment was based on a statement made by a "protected witness", who was said to be a vicious criminal and a former mental patient. The trial is still continuing.

On November 21, 2001, during the 27th session, the defense stated that Leutar had been killed by the same individuals who had set the bombs during the Pope's visit and killed Croats in Travnik.⁸⁶

The tragic events which occurred on September 11, 2001, in the USA made a serious impact on Bosnia and Herzegovina. Feelings were divided, and statements given unanimously condemned the attacks, though the attacks themselves were analyzed in different ways. In any case, anyone who believed he had political or social influence issued a statement. The SFOR units in Bosnia and Herzegovina were in the most sensitive position, as they were forced to carefully assess their situation and determine whether or not they were at war. The first week after the attacks on the US, a veritable political chaos prevailed. Some claimed that Western civilization was endangered by militant Islam, and accused the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina of supporting terrorism; others defended Islam, claiming that terrorism is in contradiction to Islam, for terrorism has no religion, and quoting various passages from the Ku'ran which prohibit the commission of evil acts. Others pointed out that the true terrorists were Karadžić and others like him. The politicians wanted simply to be on the politically correct side in order to reap political and personal gains.

Izetbegović then distanced himself from the mujahedeen, stating that they had not invited "them", and thereafter, SFOR commander General Sylvester said (October 12, 2001) that the mujahedeens posed no threat to Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁸⁷ Just a week after his statement, the American and British embassies and consulates closed down. A week after that, five foreigners (mujahedeen) were arrested in BH. The Head Secretary of NATO, George Robertson, confirmed that at least one of those arrested had links to Osama Bin Laden's Al Qaeda.⁸⁸ The Deputy Minister of the Interior of the Federation of BH, Tomislav Limov, released information that the Federal police had 17 suspects linked to international terrorism under observation, and also confirmed that between 1996 to the present day (30.10.2001), approximately 1000 individuals from Arabic countries had received Bosnian citizenship. He emphasized that problems do exist in Bosnia, and that rumors about Bosnia being a safe haven for terrorists were not, in fact, groundless.⁸⁹ The new American ambassador Bond said on November 10, 2001, that it was not Bosnia as a whole that posed a terrorist threat, but only certain individuals.⁹⁰ The International Crisis Group (ICG) then reported only two days later that Bosnia and Herzegovina posed the only true threat of terrorism in south-eastern Europe.⁹¹

Ivo Komšić, vice-president of SDP (Social Democratic Party), the most powerful party in the governing coalition, said they were informed by other party members of the executive branch of government at a meeting of the party heads (November 3, 2001) that the battle against terrorism in Bosnia was only in its initial stages. Komšić also added that he had not known that Bosnia had been ranked among high-risk countries.⁹²

After successful operations in Afghanistan, the press released information that a Bosnian passport and a notebook in Bosnian with instructions on how to make explosive devices had been found in a house in Kabul which had been used by members of the Al Qaeda,⁹³ This information was confirmed shortly thereafter; however, not only one but two passports were found, belonging to individuals, according to the Prime Minister of the Federation of BH Alija Behmen, whose citizenship had been revoked just a few days earlier.⁹⁴ The federal Ministry of the Interior then revoked the citizenship of 94 others who had come from Islamic countries and had obtained citizenship illegally.⁹⁵ Investigating the illegal issuance of citizenship is difficult, as those who enabled it still occupy high positions in the government and are thus protected. The following case provides an illustration: two police officers, Samir Rizvo and Mirsad Žutić Beganović were proven to have participated in the illegal issuance of BH citizenship to mujahedeen, yet were promoted by the new federal government of BH. It is especially indicative that Mirsad Žutić Beganović was promoted to Secretary to the Minister in the Ministry of the Interior, thus putting him in the position of invalidating the citizenship decisions he himself had previously made. What is even more interesting is the decision of French general Vincent Courderoy, International Police Commissioner of the UN (IPTF), to revoke on November 15, 2001, the work permits of two police officers who had attempted to murder Fikret Abdić, a former member of the Presidency of BH, a former vice-president of the SDA (Democratic Action Party) in BH, and the former president of the autonomous region of western Bosnia.

Abdić, who had once been Izetbegović's most influential colleague, later became his most bitter adversary. Bihać police officers, Derviš Demirović and Hajrudin Halilagić had attempted to kill Abdić, who was in Rijeka in the Republic of Croatia at that time.

The Croatian police arrested them with weapons and explosives and they were charged with endangering the safety of citizens in the Republic of Croatia by an act of terrorism and sentenced to prison sentences of 18 months, which translates to 12 months in the Croatian judicial system.

After having served their sentences, they returned to their jobs in the Bihać police department.⁹⁶ This was more than sufficient grounds for Abdić's party, the Democratic People's Union of BH, to assert that the SDA was the organizer of state terrorism. They also pointed out that the unsuccessful assassination attempt was masterminded by Ejub Ikić, Chief of AID (the Bosnian Intelligence Agency) of BH and Sakib Mahmuljin, the former commander of the third corps in the BH army in which the EI Mujahedeen force was incorporated. The DNZ also announced that information had emerged in Rijeka that two additional members of the terrorist group were currently employed as professional soldiers in the fifth corps of the BH army.

Three days prior to publication of the French general's decision on the dismissal of the two police officers in the media, the Sarajevo daily "Dnevni avaz" almost shamefacedly carried a report from the Italian newspaper "Corriere de la Sera" from November 11, 2001. Its article concerned the Bosnian government's extradition to Egypt of Hasan Masud El Sharif Saad, who was suspected of being implicated in the car bomb planted in front of the Rijeka police station (Republic of Croatia) in October 1995. According to American and European investigators, Hasan Masud El Sharif Saad was one of Bin Laden's key people in Europe. Based on an Interpol warrant, Hasan Masud El Sharif Saad had been arrested with two other countrymen and extradited to Egypt.⁹⁷ One might have thought at that point that the threat of terrorism in BH had been repelled. Especially after a meeting of the heads of BH with SFOR commander general Sylvester, during which it was stated that there was no outright threat of terrorism, at least not to SFOR troops.⁹⁸ Yet only two days later, the Director of the Federal Border Agency, Tomo Mihalj, claimed to have information that a certain number of Al Qaeda members had set out to central Europe through Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to Bosnia and Herzegovina after being defeated in Afghanistan.⁹⁹

It is clearly difficult to fight international terrorism, especially without a effective security system. It is no surprise that after SFOR forces arrested a man in Kiseljak (central Bosnia) in a spectacular operation with special forces on November 30, 2001- under suspicion of trafficking in radioactive material from which atomic bombs could be constructed - they released him from prison three days later. While searching the house, they succeeded in confiscating ground paprika, among other things, but no bombs.¹⁰⁰ These and similar actions show that members of the International Forces continue to be duped by local criminals and their fabrications, partially due to their desire to prove themselves and also due to fear.

How then can we define the Bosnian-Herzegovinan Muslim position toward terrorism? After a war which they neither initiated nor provoked, can we still designate them Europe's "special" Muslims? " "Bosnian-style Muslims", as Alija Izetbegović said in a statement in the Institute for War and Peace Reporting's (WPR) last edition?¹⁰¹ " Radicalism is alien to the Bosnian spirit, and fundamentalist elements comprise only a small minority", Izetbegović pointed out.¹⁰²

Only a day after the statement had been released to the BH media, Alija Izetbegović left on December 3, 2001, by special charter flight to Dubai, the capital of the United Arab Emirates. The plane had been specially sent for him so that he could receive an award for " Islam Personality of the Year". Reisu-l-ulema Mustafa Cerić and the president of the SDA, Sulejman Tihić, travelled with him.¹⁰³

Izetbegović described his relationship with the Albanians in his memoirs, several of which were with him in prison in Foče. he wrote that they were quiet, secretive, and much too serious. On one occasion, one of the Albanian inmates, the leader of their group, requested to speak to Izetbegović about their movement, to which Izetbegović replied: "Albanians are Muslims and that is the main reason we support your fight for freedom."¹⁰⁴ Izetbegović went on to say that Albanians had caused a lot of problems, a view with which the leader of their delegation disagreed. In his opinion, religion had played a negative role in the history of the Albanian people and had benefitted only the occupiers. Thus, religion was unnecessary for their fight for freedom. He further asserted that only Marxism and Leninism had brought progress to their people. Izetbegović disagreed with him on this, and said that they if that were the case, then they were the only nation on earth that was able to survive without religion and that he believed the majority of Albanians would disagree with this statement. At that point,

the two " delegations", with their two political views, temporarily parted ways.¹⁰⁵ That they had at least maintained some contact was evident by the arrest of the KDZ department of the Ministry of the Interior (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) Mirza Jamaković for illegally exporting weapons to Kosovo. This could have been regarded as simple smuggling, that is, a criminal offence, up until December 21, 2001, until the arrest of Bosniac Muslim general Hamid Bahto of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bahto had also served as Assistant to the Minister of Defense for Intelligence Affairs in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁰⁶ What part did the Intelligence component of the Federal army under Bosnian Muslim control play? Who or what stood behind it? This can be explained by the example of a certain judicial inquiry.

On invitation of the Israeli Minister of Defense, B. Ben Elizer, the Defense Minister of the Federation, Mijo Anić, traveled to Israel on December 10, 2001. The Federal Ministry of Defense announced that Anić would be travelling with the Deputy Assistant of Defense for the military industry, Pero Džepina, and several directors of central Bosnian companies which manufactured weapons and military gear.¹⁰⁷ This trip provoked heated reaction from Bosniac politicians and the general population. Alija Izetbegović, the honorary president of the strongest Bosniac party, the SDA, posed the following question at a press conference led by its vice-president: "Is Anić selling weapons bought for us (Bosnia-Herzegovinian Muslims) by Islamic nations to Israel?"¹⁰⁸

Only a few days after this scandal, Defense Minister Mijo Anić found himself in the limelight again, due to a statement by Cerić's on Studio 99's television show "Interview of the Day", December 19, 2001. Cerić complained bitterly about the fact that on November 25, 2001, during the celebration of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Independence Day celebration in the Military Federation Centre in Sarajevo, pork was being served even though Muslims had begun Bajram fasting.¹⁰⁹

The tumultuous events of 2001 exhausted Izetbegović, and by the end of December his state of health was very grave. So at the invitation of the Saudi king Fahd, who sent a plane for him, Izetbegović was transported to Riyadh to receive any necessary medical attention. Eight days later Izetbegović returned to Sarajevo.¹¹⁰

Authorities of the Federation reported on Friday, January 18, 2002, that in the early hours of the morning they had surrendered six individuals of Algerian citizenship to the government of the USA. These individuals had been in custody since October 2001 under suspicion of having links to individuals and organizations in the international terrorist network.¹¹¹ This extradition caused an uproar among the Bosniac Muslim public, but this time the response was well-organized, with demonstrators and the media present. They also had political support and strong legal and human rights arguments. Everything perfectly arranged. After this, the term "Islamic groups" came into regular use. Many public figures reacted to this with shock, and it ultimately caused the collapse of the Helsinki Committee, whose president Srđan Dizdarević showed support for the Algerians and thus lost non-Muslim members Todorović and Kukić.¹¹² Yet, even more important than these verbal disputes were the events that occurred on the Sarajevo streets on Friday, January 18, 2002. In a night of conflict between demonstrators and police, the Islamic groups in Bosnia demonstrated their clout, organizational skills, and will.¹¹³

These events inspired Zija Dizdarević of Sarajevo's "Oslobođenje" to write the following: " Bosnia and Herzegovina is confronted with a rise in Islamic fundamentalism. This new Islamic youth movement is an ideological and political reality, but it remains to be seen whether it will be an important factor in the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina."¹¹⁴

Once again, Izetbegović's statement of December 2001: " Radicalism is foreign to the Bosnian spirit, and elements of fundamentalism are only part of a small minority." Terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina did not come about spontaneously; it did not arise from the Bosnian milieu and it definitely is not part of Bosnian and Herzegovinan mentality. It was imported into Bosnia and Herzegovina, brought in during the Yugoslavia's existence, and its presence continues even after the collapse of Yugoslavia. Terrorism in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not attributable to any individual or group, but it part of the system and therefore a political problem. These were the policies of non-aligned Yugoslavia and later the project of Islamization of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The consequence of some of these policies has been, in fact, terrorism. James Rubin, the former State Department spokesperson, told Croatian politicians

that they could bear witness to what the Americans had done for Muslims in Europe (Bosnia and Herzegovina), because it was a known fact that the American administration at that time was considered pro-Muslim, though it seems the Arabs have forgotten this.¹¹⁵

Not only have the Arabs forgotten, but so too the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims (Bosniacs). Everyone has forgotten but the Croats, who were forced into a federation with the Muslims and thus had to resolve the problem Europe could not - the spread of Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Islam is the joining of religion with the state, as Dr. Abdullah Omer Nasif, Secretary General of the World Islamic League Senior Council wrote in the official journal of the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹¹⁶

The fact that many Europeans fear Islam is understandable, especially after the events of September 11, 2001. This explains, for example, the denial of visas by France, Holland, and Switzerland to Imams designated by the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina to organize religious activities among the Bosnian diaspora population during the month of Ramadan.¹¹⁷

This fear was also referred to by the former Vice-Chancellor of Austria, Erhard Busek, coordinator of the American Initiative for south-eastern Europe (SECI) in an interview on March 8, 2001.¹¹⁸ A major part of European political policy toward the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was governed by that same fear. "Why hasn't Bosnia and Herzegovina become a Muslim state yet?" asks Enver Eaušević in the Islamic Community weekly Rijaset of Bosnia and Herzegovina. "Because", he says, "there is a shortage of power and will needed to transform lethargy and general hopelessness into action. To intensify the struggle for a return to the basic values of Islam and to those individuals who will preserve them for our children."¹¹⁹

The will is increasing, as well as the power supplied by the Islamic centres which are appearing throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and which are completely different from mosques, even though they are located in their backyards.