

UKRAINE AND THE YUGOSLAV CONFLICT

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Even before gaining independence in December 1991 from the former USSR, Ukraine had supported Slovenia and Croatia's drive to independence from the former Yugoslavia. In May 1991, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman paid an official visit to Ukraine where then parliamentary speaker Leonid Kravchuk expressed sympathy with Croatia's desire for independence. Tudjman pointed out how Ukraine's seat at the United Nations had given it a head start in obtaining international recognition of its independent status. On 12 December 1991, twelve days after the Ukrainian referendum on independence, Kyiv became one of the first states to diplomatically recognise Croatia and Slovenia; and further, it announced its readiness to open embassies in both countries.¹ Ukraine was the first member of the U.N. to recognise Croatia; the second and third countries, Slovenia and Lithuania, were not members of the U.N. when they recognised Croatia.

Ukraine's motives were quite clear early on vis-à-vis Yugoslavia. First, it wanted to reaffirm its independent status as a new international state. Secondly, Kyiv desired to distance itself from Russian sympathy with Serbia and Yugoslavia² in order to show the outside world—particularly at that stage, the sceptical West—that Ukraine and Russia were indeed different peoples and nations.³ Fourthly, Ukraine desired to show the outside world that it was a respectable and co-operative member of the international community. Finally, a majority of the Ukrainian leadership sympathised with the Croats and Slovenes in their drive to independence, comparing it to Ukraine's quest to divorce itself from Russia.

This essay will discuss each of these factors and compare Ukrainian policies towards the conflict in the former Yugoslavia under former President Kravchuk and current President Leonid Kuchma; it will also discuss Ukrainian policies (or a lack of policies) towards the 100,000 Ukrainian minority in the former Yugoslavia.

Ukrainian Security Policy Towards the Balkans

Unlike the Russian Federation—the successor state to the Tsarist Empire and the former USSR—Ukraine has few *visible* strategic interests in the Balkans. The Ukrainian public's preoccupation in surviving the economic crisis, in the lack of media coverage and experience in dealing with world affairs, and in a foreign and defence affairs community still finding its and independent Ukraine's way in the world community gave little time for the Yugoslav crisis. Ethnic conflicts closer to home in the CIS were of more concern to the Ukrainian public.

One opinion poll held in Kyiv and L'viv obtained the following results:⁴

TABLE 1
Does Ukraine Have Strategic Interests in the Balkans?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Kyiv	46%	21%	33%
L'viv	28%	33%	39%

TABLE 2
Whom Do You Regard as Ukraine's Strategic Ally in the Balkans?

	Croatia/Slovenia	Serbia	Turkey	Don't Know
Kyiv	41%	11%	5%	26%
L'viv	21%	4%	4%	38%

Ukraine continued to lack clear cut and co-ordinated policies throughout the three years of the Yugoslav conflict. In Autumn 1995, on the eve of a breakthrough in the peace process, "[t]he lack of co-ordination between the assessments of the events in the former Yugoslavia presented by the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry and President Leonid Kuchma confirm[ed] the lack of maturity, integrity and definition of Ukraine's policies toward the Balkans." Ukraine's lack of military diplomats (in contrast to soldiers) and lack of professional diplomats precluded it from taking an active mediating role (despite its promotion of itself in September 1995 in such a manner) except as an organiser.⁵

Nevertheless, Ukraine does have strategic interests in the Balkans. Russian demands for the conversion of the Army in the Trans-Dniester Republic into a military forward base in Moldova is part of its demands for thirty forward bases throughout the former USSR. Together with similar demands which have been granted in Belarus and on-going negotiations about the Sevastopol naval base, Ukraine is gradually being surrounded by Russian military bases which could have strategic significance in the event of any future Russian-Ukrainian conflict. The demand for bases in Moldova is openly described by Russia as forward military bases geared towards the Balkans.

In addition, the West's willingness to allow the Serbian President to negotiate on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs in Autumn 1995 has already been understood by Moscow as a legal precedent that they themselves are likely to utilise in the future within the former USSR.⁶ The Russian leadership has played the Russian minority card since 1993, with top officials (such as Konstantin Zatulin, chairman of the State Duma commission on CIS Affairs and Compatriot Ties) alleging "ethnic cleansing" in Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev has even threatened,

like the nationalist opposition, military intervention on behalf of the 25 million Russian diaspora. In view of the fact that nearly half of this diaspora lives in Ukraine, Kyiv should be rightly concerned that the demands for a "Greater Serbia" which led to the Yugoslav conflict may not be repeated in the former USSR by demands for a "Greater Russia."

Independent Ukraine

Ukraine became an independent state through a *de facto* tactical alliance between former national communists, who had deserted the Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU) in 1990–1991, and national democrats from the dissident counter elites and the creative intelligentsia, such as the Writer's Union of Ukraine.⁷ This alliance, although not endorsed by the wing of the Ukrainian Popular Movement (Rukh) led by Viacheslav Chornovil, which preferred to remain in "constructive opposition" to Kravchuk, or the "Party of Power" as they became called,⁸ proved important in defining Ukraine's foreign and defence policies during the 1992–1994 period, when Ukraine established itself as a permanent member of the international community.⁹

This alliance ensured that like-minded people controlled the leadership of the Supreme Council of Ukraine (Ivan Plyushch and Vasyl Durdynets), the presidency (Kravchuk) and presidential administration, (Anton Buteiko)¹⁰ parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs (Dmytro Pavlychko)¹¹ and Defence and Security questions (Vasyl Durdynets¹² and Valentyn Lemish), Minister of Defence Konstantin Morozov (who co-operated closely with the Union of Ukrainian Officers) and the Foreign Ministry (Konstantin Zlenko and Borys Tarasiuk).¹³ Until the parliamentary and presidential elections in Spring-Summer 1994, there was little disagreement, if any, between these various branches of the executive and legislature vis-à-vis Ukrainian policies towards the former Yugoslavia.

The most influential members of the parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs were Pavlychko, Bohdan Horyn and Serhiy Holovatiy, all long-term activists in the national democratic Rukh, and the Democratic and Republican Parties. They believed the Yugoslav conflict was similar to their own experiences within the former USSR. They welcomed the collapse of both empires, Yugoslavia and the USSR, because both, in their opinion, had been held together by Serbian and Russian imperialism.

In this manner, they wanted to show that Ukraine's position differed fundamentally from that of the Russian Federation, which saw the disintegration of Yugoslavia as a "tragedy." Such national democrats, who controlled the parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs, viewed the mentality and policies of the Serbs and Russians as the same.

In various speeches to international organisations, such as the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the North Atlantic Co-operation Council, members of the Ukrainian parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs deliberately

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played up their differences with Russia over questions such as the Yugoslav crisis and Moscow's demands for recognition and financing of its "peacekeeping" and "peacemaking" activities within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Ukraine, therefore, blamed the Serbs for the bloodshed while the Russians remained neutral but, in reality, came down on the side of the Serbs. Horyn remembers how the Russian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe was infuriated when he openly called upon those present to declare the Serbs the "main aggressors" in the Yugoslav crisis.

Another reason why Ukrainian leaders adopted these positions was to show their European orientation. Ukraine, as a country which repeatedly outlined its strategic goal as that of "re-joining" Europe, wanted to prove it had similar views towards the Yugoslav crisis as the West. In addition, then President Kravchuk understood the similarity in the conflicts between Croatia–Serbia and potentially Ukraine–Russia.¹⁴

The Ukrainian media remained largely neutral¹⁵ during the Yugoslav crisis but often pro-Serb views crept into newspaper reports mainly because of two factors. Russian, in contrast to Ukrainian, journalists often travelled to the Balkans; and, the Russian media inherited the Soviet tradition of maintaining foreign correspondents. Ukrainian newspapers, therefore, often had little choice but to utilise Russian information sources, such as ITAR-TASS or Interfax news agencies, whose reports inevitably included a pro-Serb bias. Access to Western news agencies is largely non-existent; and, Ukrainian news agencies (such as UNIAN or UNIAR) have poor coverage of foreign affairs.

Ostankino and Ukrainian State Television, therefore, presented the Yugoslav crisis from different angles, with the former favouring the Serbs and the latter the Croats and Bosnian Muslims. This may have reflected the anti-Serb views of the national democrats whose tactical alliance with the national communists dominated Ukrainian politics and leadership until Spring–Summer 1994. In addition, the pro-Croatian/Bosnian Muslim views of Ukrainian Television probably reflected its sympathy with those peoples (the "underdogs") who were defending their territory against an outside aggressor.¹⁶

These views on the Yugoslav crisis, held by the parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs, were not contradicted by the presidential or parliamentary leaders. The parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs held frequent meetings with the directorate, within the presidential administration, responsible for foreign affairs under Buteiko; and, Horyn does not recall a single instance when there were conflicts between them over policies which were either very close or similar. Also, the parliamentary leadership never contradicted or criticised the views on the Yugoslav crisis held by its commission on Foreign Affairs. The only criticism came from a minority of Russian-speaking, left-wing members of parliament.¹⁷

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also had no principle problem with the position on the Yugoslav crisis held by the parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs. But, the Ministry never felt comfortable with laying sole blame for the crisis purely

on the Serbs, and they increasingly shifted to the Russian position that all sides were equally to blame in the conflict. The Russian Foreign Ministry and its parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs, led by Vladimir Lukin, applied strong pressure on Zlenko to adopt a joint policy of the three East Slavic states vis-à-vis the conflict. This would have helped to cement the CIS as a new body with weight and influence in international affairs to counter NATO and the EU. V. Prymachenko, the representative of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Yugoslavia—tentatively based within the Russian Embassy in Beograd because of the absence of Ukrainian diplomatic representation due to international sanctions—had surveyed the Yugoslav and Serb media regarding the speeches of Horyn in the West, found it to be highly critical and was surprised to find it at odds with Russia.¹⁸

Attitude of Political Parties

During the Kravchuk era, due to the command of the controlling heights of foreign and defence policy-making by national democrats, those political parties with a pro-Serb orientation (the Communist and Socialist Parties as well as the Civic Congress of Ukraine) possessed little influence. The 1994 parliamentary elections changed this. The chairmanship of the parliamentary commissions on Defence and Security as well as Foreign Affairs and CIS Ties were taken over by a socialist and communist respectively, Volodymyr Mukhin and Borys Oliynyk. Oliynyk had been a long term supporter of the Serb position and had often travelled to the conflict zone. In early 1993 he had sent an open letter to the Ukrainian authorities which argued that, “before the eyes of progressive mankind, with the open connivance of democrats and defenders of human rights, the long-suffering Serbian nation is being methodically annihilated.” This is being undertaken by the U.S. which, by “cracking a whip,” is trying to establish a “new order.” The open letter ends with the words: “Long live all Balkan nations, among them free Serbia as a sister of free Ukraine!”¹⁹

In addition, the new chairmanship of the Supreme Council was dominated by Socialists (Oleksandr Moroz) and Agrarians. Moroz condemned the use of NATO military power in the Yugoslav conflict in even sharper tones than the executive power structures. He rejected the use of sanctions “as a form of interstate relations,” and he believed that NATO was the wrong organisation for the U.N. to use in the conflict. He stated that neither Ukraine nor Russia gave their consent to the use of air strikes and that it is mainly civilians who suffered.²⁰

The left-wing bloc, formed during the 1994 elections, protested loudly over NATO actions against the Serbs, often outside the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv. The pickets—Communist and Socialist Parties, the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, the Lenin Communist League of Ukrainian Youth, the Civic Congress and the Party of Slavic Unity—demanded the cessation of “unprovoked aggression in the Balkans” and condemned NATO air strikes. They also demanded the suspension of Ukraine’s co-operation with NATO’s Partnership for Peace

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Programme.²¹ According to a Russian press report, “[p]ickets demands seemed to gain approval from by-walkers and were not opposed by the local police.”²²

The Civic Congress of Ukraine has gone further than most Ukrainian political groups in demanding the imposition of trade sanctions against Croatia for its military action in Krajina. These actions, “can be qualified only as genocide against the Serbs who had lived on that land since the sixteenth century. It is evident that the war criminal was not fearful of the world community, sensing unilateral support from the USA and NATO.”²³ The Socialists demanded an end to NATO air strikes; and, they supported the call to hold peace talks in Kyiv, the provision of humanitarian aid to Serbian refugees from Krajina, and the withdrawal of Ukraine from sanctions against Yugoslavia.²⁴

The national democrats, of course, held diametrically opposed views, which were anti-Serb. The Statehood parliamentary faction, which is primarily composed of the Republican and Democratic Parties, blamed the Krajina Serbs for being the first who launched ethnic cleansing against Croats in the early stages of the Yugoslav conflict. Also blamed were Serb actions in Kosovo and elsewhere in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The statement reads “[t]here is no moral justification for this war. Neither can it be regulated by political methods or won by military means.”²⁵

United Nations Peacekeeping

In July 1992, Ukraine sent its first 420-strong peacekeeping troops to Yugoslavia. Kyiv’s attitude was always one of readiness, rather than reluctance, to send more troops. With U.N. payment of \$500 per month to privates and \$1,000 per month to officers, there were more volunteers than vacancies for the peacekeeping battalion. Ukrainian casualties have remained low (12 killed, 39 injured and 58 taken hostage and later released by the Bosnian Serbs), and any criticism has been muted because of the relatively large salaries (by Ukrainian standards).²⁶

In November 1993, after a decision by the Supreme Council of Ukraine to treble its contribution, the total number of Ukrainian peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia rose to 1,200. There were four applicants for each place.²⁷ The Ukrainian authorities not only viewed its contribution as enhancing its international prestige but as also providing good training for its troops.

Ukraine’s position on NATO air strikes against Serb positions constantly fluctuated and lacked coherence. In early 1994 Foreign Minister Zlenko said that Ukraine was unequivocally opposed to air strikes on Serb positions because they would endanger U.N. peacekeeping troops on the ground. “We are absolutely opposed to bombardment of Serb positions around Sarajevo. Peacekeeping forces would immediately become hostages,” Zlenko pointed out.²⁸ Then Defence Minister Valerii Radetsky drew up contingency plans to withdraw the 400 Ukrainian peacekeeping battalion “to a place of safety.” In an attempt to forestall NATO air strikes President Kravchuk backed Russia’s call for a debate within the U.N. Security

Council which, he believed, should be the only body that could authorise them (and not a small number of states).²⁹ Kravchuk only agreed to air strikes if all other options had been exhausted.

Ukraine was again treading a fine line between wanting to be seen as supporting the West while not harming newly improved relations with Russia; a Trilateral Treaty with the U.S and Russia in January had paved the way for the Supreme Council of Ukraine's ratification of the START 1 Treaty the following month. On one of the few occasions during the Yugoslav crisis, therefore, the positions of the Ukrainian and Russian Foreign Ministries coincided with both calling for the prevention of an escalation of the conflict: "Views on both sides coincided that the way to settle the situation was not by escalating military action but through intensifying political efforts, mainly through the U.N. Security Council."³⁰

Before air strikes were launched in April 1994 on Goražde, the Ukrainian military officials were warned in advance, allowing its U.N. peacekeeping troops to be moved to a safe location. According to one Ukrainian report, Ukraine rejected a NATO proposal to carry out joint air operations against Serbs without U.N. Security Council official approval, because Kyiv's official position stood in favour of a political not military solution to the Yugoslav crisis.³¹ The heavy NATO air strikes on Serb positions in August 1995, in retaliation for its shelling of Sarajevo, revealed for the first time the yawning gap between the Russian and Ukrainian positions on the Yugoslav crisis. The assessment by Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Volodymyr Khandohiy was frank: "NATO was forced to act. Its actions correspond to the U.N. Security Council resolution permitting all available measures to protect civilians and U.N. peacekeepers." But he added, "[w]e are concerned, however, that such actions could lead to an escalation of the conflict and casualties among civilians."³² One Ukrainian report commented that it "contains a cautiously positive attitude toward, if not support for, the NATO air action and does not doubt Serb responsibility for the shelling of Sarajevo. The diplomatic interludes on the need to resolve the conflict through negotiations and on the undesirability of further use of NATO air power seem to be partly a homage to Moscow and partly attributes of diplomatic speeches."³³

Ukrainian officials remained cautious though, that military force could be effective in solving the Yugoslav conflict, always pointing to the threat to civilians. President Kuchma compared the use of force in Yugoslavia to that in Chechnya, "in which the Russians failed to end the battle against Chechen separatists after protracted forceful actions, and having to sit at a negotiating table."³⁴ Although not backing "this type of education," in Kuchma's words, the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, unlike its Russian counterpart, openly blamed the Serbs for the "continuing criminal acts against civilians in Sarajevo."³⁵

The Ukrainian position continued to remain critical of the Serb atrocities, such as in July 1995, in Srebrenica, while being sceptical of the effectiveness of military force to resolve the conflict. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry offered its services as

a mediator to attempt to resolve the conflict through political means.³⁶ Military air strikes were “ineffective,” Ukrainian Defence Minister Valerii Shmarov argued;³⁷ and, Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk pointed out that air strikes were “not the best possible solution.”³⁸ Although air strikes were not “effective,” even President Kuchma had to acknowledge in British Foreign Minister Malcolm Rifkind’s presence that “it is impossible to resolve this problem by political means alone.”³⁹

Following the NATO air strikes, Ukrainian diplomats intensified their competition with Moscow over acting as an international mediator to the Yugoslav crisis. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry proposed that it host negotiations between Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia in Kyiv. This was proposed after the failure of the Russian proposal, due to the Croats refusal to travel to Moscow in response to the pro-Serb views of the Russian media. According to the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, the Croats had agreed to the Ukrainian offer, and the Serb, “welcomed Ukraine’s role and had no objections in principle.” Belgrade favoured an upgrading of Ukraine’s participation in the international efforts to resolve the crisis, but the Bosnians were late in responding.⁴⁰ Kyiv claimed that it “was absolutely impartial and would give preference to neither party in the conflict.”⁴¹

Whereas Belarus readily backed Russia’s proposal to issue a joint statement from the parliaments of the three East Slavic states on the Yugoslav crisis, Ukrainian parliamentarians remained cautious and divided. In the end, the Supreme Council of Ukraine turned down the offer, probably on the advice of the President and the Foreign Ministry. The national democrats, such as Rukh, rejected the offer outright, pointing out that an international forum could be utilised for this purpose. Even the radical left parliamentary factions were not unanimous in their support. Yevgeniy Marmazov, a communist member of the parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs and CIS Links, thought the idea interesting but failed to see how it could be implemented.⁴²

Ukrainian political leaders welcomed the Serbs’ decision to withdraw their heavy weapons. This they hoped would lead to a strengthening of the peace process, which was, “now dependent upon the Bosnian Serbs’ track record and their readiness to keep their promises.”⁴³ With the conclusion of the peace process held under U.S. auspices, President Kuchma thanked American mediation, called on all parties to the conflict to fulfil the agreement, and offered Ukraine’s services in its implementation. Kuchma also called for an end to sanctions and Yugoslavia’s re-entry into the international community.⁴⁴

Ukraine was willing to contribute troops to a new peacekeeping force in Bosnia-Herzegovina—but *not* under NATO command due to its policy of neutrality, according to Defence Minister Shmarov and Foreign Minister Udovenko. This was contradicted by General Vadym Hrechaninov, presidential adviser on military affairs, who did not regard the possibility of Ukraine joining a NATO-led, peacekeeping operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina as undesirable. Eventually, Ukraine and Russia agreed to send peacekeeping troops as part of the multinational force in Bosnia but

without its subordination to NATO. The Bosnian Serbs insisted on the stationing of Russian and Ukrainian troops in their territory. Ukraine also complained that it lacked the finances to participate in the peacekeeping operation.⁴⁵

The U.N. Sanctions and their Effects

The question of the losses inflicted upon the Ukrainian economy by the U.N. sanctions has been the predominant subject of attention in Ukraine in relation to the Yugoslav conflict.⁴⁶ The claims of losses have included lost business, "loss of potential business clients," the cost of enforcing the sanctions, hiring extra security personnel, providing housing and office facilities for the new personnel, ecological damage, and new border checkpoints.⁴⁷

The main damage of the sanctions has been vis-à-vis the Danube river traffic, one of Ukraine's main sources of hard currency (the Ukrainian Danube Shipping Company employed 30,000 staff prior to the launch of the conflict). As early as March 1993, it was alleged that direct losses of the Ukrainian Danube Shipping Company were \$100 million,⁴⁸ and up to or \$350 million by the end of 1993. By this time, only 40% of the fleet was in operation; unemployment threatened 25,000 of the fleet's staff plus inhabitants of entire towns such as Izmail and Reni, where the shipping company was the main form of employment.⁴⁹

Unlike Russia, Ukraine opposed the idea of "balancing" U.N. sanctions against Serbia with new ones against Croatia. Demand's for the lifting of international sanctions on Yugoslavia have long been heard in Ukraine. The Foreign Ministry pointed out that Ukraine's participation in the sanctions is not a manifestation of anti-Serb hostility.⁵⁰ "We are observing the U.N. Security Council sanctions against Yugoslavia. But, the difficulties in Montenegro and Serbia make us favour progressive removal of sanctions, especially those affecting children and elderly people," Foreign Minister Zlenko said.⁵¹ These sanctions, as parliamentary speaker Moroz has pointed out, affect not only the state against whom the sanctions are directed—but also those who are applying the sanctions.

In May 1995, the Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister visited Kyiv where the exchange of opinions was "very comprehensive." They discussed possible economic co-operation when the sanctions were lifted. "We agreed that we could improve our relations considerably even under the current conditions dictated by the sanctions," the Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister Nikola Sainović said.⁵²

At the U.N. in September 1995, Foreign Minister Udovenko called for the lifting of sanctions against Yugoslavia after the mutual and simultaneous recognition by all states on the territory of former Yugoslavia. In Ukraine's opinion, the sanctions were now counter-productive and had not facilitated the reaching of a peaceful settlement. Sanctions should be lifted against Yugoslavia in return for the demonstration of "its willingness to assist in the restoration of peace."⁵³

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The Ukrainian Minority

The Ukrainian minority numbered nearly 100,000 prior to the disintegration of former Yugoslavia. When the minority was part of the Austrian–Hungarian Empire, it settled in areas concentrated in two regions—Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Vojvodina autonomous region of Serbia. Most of the former are from Galicia and the latter from Trans-Carpathia.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry issued an official statement in mid-1993 complaining about the violation of human rights in the Yugoslav conflict zone, asserting that 60,000 Ukrainians were ethnically cleansed from Bosnia-Herzegovina and hundreds were thrown into concentration camps.⁵⁴ “In fact, they have been physically exterminated,” Taras Kiyak, a member of the parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs and CIS Ties, claimed.⁵⁵

But, as a statement by the Statehood parliamentary faction points out, the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry “has taken an ostrich-like stance. European politicians are outraged by the Ukrainian diplomats’ indifference.”⁵⁶ According to Horyn, deputy chairman of the parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs between 1992–1994, then Foreign Minister Zlenko “deliberately ignored this question.” The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry did not react to danger signals heard with respect to threats towards the Ukrainian minority. This, in Horyn’s view, was related to the lack of Ukrainian policies in defence of its co-ethnics abroad, whether in Yugoslavia or the Russian Federation.

Other reasons for this lack of interest by the Ukrainian executive authorities regarding the fate of the Ukrainian minority were blamed on a lack of finances and unwillingness to inflame relations with Russia. “The Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not adopt an active policy on behalf of the Ukrainian minority and still does not,” Horyn believed.⁵⁷ In addition, Ukrainian concerns remained largely focussed on introverted, domestic questions (state-building, dealing with the economic crisis, *etc.*). Finally, in Ukraine the lack of a united ethnos and fully developed nation (due to centuries of external domination) failed to produce cross-party consensus on emotional support for co-ethnics abroad.⁵⁸

A statement by the parliamentary Statehood faction was even more forthright in its condemnation of Serbian ethnic cleansing of the Ukrainian minority:

Four years ago it was destroyed in Serbia just as the Croat community. Ukrainian villages were ruined, as well as Ukrainian cultural centres and all the 16 churches. Why? Because the Ukrainians did not want to fight for the interests of others. The remains of the Ukrainian community found asylum in Croatia ... No matter how often declarations styled after the Russian State Duma are voiced here (in the Supreme Council of Ukraine), we ask: where were we, the Ukrainian people and legislator’s, when thousands of Ukrainians were being exterminated? We ask many responsible people in this hall. Do you have pangs of conscience?⁵⁹

The lack of defence of the Ukrainian minority in the former Yugoslavia by the newly independent Ukrainian state is rather strange in light of the information collected by the Union of Ukrainians–Rusyns of Croatia which reveals the extent of the terror and human rights abuses inflicted by the Serbs. This terror particularly took place in eastern Slavonia and the Vukovar region which has remained occupied by the Serbs since 1991. Prior to 1991, this region was populated by 60% of the Ukrainians and Rusyns who lived in the then Yugoslav republic of Croatia.

Serb atrocities against the Ukrainians and Rusyns (who are nearly all Greek–Catholics–Uniates) in eastern Slavonia consisted of: demands by Serb irregulars for them to evacuate their premises quickly to provide homes for the Serbs who had fled western Slavonia, the destruction of offices of the Union of Ukrainians–Rusyns in Croatia (as was the editorial office of *Nova Dumka*, its organ), the demolishing of all schools, cultural centres and the headquarters of various choirs and dance groups, and the presumed murder of many leading members of the Ukrainian–Rusyn community (priests, teachers, journalists from *Nova Dumka* and activists of the Union of Ukrainians–Rusyns) now missing.⁶⁰

Conclusions

During 1992–1994 Ukrainian policies towards the former Yugoslavia were not co-ordinated between the various branches of authority, remained inconsistent, lacked clear direction and possessed no appreciation of the strategic concerns for Ukraine in the Yugoslav crisis. Ukraine's foreign policy towards the Yugoslav crisis proved to be "amateurish," according to one leading Ukrainian specialist. This view which was partly explained by the lack of trained experts and access to high-quality information in Ukraine. The Russian Federation inherited the former USSR's specialist institutes which had previously trained experts in the world's regions.⁶¹

Attempts to distance Ukraine's position as far as possible from that of Russia's partly reflected its sympathy with those ethnic groups who were perceived to be defending their territory and who, it was thought, displayed a similarity with the Ukraine's historical problems of separating from Russia. The motivation to play up these policy differences with Russia declined after the 1994 parliamentary and presidential elections.

Russia's inability and unwillingness to accept that Kyiv has a right to hold its own individual views on international affairs stems from Moscow's unwillingness to regard Ukraine as an equal, sovereign state in international law. Moscow, therefore, continuously applied pressure on Ukraine to join with Russia and Belarus in a common, united front on such important international questions as the expansion of NATO into Central Europe and the Yugoslav crisis.

Ukraine's lack of clear-cut policies in defence of the Ukrainian minority in the former Yugoslavia is probably the darkest stain on its foreign policy during this period. The ethnic cleansing and extermination of tens of thousands of Ukrainians

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would have been sufficient for other countries to come down firmly within the anti-Serb camp, and even to launch military intervention in their defence despite Russian threats. But, this was not to be. The Ukrainian minority were largely forgotten and left to their fate by the newly independent Ukrainian state.

NOTES

1. Ustina Markus, "Ukraine and the Yugoslav Conflict," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, No. 30, 23 July 1993, pp. 36–37.
2. On Russian policy towards Yugoslavia see Suzanne Crow, "Soviet Reaction to the Crisis in Yugoslavia," *Report on the USSR*, 2 August 1991; "Reading Moscow's Policies toward the Rump Yugoslavia," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 1, No. 446, November 1992; "Russia and the Macedonian Question," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 1, No. 45, 13 November 1992; and "Russia Adopts a More Active Policy," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, No. 12, 19 March 1993.
3. Until 1994 the majority of Western academics, journalists and government officials all shared the view that Ukraine and Russia were indeed one and the same and that Ukrainian independence was a "temporary phenomenon." Sooner or later, therefore, Ukraine would return to its "normal" state of affairs as a satellite of Russia, or it would be re-incorporated. This view is still held by the majority of Russian public opinion.
4. *Post Postup*, No. 4, 24 February–13 March 1994.
5. *Zerkalo Nedeli*, 2–8 September 1995.
6. Jonathan Eyal, "Minority Problems in Eastern Europe," General Seminar Series, Centre for Russian and East European Studies, The University of Birmingham, 1 November 1995. The Russian media immediately understood this as well, pointing to the regulation of the Bosnian conflict as something which could be applied to the CIS.
7. See Taras Kuzio and Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine. Perestroika to Independence* (London: Macmillan, 1994).
8. This mainly revolved around domestic questions. With regard to the former Yugoslavia, members of Rukh had no difficulty cooperating with members of the pro-Kravchuk Ukrainian Republican Party within parliamentary commissions or as a member together in foreign delegations.
9. See Taras Kuzio, "Ukrainian Security Policy," *The Washington Papers*, Vol. 167 (Washington, DC: Praeger for The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995).
10. Then presidential adviser on foreign affairs, appointed First Deputy Foreign Minister in October 1995.
11. During the 1994 parliamentary elections Pavlychko was chairman of the (national democratic) Democratic Coalition "Ukraine" bloc.
12. Appointed First Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for Security in mid-1995.
13. After the 1994 presidential elections, Zlenko was removed from the post of Foreign Minister and transferred to the post of Ambassador to the U.N. Tarasiuk was appointed Ambassador to the Benelux countries and liaison to the EU and NATO in mid-1995 (his replacement was Buteiko).
14. Interview with Mykhailo Honchar, Senior Research Fellow, National Institute for Strategic Studies (National Security Council), Kyiv, 29 November 1995.
15. In contrast, the Ukrainian media (including Russian-language publications) had all taken a pro-Chechen position.
16. See Oles Vakhniy, "Ukraina i Khorvatiya—Spilna Tragediya," *Nash Klych*, Nos 2–3, 1992, pp. 48–51.

17. Interview with Bohdan Horyn, former deputy chairman of the parliamentary commission on Foreign Affairs between 1992–1994, Kyiv, 26 November 1994.
18. Copy in the author's possession of internal report No. 542 (16 October 1992) from V. Prymachenko, the Representative of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs within the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Yugoslavia, addressed to the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, N. P. Makarevych.
19. *Robitnychna Hazeta*, 9 February 1993. Oliynyk played an important role in shifting public and political support during 1993–1994 towards the Serbs—a trend also influenced by the biting impact of the trade sanctions against rump Yugoslavia. Interview with Mykhailo Honchar, Senior Research Fellow, National Institute for Strategic Studies (National Security Council), Kyiv, 29 November 1995.
20. *UNIAR News Agency*, 9 September 1995.
21. See T. Kuzio, "Ukraine and the Expansion of NATO," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 7, No. 9, September 1995.
22. *ITAR-TASS News Agency*, 6 September 1995; see also *UNIAN News Agency*, 14 September 1995.
23. *Interfax News Agency*, 14 August 1995.
24. *Holos Ukrainy*, 21 September; and *Tovarysh*, No. 38, September 1995.
25. *Holos Ukrainy*, 21 September 1995.
26. See Sergei Sydorov, "Trudnaya missiya Ukrainskogo batal'iona," *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 27 October 1992.
27. *Reuters*, 15 April 1994.
28. *Reuters*, 8 February 1994.
29. *UPI*, 10 February 1994.
30. *Reuters*, 11 February 1994.
31. *UNIAN News Agency*, 14 September 1993.
32. *Reuters*, 30 August 1995.
33. *Holos Ukrainy*, 1 September 1995.
34. *Zerkalo Nedeli*, 2–8 September 1995.
35. *Holos Ukrainy*, 6 September; *Reuters*, 31 August; and *Reuters*, 6 September 1995.
36. *Radio Ukraine World Service*, 13 July 1995.
37. *UNIAN News Agency*, 21 July 1995.
38. *Interfax News Agency*, 8 September 1995.
39. *Holos Ukrainy*, 6 September 1995.
40. *Reuters*, 30 August 1995; and *ITAR-TASS News Agency*, 31 August 1995.
41. *Interfax News Agency*, 15 August 1995.
42. *Interfax News Agency*, 11 September 1995.
43. *Holos Ukrainy*, 19 September 1995.
44. *Narodna Armiya*, 24 November 1995.
45. *Reuters*, 27 October and 4 November 1995.
46. Many accusations of Ukrainian sanction busting made by the Western media have since been proved to be performed by Russians. A U.N. inspection team later confirmed that there was no evidence that Ukraine had violated U.N. sanctions against Yugoslavia. However, these accusations led to the circulation of instructions by the Cabinet of Ministers to relevant government agencies to secure the implementation of these sanctions. Many of the shipments affected by these measures were of petroleum products by Russia, Bulgaria, Greece, Cyprus and Turkey to Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia along the Danube river. A group attempting to smuggle more than four tons of ammunition to Croatia was arrested by the Ukrainian authorities, who seized their plane and cargo.

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Ukrainian weapons have also been illegally supplied to the Croats and Bosnian Muslims (possibly with the U.S. government turning a blind eye).

47. U. Markus, "Ukraine and the Yugoslav Conflict," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 2, No. 30, 23 July 1993, pp. 39–41. *Molod Ukrainy*, 14 May 1993; and *Moscow News*, 4 June 1993 claimed that Ukrainian losses due to the sanctions by mid-1993 amounted to \$2 billion.
48. *Kyivski Visnyk*, 16 March 1993.
49. *Moscow News*, 4 June 1993.
50. *ITAR-TASS News Agency*, 6 February 1993.
51. *Reuters*, 29 July 1994.
52. *Tanjug News Agency*, 7 May 1995.
53. *Reuters*, 28 September 1995.
54. *Holos Ukrainy*, 6 May 1993.
55. *Interfax News Agency*, 7 September 1995. See also Andrij Wynnyckyj, "UWC Studies Plight of Ukrainians Trapped in the Bosnian Quagmire," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 15 October 1995 which reports that Ukrainians were used as shields and targeted for atrocities near Banja Luka.
56. *Holos Ukrainy*, 21 September 1995.
57. Interview with Bohdan Horyn, Kyiv, 26 November 1995.
58. Interview with Mykhailo Honchar, Senior Research Fellow, National Institute of Strategic Studies (National Security Council), Kyiv, 29 November 1995.
59. *Holos Ukrainy*, 21 September 1995.
60. *Shliakh Peremohy*, 27 May 1995: See appendix for a breakdown of the terror inflicted on Ukrainians and Rusyns in Croatia by the Serbs.
61. Interview with Mykhailo Honchar, Senior Research Fellow, National Institute for Strategic Studies (National Security Council), Kyiv, 29 November 1995.