Max M. Kampelman Papers

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MAX M. KAMPELMAN

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I apologize for the delay in returning the "short talks contract" to you but only received your letter and enclosures this past week -- long after the May 6 date of your letter.

All my best.

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6th May, 1994

Dear Mr Kampelman

Brendan O'Leary and I would like to thank you very much for taking part in this week's ANALYSIS documentary, "The Fate of Nations". Your contribution was extremely helpful and illuminating.

We very much enjoyed making the programme and I hope you were able to hear it. I am enclosing a transcript for your records.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely

Nicola Meyrick
Senior Producer, ANALYSIS

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION
NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
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'ANALYSIS'

THE FATE OF NATIONS

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Producer — Nicola Meyrick

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Dr. Morton Halperin
Senior Director for Democracy
U.S. Government National Security Council

Max van der Stoel
High Commissioner on National Minorities
Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe

Sir Brian Urquhart
former Under Secretary of the United Nations

O'LEARY Rwanda; Burundi; Bosnia, Belfast. These names and the killings in these places are reminders of the present fate of some nations. National and ethnic collective slaughter is so frequent that it's tempting to see it as proof of the intrinsic evil, irrationality, and incomprehensibility of our species.

But do nations and nationalism defy understanding ? Have they no positive merits ? More importantly, can nations and nationalism be managed better, to eliminate the threats of holocausts and 'ethnic cleansing' ? As members of a global village can't we mediate, arbitrate and indeed use force to protect those being battered in the back-alleys of the village?

And why is it that when many empires and states collapse that there's not a war of individuals against individuals, but rather a war of ethnic communities ?

Michael Ignatieff, a Canadian writer and investigator of nationalisms, captures what happens to people's minds when a state is about to collapse.

IGNATIEFF: They then look around and ask themselves who will protect me now? The Hobbesian question. And the answer given to the Hobbesian question, always is, my own will protect me. Only my own. Meaning someone of my own skin colour, my own religion. When you're in danger, when you're threatened, you go to those who most closely resemble you. It's not a time for trust. It's not a time for reaching out to strangers. It's a time for returning home, wherever that is.

GELLNER: There's a kind of point of maximum danger which obviously Europe went through during the very very virulent nationalisms of the twenties and the thirties and which ex Yugoslavia is going through now. I'm old enough to remember Central Europe as it was fifty years ago and when I visit the Caucasus, as it is now, I get a kind of feeling of being in a time machine. The Caucasus now .. the ethnic atmosphere is rather like that of Central Europe of half a century ago.

O'LEARY That's the voice of Ernest Gellner, Professor at the Central European University in Prague. In his judgement ethnic nationalism is usually at its most virulent when early industrialisation and urbanisation put culturally different and unskilled people in competition with one another.

However, neither nationalism nor nationalists disappear in advanced societies.

Both liberals and socialists wrongly thought that modernity homogenises peoples. They looked forward to the erosion of ethnic hatreds and animosities. They believed that they could live beyond the parochial prejudices of nationalism and ethnic sentiment. They thought of themselves as cosmopolitans, citizens of the world. Michael Ignatieff maintains that this is an illusion.

IGNATIEFF: Cosmopolitans forget that most cosmopolitanism is only possible because of the secure order of stable nation states. Most people who call themselves cosmopolitans live in the very small number of societies that have secure nation states, effective police forces. Belong to states which do not have irredentist claims on others. In other words, places that do not have a nationalist agenda. And because those societies have consolidated themselves as secure places to live, you can then think very grandly that you're above nationalist conflict. You're above fanaticism. You're at home anywhere' (quote unquote). And I think one of the things that we've all woken up to at the end of the Cold War is to discover just how small the world is, that can properly call itself cosmopolitan.

O'LEARY: So cosmopolitanism, if you like is the luxury of those who have satisfied nationalisms.

IGNATIEFF: The cosmopolitan is someone who's got a passport in his pocket.

O'LEARY Cosmopolitans undoubtedly suffer from illusions, but so do nationalists; they think that their identity has always been around, that nations are immemorial, or primordial. In the same way that we have faces and tongues so we have nations.

It isn't so. The French historian Renan once declared that a nation is a people united in a common error about its origin; and Ernest Gellner agrees that nationalism is often based on collective amnesia.

GELLNER: Groups of people unite with each other and distinguish themselves from other people on all kinds of principles, such as kinship, territoriality, or religion of whatever and amongst those principles, cultural similarity has from time to time operated. But it wasn't a persvasive principle, it wasn't totally absent but it wasn't normal and pervasive, and it has become dominant in the past two centuries. It's in this sense that nationalism is a modern phenomenon. The point where I'm dismissive is that the central self image of nationalism is simply wrong, that there's a kind of inverse relationship between the reality of nationalism and its self image. Roughly speaking, nationalism talks the language of gemeinschaft

community whilst in fact being rooted in gesellschaft in anonymous mass society. Nationalism emerges at a time when you get massive anonymous mobile and standardised societies but because these national cultures in Central and Eastern Europe had to be created, there previously had been dynastic and religious states but not ethnic ones, the new national cultural base had to be created. The typical nationalist propagandist borrowed the imagery of the village green, when in fact its clientele was a modern indistrial suburb. So that what they say about themselves is largely rubbish.

O'LEARY Nationalist myths may often be rubbish, but they are grounded in present realities.

Two transformations underpin the power of nationalism. The first, emphasised by Ernest Gellner, is the industrial and scientific revolution which has destroyed traditional societies and impelled people into mass, literate and culturally standardised industrial societies, which require them to be mutually comprehensible and substitutable.

The second transformation is the democratic one. Ever since the American and French revolutions, and despite fascist and Communist interludes, the principle of popular sovereignty has been the animating doctrine of modern politics. It states that the people must rule. But who are the people ? The most coherent answer is that the people is 'the nation', we who inhabit this land, this place: ''we are the people'. Nationalism declares that the nation must be ruled by co-nationals, which is why the definition of the nation matters, and why being excluded from a nation can have catastrophic consequences. The natural tendency of the modern world might appear to be an equilibrium condition in which every nation must have its own state and every state must be a nation-state.

Does that mean we must all assimilate into a dominant national culture or face the threat of discrimination, or worse ?

For Preston King, Professor of Political Philosophy at the University of Lancaster, the very processes of modernisation which have been the sources of nationalism are also federalising the world, making the nation-state obsolete:

KING: What we do note if we take the world in general terms is a consistent movement in the direction of larger and larger territorial entities and the real question is, how we negotiate.

O'LEARY: Is that true ? I mean, the number of states that now exist in the United Nations is growing. We've just had twenty new members of the United Nations. Isn't the general trend towards fragmentation rather than larger entities ?

KING: If you take an entity like Africa, where you may figure anything between 800 and a 1000 languages, then you've got the basis for a number, a very great number of different nations. If you take the pre-colonial situation, then the fragmented states that you're looking at were extremely numerous. Today, of course, the fifty or so entities that you're looking at are on the average, huge as compared to what there was before. The United States starts with thirteen states - it's now in the area of fifty; the USSR has disintegrated but Russia remains an absolutely huge entity and it's open to question as to how long it will continue in this more restrictive guise. I think the pressures of modernity, of rapidity of communication, accessibility does mean that so many problems that arise will have to be dealt with on a supernational level and the nation will not quite work. We need to retain some sense of identity, locality et cetera, but of course there is an imperative which goes towards larger scale. We can only try to block that, modify it, humanise it but I don't think we're going to be able to stop it and I think the history of the world, despite the zig-zaginess of a graph, is going towards greater concentrations, not towards smaller ones. Despite the evidence of the former Yugoslavia and the former USSR.

O'LEARY This vision suggests that the creation of large multi-ethnic and multi-national blocs, like the European Union and NAFTA, is superseding nation-statism, and secessionism. But, as we can see in places as diverse as Quebec and Catalonia, large numbers of people feel the urge to be ruled by their own, to make state and culture coincide, and economic forces do not explain why nationalism is powerful or for that matter when it is weak.

The worth of nations often matters more than the wealth of nations; and nationalist ideas are no spent force. Nationalism provides a doctrine of citizenship, persuades people that they share a common past, and, more importantly, a common future, and inspires the building and renewal of national economies and educational systems. It also provides a powerful resource to those who would challenge the sway of liberal economics which is no respector of cultures, traditional or otherwise.

But the most powerful nationalist idea, paid lip-service by states since Woodrow Wilson went to Versailles in 1919, is that each nation should be entitled to self-determination. Max Kampelman, former American ambassador to the Conference

on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the CSCE, believes that the concept of self-determination is potentially explosive.

KAMPELMAN: The reason it's loaded with dynamite is that historically minority groups have interpreted the right of self determination to include within it, the right of secession. If that interpretation is to be upheld then we're in a period of international chaos. As minority groups, without having any definition as to the geographic area or their numbers, assert the right to secede, then there are minority groups within that larger minority group that can say, well we want our own enclave that is independent within this larger group and the result is chaos and violence. The right of self determination includes the right to determine how one's cultural life should prevail, the kind of educational programmes, the right of religious freedom, the right to be a cultural or national entity within itself. But it does not include a political right to be indepedent and to use violence or secession as a way of achieving that independence.

IGNATIEFF: It's a privilege of cosmopolitans to say that self determination's a bad thing. But if you've never **had** self determination, if you're a colonised people, if you're a subordinated people, if you're people without the right to speak your own language, self determination matters intimately.

O'LEARY Michael Ignatieff plainly is more sympathetic to self-determination than Max Kampelman but he too would also prefer it if secessions were rare:

IGNATIEFF: The question is whether self determination requires statehood; whether self determination requires sovereignty; whether self determination requires armed insurrection; whether self determination necessarily leads to violence. There are all kinds of forms of self determination that do not require a nation to press towards statehood and full sovereighnty. There are forms of devolution, there are forms of power sharing. Canada is an example of a place which accords substantial self determination to essentially ethnic or linguistically based communities. Those communities can exercise self rule without having statehood, without having flags, withour having a whole ridiculous paraphernalia. So the problem is not self determination, since if it's a good thing for individuals to have self determination, to be masters of their own lives, it must be a good thing for peoples to have self determination. The question is, what form that self determination takes and whether you can find forms of self determination that are consistent with leaving cheek by jowl with other peoples.

O'LEARY Is there a principle of self-determination and secession which can answer the fear that self-determination must end in blood and tears ? There is, but we don't use it.

The fair principle is that any people should be entitled to self-determination, including the right of secession, provided they grant the same right to any other peoples within their proposed area of secession.

That would have meant, for example, that the self-determination and secessionist claims of Croatians should only have been recognised if they were prepared to recognise the validity of the claims of the Serbs of Krajina.

But even so-called liberal nation-states may be hostile to any principle of self-determination. David Marquand, Professor of Politics at the University of Sheffield, and a former official of the European Commission, points out that vested interests are at stake.

MARQUAND: No member state wants to open the can of worms of regional secession within the existing territory of the European Union because an awful lot of them, in fact, if that can of worms were opened might find themselves facing similar demands from regions within their own territory. Nobody wants to go down that road. Surely the truth is, that there is, so to speak, a club of states, in Europe and in the world and on the whole, states don't like to support break-up movements in other states. Not, I think, so much because they're afraid, my god if we do that then the same thing's going to happen in our own territory - that might be a part of the calculation - but I think the more fundamental reason is the feeling that if you start supporting the break-up of states, all kinds of horrible things may happen. I think we'd rather have stability, if you like, than justice to particular collectivities of ethnicities in the world, if we have to choose between the two.

O'LEARY The fact is that we usually only recognise secessionists after they've been successful, through violence or other means. The club of states prefers order to justice between nations. But if secession is denied to unhappy peoples how can states be re-engineered to make their fate more bearable ?

The internal partition of a state offers one way forward, providing minorities can get control of at least one unit of government, as in Belgium, Canada and Switzerland. However, Donald Horowitz, Professor of Political Science at Duke University, and a specialist on ethnic conflict, points out that territorial devices can be double-edged:

HOROWITZ: If we're talking about regionally dispersed minorities, those that are concentrated in particular regions, then of course federalism and regional autonomy would have a considerable utility and there are many benefits that can be received from federalism and regional autonomy. But it does need to be said that central policymakers are usually quite wary of this in the case of minorities that are geographically concentrated because they fear that federalism and regional autonomy are the first steps towards separatism and secession. In this they're quite wrong, if these measures are put into place early and generously and if they're also coupled with guarantees that the minority has a place at the centre as well as in its own region.

O'LEARY Territorial management can be supplemented by electoral engineering. Voting systems can be designed to encourage politicians to appeal beyond the narrow confines of their own communities, but these mechanisms are rarely successful when groups have already come into conflict. Alternatively, voting rules can ensure that groups are proportionately represented in government, as in the recent South African elections, but that can be destabilising if one group forms a permanent majority.

Employment policies can also be used. Governments can ensure that each group gets its share of jobs in the civil service, the judiciary and the armed forces, although such policies can lead to a backlash amongst the previously privileged.

In short a whole range of possibilities is open to politicians if they want to dampen ethnic conflict. But every tool of conflict-regulation can become an instrument which provokes antagonism.

Consider for example the protection of collective cultural rights, such as the right to be educated in one's parents tongue and faith. These rights can become the sites of battlegrounds, and historically they became taboo because they were abused in the Nazi era. James Mayall, Professor of International Relations at the LSE.

MAYALL: The Covenant of the League of Nations contained guarantees for minority rights. They didn't work very well and Hitler used the protection of German minorities as part of his rationalisation for eastward expansion. So that when it came to 1945 the whole concept of minority rights had got a bad press and hence the emphasis was put on state's rights and individual rights. And there is, of course, a tension, if not a contradiction between what I've just said and the fact that one of the inalienable rights in the charter is the right of all peoples to self determination. But that has, until very

recently, always been interpreted as a right that individuals have. In other words, they as individuals have a right to join a people rather than a group having a right as a group. Now, partly in the context of the breakup of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia and the transfer of power in Eastern Europe, minority questions have gained an enormous new salience and there has been a recognition that more attention will have to be given to minority rights.

O'LEARY So the victims of indifferent or hostile majorities might hope for external or international remedies if their domestic institutions and politicians will not protect them. But should they look outside for help ? Donald Horowitz,

HOROWITZ: Most of the remedies in this area are going to be in domestic politics and they're going to take some form along the lines I've described, with variations from place to place. I don't think it's merely that there's a weak international community that has prevented the UN from taking effective action in some of these most serious cases. I think it's the fact that there are a lot of them around, that their sources do not really reside in international relations and so their remedies are not going to be in international relations, and it's also the case that the international actors who are going to be most central will find most of the time that their interests will not lie in the expenditure of the blood and treasure required.

O'LEARY But is it it true that most of the causes of ethnic conflict are internal to states and that they can't be resolved by external interventions ? Isn't it the international emphasis on the inviolability of borders, and on non-interference in the affairs of other states, which makes the management of ethnic conflicts so difficult ? Donald Horowitz,

HOROWITZ: I would say the problem with the international community is that it values two things simultaneously and they're probably in conflict. One is territorial integrity and the other is, especially these days, ethnic self determiation. And it acts inconsistently on the basis of this. If domestic protagonists had, for example, a very clear idea that the international community valued territorial integrity much more than it values ethnic self determination, it might well be that they would be pushed to pursue domestic measures of accommodation. But as things now stand, there's an ambiguity and the ambiguity in favour of self determination and in favour of territorial integrity encourages ethnic groups that are discontented to take their discontent to the point of separatism and secession and the ambiguity that favours

territorial integrity encourages central governments to repress them.

O'LEARY A grim analysis: the ambiguities of the present international system encourage both repression and secession.

And politicians within divided states may not have the right incentives. Their careers often depend on looking after their own. They may also have the wrong international signals. They're free to do their worst at home. Can we transcend this state of affairs ? Michael Ignatieff, for one, would like to see external mechanisms for conflict-prevention and resolution.

IGNATIEFF: There just has to be some way in which ethnic minorities who feel in fear for their lives or their liberties or their cultural identity can appeal to some international body to stop the oppression that's going on within an existing state. Find some way in which those disputes between a majority community and a minority community can be adjudicated peacefully without secession, without violence and disruption to existing borders. That's a very tall order. We're miles away from it. We think we shouldn't mess with the internal affairs of states. But the fact is we have to now. The international order has to. There are simply too many vulnerable people at the mercy of ethnic majorities around the world. They have to have some reliable means of international recourse and that's where the international community has failed.

O'LEARY Our present international failures flow from our collective over-reaction to the lessons of the inter-war years, when the great powers didn't defend the frontiers or the sovereignty of small states. So after 1945, international law and UN charter-drafting focused on the protection of individual rights, the stabilisation of state frontiers, and the inviolability of states' internal sovereignty.

It's now possible to foresee an alternative, democratised world order in which collective cultural rights are protected, frontiers are not so rigidly set in stone, sovereignty is divisible, and collective intervention in one another's states is accepted in defence of human rights and cultural rights.

But if the present international arena expresses the interests of states won't we have to wait until all the states on the UN Security Council, including China, have been democratised, and until they've all transformed their treatment of their minorities before we see this new age? James Mayall.

MAYALL: I suspect that that's probably right. I think that there is no dodging history on this. One can't just think a new and more attractive international system into existence. The principles of legitimacy in the international system have always been ultimately the same as the principles of legitimacy which prevailed in the major passage of time when .. when most of the great powers were dynastic states, then dynastic legitimacy was what defined the international system. When after 1918, at least notionally they became national democracies, notionally again the international system was cast in that mould.

O'LEARY If the world order always reflects the principles of the dominant powers are there any changes occurring within states, such as the dilution of their sovereignty, which might herald a different world order ?

MAYALL: One possible development which may be occurring is that the centralised states are finding themselves under attack from both above and below. The state is having many of its traditional prerogatives eroded by, for example, the growth of international capital. What is interesting, I think, about much of the new resurgent nationalism is that the claims of an increased national autonomy are on the whole no longer claims for control over a national economy, on the grounds that that's becoming increasingly difficult to do anyway. So it would be possible to conceive of an emerging new order which is much looser and more confederal and consists of overlapping jurisdictions with local communities having much more control over matters which remain close to them, in cultural matters of local government, education, language, religion and so forth and at the same time, macroeconomic decisions are delegated upwards.

O'LEARY But for the time being we're a long way from the transformation of the internal order of states, and our international system remains deeply contradictory and unpleasant.

There are, for example, national communities which would like to secede peacefully but they face a despotic or dictatorial state, or even a tyrannous majority, which will not allow them to negotiate territorial autonomy let alone to secede. What should they do ? Ambassador Max Kampelman.

KAMPELMAN: That is the legitimate question now, namely, where a minority group desires to make its changes peacefully, what recourse does it have ? In my opinion we've already adequately demonstrated in the world that where there is an appeal, a moral appeal, a political appeal for rights, the world responds. We as a world, as

a civilised world, have already shown in many places of the world, concern for human rights abuses - starvation, violence, police state aggression. We've shown that concern. I don't think we yet have adequately developed the mechanism so as to be certain that repressive states cannot get away with it. One reason, for example, that I feel personally very strongly about the terrible repression now engaged in by Serbia is because I think the civilised world has not adequately responded. But I hope we'll learn. We have a long way to go but I think we're moving in that direction.

O'LEARY There's a lot of *hope* in that.

If a new international order for the protection of minorities is emerging one would expect it to figure in the foreign policy of the world's leading power, the USA.

Morton Halperin is President Clinton's Senior Director for Democracy in the National Security Council. Before he joined the administration he advocated that self-determination claims should take centre-stage in American foreign policy analysis. So does the Clinton administration regard democracy as more important than self-determination ?

HALPERIN: No I would say that rights of minority groups are a critical component of the development of democracy. The question of whether that should lead to autonomy or to the full right to participate within a society, or in some cases to the creation of a new government is, I think, a question that has to be dealt with in the specifics of each situation. But the right of groups to cultural and even political autonomy is, I think, an important element of the promotion and democracy.

O'LEARY: Is that kind of thinking affecting present US planning and foresight activities with regard to future possible ethnic hotspots ?

HALPERIN: I think there has not been any systematic planning that I'm aware of that focuses specifically on that question.

O'LEARY Morton Halperin is being frank about the limits to America's commitments to minorities and self-determination movements. But are we Europeans doing any better ?

Sixteen months ago the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the CSCE, appointed a High Commissioner on National Minorities. He is Max van der Stoel, a former Dutch foreign minister, who can be found in a small building in The Hague overlooking a deer park. His

mandate is to engage in conflict-prevention and to monitor the fate of national minorities in the 53 member-states of the CSCE, ranging from Canada to Kazakhstan.

Does he have the resources to do his job ?

VAN DER STOEL: I have a small staff which works very hard, but the problem is not so much the size of the staff but the fact that I have no budget for expert consultation, even for documentation. So I have to rely on indirect ways of support for this. I have been active in creating a foundation on inter-ethnic relations which has as its main aim to support the activities of the commissioner, especially in those fields where no budget items are available - documentation, research, expert consultation.

O'LEARY Mr van der Stoel's total budget is precisely 4,635,000 Austrian schillings, that's about 270,000 pounds sterling. His organisation does not own its own building. It has some filing cabinets for monitoring the 53 states, a small number of researchers, and lots of empty book-shelves.

But his is not the only organisation with a small budget for the task of conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution. Sir Brian Urquhart, former Under Secretary of the United Nations says that the UN itself is burdened by an impossible mandate and insufficient resources.

URQUHART: The UN is seen, I think, by the public certainly in this country and probably in Europe, as a sort of embryo world police force and emergency service. That is to say, when something goes terribly wrong which no-one can fix, the UN is expected to do something about it. But that is not what the UN was set up to do. The UN was set up to deal with conflicts between states and disputes between states and threats to the peace and I think that you have to get a serious effort to get governments to reassess what they think they're doing in the United States and what their responsibilities are. And then it would be, I think, a relatively simple matter provided the resources were available to give the UN at least a much more consistent capacity to deal with the kind of things it's now trying to deal with. At the moment every single UN operation starts from scratch and on an **extremely** limited budget, sometimes on no budget at all. But there is no infrastructure for contingency planning, training, logistics or anything else. You just improvise everything. It's sort of like a sheriff's posse. And that is a very inefficient way of doing things and it's very bad luck, incidentally, on the soldiers and civilians who have to take part in these emergency operations. And then of course, it's bad luck on the UN because the UN then gets blamed for being incompetent. Well I think that

governments have to think about that. They have to think about what they perceive the organisation as in the last years of the twentieth century, and they have to then ask themselves what they're prepared to do about it.

O'LEARY At present they don't appear to be prepared to pay very much for either conflict-prevention or conflict-resolution. Yet capital invested in conflict-prevention is money well spent. Sometimes it can work, and it's a lot cheaper than war.

Evidently the governments of established states don't wish to encourage their national minorities. Perhaps that's why the CSCE's High Commissioner, Max van der Stoel, is the Commissioner on National Minorities and not the Commissioner for National Minorities.

VAN DER STOEL: I'm not the advocate of minorities. I am trying to help to avoid conflicts concerning minorities. My task is in the field of conflict prevention. That is the mandate which CSCE has given to me. If minorities would be treated in a way which would constitute violation of CSCE principles, I would certainly criticise the government concerned for such an action. But in principle, I am not the advocate of minorities, nor for that matter, an advocate of the governments who have to deal with minorities. I'm just an instrument of conflict prevention.

O'LEARY The Commissioner has no capacity to disturb any state's territorial boundaries, however absurd they may be. He's also specifically prohibited from playing a mediating role when national minorities have resorted to armed violence: so he's not going to be dining or clarifying documents with Gerry Adams. That said, Mr. van der Stoel does have an agenda: to build confidence in his impartiality (while encouraging governments to take early action to prevent conflict); and to persuade governments to abandon counter-productive assimilation policies.

VAN DER STOEL: I'm very much against assimilation because that means that in fact the identity will be lost. I'm also very much against each minority trying to constitute its own state. Sometimes it simply happens, but the reality we have to face the fact that, especially in Eastern Europe, the population is so intermingled that even if you could start to draw frontiers from the beginning, it is impossible to have ethnically homogeneous states. There will always be minorities. My thesis is that a government is wise to promote the identity of a minority. On the other hand, I think one also has to ask something from the minority - not to give up its linguistic identity - I'm not asking the minority to give up its own language, I do argue that it is important for the members of the minority itself to learn the language of the majority. Simply think of the

children. Their chances, their opportunities in life will increase if they can communicate also in the majority language. So a certain amount of integration which enables them to be part of the larger community living in that state, but which at the same time, allows them to maintain or even strengthen their own identity.

O'LEARY The form of integration recommended by the High Commissioner will not satisfy many national minorities. For some of them his proposals will sound little different from assimilation; it is they, after all, who are being asked to make the major concessions. His integration programme is likely to work best with voluntary migrants rather than with peoples living on what they regard as their homelands.

We may not like the national identities of peoples in their homelands but as Michael Ignatieff points out, we're not entitled to pick and choose.

IGNATIEFF: Some of these ethnic minorities are not very attractive to get right down to it. I mean, the Bosnian Serbs are everyone's most loathed ethnic group. But they had a very serious set of concerns about going into a Bosnian Herzegovina state that they believed would be dominated by Muslims. They were legitimate concerns. They were not addressed at any time by the international community and that made that whole polity of Bosnian Serbs prey to lunatic forms of paranoia and adventurism. And had there been some way in which the international community could have made it very clear that they took those concerns seriously, listened to them, put in monitors, insisted that the independence of Bosnia Herzegovina could not proceed unless these minorities had really strong, firm, internationally recognised guarantees for the survival of their language, their culture and some form of self government, that form of intervention - peaceful, liberal, internationalist intervention might have averted the castastrophe.

O'LEARY What about averting potential catastrophes ? Given his limited resources and his circumscribed terms of reference it's difficult to believe that Mr van der Stoel's organisation is much more than a palliative for the consciences of our foreign ministers, or that it's likely to prevent war over Kosovo or the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

If the CSCE isn't likely to interpret let alone change the world, at least just yet, what about 'the sheriff's posse' at the UN ? Early, effective and regular international monitoring and intervention in potentially violent ethnic conflicts surely requires a beefed-up UN. Morton Halperin of the National Security Council once argued that the UN's

military resources needed to be strengthened for effective peace-keeping and peace-making. What then is the present perspective of the Clinton administration on the feasibility of creating a UN 'foreign legion' ?

HALPERIN: I think it is very much for the future. I think the UN needs now to progress to a better capacity, to manage peace-keeping operations through the existing mechanisms of the Security Council. And the United States is very much in favour of a variety of steps to strengthen the capacity of the Secretary General and the UN Secretariat and of the Security Council to manage peace-keeping operations. I think that's the next step forward that needs to be made. There are things that need to be done that are beginning to be done, including give the UN an effective capacity to communicate on a 24 hour basis, with its peace-keeping operations and giving UN the capacity to send out survey teams to determine precisely what a peace-keeping force might do and to draw up precise plans for that. The UN is in the process of asking countries to identify units that might be made available for peace-keeping operations. We need better methods for training units for peace-keeping and assuring that there is a common understanding of the role of the peace-keeping force among those countries that contribute to a peace-keeping operation. I think all those things are in progess and that we're going to see substantial improvements over the next several years.

O'LEARY Those sound like very low key measures in comparison with the hopes raised for a 'new world order'.?

HALPERIN: Yes I think there were some unreasonable expectations that were raised several years ago, both about the ability to impose or to have a new world order that would apply to the entire world and about the notion that the UN was ready to assume a very activist role everywhere in the world. I think we've learned that the UN needs to go through a slow process of evolution before it would be capable of taking on some of the tasks that people envision.

O'LEARY It seems the best we can hope for is a slow process, starting with better telephones. What are the prospects for revitalising the UN or resuscitating the concept of the UN as a trustee, overseeing disputed territories and preparing them for more widely agreeable forms of government ? James Mayall is sympathetic to these proposals but sceptical that they will come to pass

MAYALL: That programme is very costly and everything we have seen over the last three or four years

suggests that at present the major powers who would have to foot the bill are in the end, in a sense, retrenching rather than wanting to go forward to accept new commitments and the difficulty with going ahead of what the major powers are prepared to do is that you risk pulling the operation, the United Nations organisation into disrespect. I mean, no-one will take it seriously. Firstly, the problem with reviving the trusteeship council would be that one was reviving a part of the UN which was identified in the minds of many of the states with the collonial period. And if one was going to create new trusteeship protectorates, I think it will be very important that this was seen to be a decision of the international community and not just of the major western powers. And therefore, that would be one reason for being a bit hesitant about the trusteeship community. But again, there is, so far as I can see, absolutely no willingness on the part of the permanent members of the Security Council to go down this road. If there was they should have done it in Somalia and they might not have got into some of the mess that they did.

O'LEARY Somalia, and for that matter Rwanda and Bosnia are realities and metaphors for our times. They show up the gap between what we say we want to do, and what we actually do. And we can do better, despite the difficulties. The UN has usable knowledge about how to regulate national and ethnic conflicts, but we, or at least the states in which we live, lack the will, and often the interest to do what is right. Former UN Under Secretary, Sir Brian Urquhart.

URQUHART: The Secretariat has already done quite a lot of work on this, on what they call early warning and on studying what preventive measures can be taken. That sounds very good .. it's great. But the truth is governments are extremely conservative, they don't like to anticipate trouble or get into things unless they absolutely have to, quite understandably. And also preventive action is quite difficult because most people who are about to launch a conflict for their own ends are extremely reluctant to be deterred from it because they think they can win. So that there are psychological and political difficulties against preventive action. That's not to say we shouldn't have early warning much better organised - I think it should be - and I think that is now being done to the extent of the resources the UN has. But the real problem still remains which is the willingness of the people who get into disputes and conflicts to actually be talked out of them before they start killing each other.

O'LEARY So how do we stop people from killing one another ? By making the UN more effective, by making the CSCE more effective and by applying our knowledge about how best to accommodate national differences. Treat peoples as equals as well as individuals as equals. Regard borders as instruments rather than as ends in themselves. Where people are intermingled, share and divide sovereignty. Today, however, the world's political order dictates that the difference between a nation and a national minority is that the former has an army and a navy and the latter is told to accommodate to the powers that be. If national minorities do not accept that fate then their plight or their fight is theirs and theirs alone.

E N D S

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