



## In Bosnia

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

*Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina*

Perhaps it was not such a good idea for me to absent myself from America's current outbreak of political doubletalk and hot air. The political hot air in these parts contains shrapnel.

Roused by the plight of the refugees in erstwhile Yugoslavia, Ted Forstmann, the American entrepreneur, has flown his jet into Croatia's sparkling port of Split. And from that memorably named city we bump along the memorably beautiful Dalmatian coast, round hairpin turns. We take a left into the interior, up and down hills of gray stone, toward one of the less publicized of the area's many war zones. We had been promised a "motorcade with police escort." What we have is an ill-sprung black Volkswagen driven by an oddly lackadaisical Croatian corporal, lost in the rock music pounding from his tape deck and oblivious to the bruised condition of his passengers: Forstmann, the British historian Andrew Roberts, a Croatian-American diplomat, and me.

In many ways this battle-scarred and militarized area puts one in mind of Israel, despite our laid-back corporal. The day before, in Zagreb, we had visited a children's hospital where war's innocent victims stumbled around on twisted limbs. Then in the stillness of the Spansko refugee camp, we met Muslims, Serbs,

and Croats, all crammed into flimsy barracks, unready for winter. Most were women and children—the men are either fighting, imprisoned, or dead. Such barracks are peaceful now, but again they put me in mind of the Middle East. Already they are the source of prostitution and begging. The restlessness in the eyes of the boys suggests that soon hooliganism will begin, and then the kind of political dissatisfaction and irredentism that gave birth to the PLO. This last eventuality could prove more horrible than the present butchery.

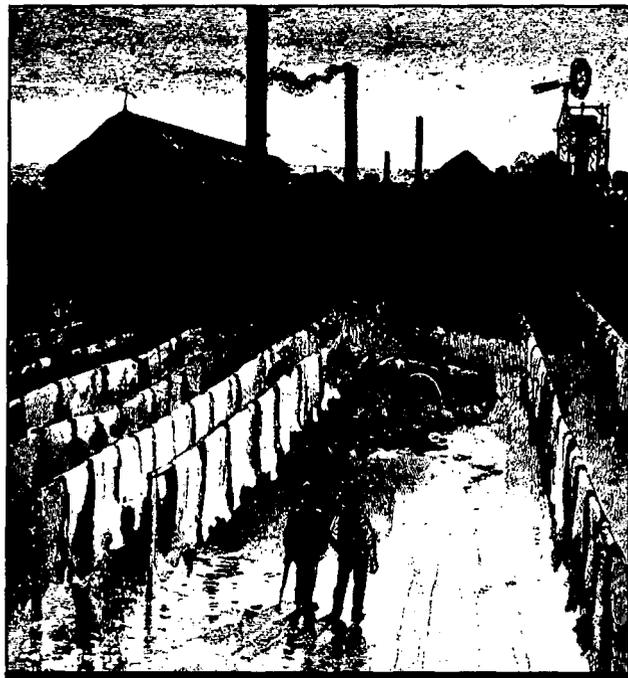
Six hundred thousand refugees now languish in Croatia. They cost Croatia \$2 million daily, or 20 percent of its budget—and that budget also has to support

250,000 soldiers in a population of some 3.5 million. Croatia did not anticipate this growing refugee population, and as there is no foreseeable end to nearby wars there is no foreseeable end to the refugee problem.

Just two years ago all the peoples of Yugoslavia—the Slovenes, the Serbs, the Muslims, the Croats, and the rest—were anticipating the fresh breezes of liberty. Then came the ethnic wars. The mentalities of these ethnically and religiously diverse peoples are different from anything we Americans can appreciate. Under the Communist dictatorship all had lived in a relatively peaceful stew, small numbers of Serbs spicing up a Croatian neighborhood, minorities of liberals living among both groups. But, of a sudden, with the expiry of dictatorship, ancient and mysterious animosities flared, provoking the strong to fall upon the weak, to expropriate their homes, and frequently to kill them.

The consequence has been one of the cruelest pages of history in this century. As we drove to Mostar we stopped at the religious shrine Medjugorje, where in 1981 the Blessed Virgin allegedly appeared and urged prayers for peace. The prayers continue, but now there is war. A bespectacled nun and a cigarette-smoking priest are eager to take us to the "ethnically cleansed" Mostar to show us how the Serbs,

*(continued on page 18)*



*Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Times column syndicated by Creators Syndicate.*

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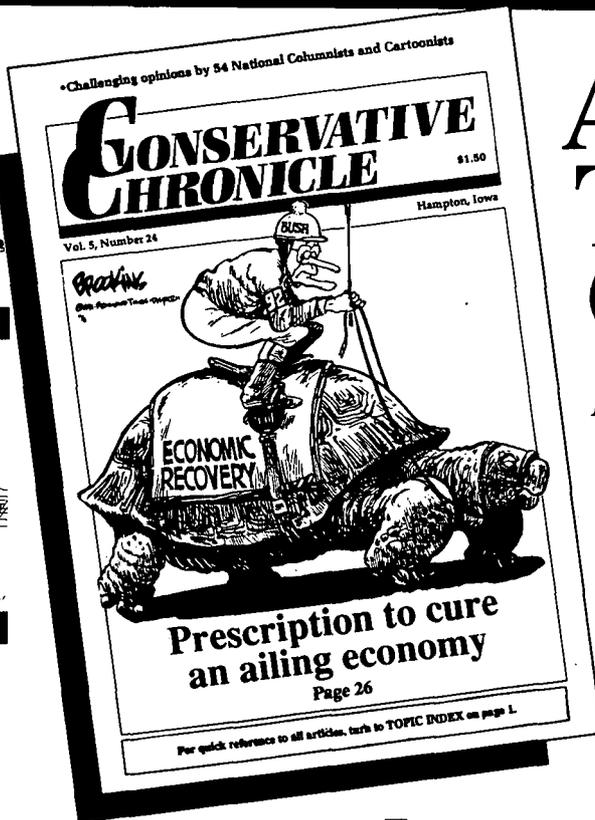
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with artillery and air strikes, have bombed out Croatian hospitals, churches, schools, libraries—"anything relating to our history," this Croatian nun declares.

She did not exaggerate the destruction. I had envisaged Mostar to be a village. It is a large city, now quite dead. Its entire infrastructure is gone. Half its 120,000 citizens are dead or in refugee camps. Every significant building and home in a city that once would have been worthy of the most prosperous regions of Italy has been badly damaged. A hundred or so fresh graves, with copper-colored dirt heaped a couple of feet above each, have taken over a once-elegant park. Blood remains on a sidewalk from a recent sniper assault on civilians. The city's gutted surgery hospital is now a

haven for lunatics, cruelly used by the Serbs.

Beneath the occasional boom of artillery fire we are hustled into a deserted hospital, the center of which is sufficiently fortified to lay on lunch. There Forstmann assures the nun, the priest, and assembled officials that he will gather up supplies for the refugees' winter. And something more is necessary. If Sarajevo falls, the Serbs will reinvigorate their assaults on Croatia and other areas. Other warlords in the former Soviet empire will see the rewards open to those who practice "ethnic cleansing" such as I have just seen in Mostar. The West should threaten the Serb army with destruction from the air. And the arms embargo should be lifted so that those menaced by the well-equipped Serbs can defend themselves. □

didate's unseemly whining that his wife is being slandered along with liberalism's progressive "values." In truth, the Republicans have only been disagreeing with progressive values and with the politics of Mrs. Clinton, but Boy Clinton is the kind of liberal who is so unaccustomed to differences of opinion that when he encounters disagreement he complains of unfairness.

Then, too, Clinton's policies and his proclivity for foxiness do not allow for a campaign strategy. He cannot outline a foreign policy superior to that of Bush because he has had no experience in foreign policy, and his amusing claim that his stewardship of the Arkansas National Guard is comparable to Bush's command of our armed forces merely reveals how his facile mind gets him into trouble. Nor can he stress his domestic policies. The economic and social condition of Arkansas is nothing to boast of. Neither is the Bush economy, but Clinton's proposals to improve the national economy if elaborated upon would be seen to consist of the kind of big government policies of the past that put money in the citizens' outstretched hands after taking it from their wallets and charging a federal carrying fee. Clinton does not want to remind the electorate of the late 1970s, when his policies were last in place.

Yet the deepest reason for Clinton's wobbliness as he approached October is that for months now he has been lying to the electorate. And it is his readiness to lie that has landed him on the defensive. He lies about little things, as he did last March when asked by NBC's Andrea Mitchell if his support for the Seawolf submarine program was a ploy for Connecticut primary votes—denying the charge by claiming to have proposed the program in a December 12 speech in Georgetown. He had not. He claimed to have fully supported the Gulf War. Again, he had not. He has perpetrated numerous other reckless acts of deceit, and, of course, there are the ongoing lies about larger matters, particularly about his amazing contortions to beat the draft.

Not long ago, the American people nearly impeached a President for lying. Revelations of Clinton's prevarications will mount in October. By late in the month, he will issue his equivalent of "I am not a crook," and by November he will be a goner. □

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## Dread October

How do the experts account for the fact that as Boy Clinton jogs ever more intensively he gets fatter? Well, how did they account for the abnormal distension of Pinocchio's nose? Justice prevails!

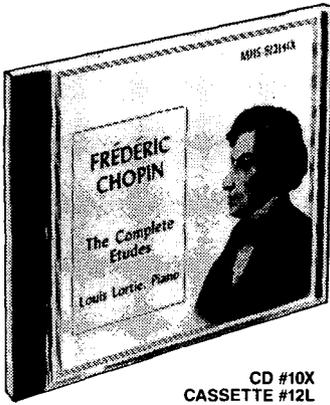
We are heading down the last stretch of this appalling presidential campaign. Boy Clinton's lead in the polls is ample. The easy grace that he doubtless refined during his Oxford years, when he studied with the select of all England and later at the Yale Law School, should again envelop and exalt him. This superior breeding he coyly disclosed during his historic acceptance speech at the Democratic convention midst revelations about his grisly youth: the alcoholic father, the mother who "held steady through tragedy after tragedy" and "tough times," "fighting off breast cancer" whilst grandfather held out against the Ku Klux Klan, his country store chock-full of terrorized blacks who had turned to him for shelter—apparently there was much melodrama in old Arkansas as the young lord laced up his first pair of shoes and scudded off to Oxford.

Yet despite his lead in the polls Boy Clinton displays no easy grace. In fact,

he is beginning to sweat and to labor and to duck reporters, even as he fattens. In fact, his campaign is blowing gaskets. In fact, Boy Clinton is going to lose.

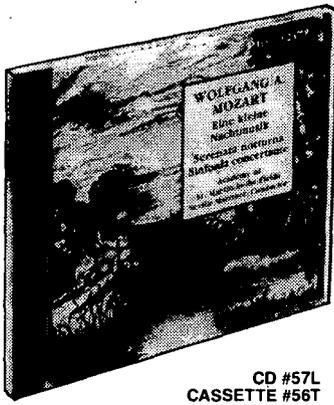
September should have been a very good month for the Clinton campaign. The Bush campaign was befogged. Its leadership was without direction or ideas. Boy Clinton should have been setting strategy for a glorious October. October is the crucial month in modern presidential campaigns. In the presidential campaign of 1980 an American electorate gravely dissatisfied with President Carter remained to be convinced by candidate Reagan. Reagan passed muster, and in October the Carter candidacy collapsed. Now it is the Clinton campaign that is collapsing even before October and even as the Bush campaign is coming alive.

There are several reasons that, despite his standing in the polls, Boy Clinton is rocking back on his heels. For one, he has no strategy. Ever since last winter's revelations of marital infidelity and of draft evasion, his staff has run a campaign good at tactical responses to changing front runners and to embarrassing revelations, but bereft of a strategic vision any more substantial than the can-



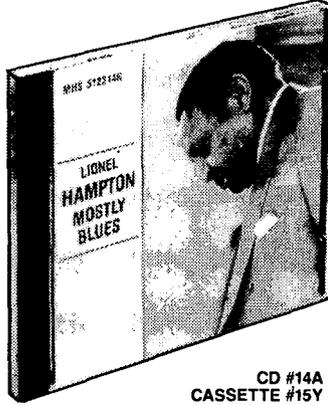
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## The End Is Nigh

by Tom Bethell

As I write, at the end of September, the conventional wisdom is that Bill Clinton will win the election. The feckless Ross Perot, who poses as an outsider but seeks to implement the establishment goal of "deficit reduction" (tax increases), may be getting back into the race, thereby introducing a element of uncertainty. Discounting Perot, however, the conventional wisdom seems sound. Various polls put Clinton ahead by about ten percentage points. Failing some dramatic new development, I expect to see Bill and Hillary Clinton on the reviewing stand in front of the White House, accepting salutes from the inaugural parade next January.

My purpose here is not to berate President Bush or to lament his dramatic decline but to anticipate the news media's response to a Clinton victory. We have already begun to see the media strategy: a Clinton win will be construed as a repudiation of the "failed policies of the Reagan-Bush years." A number of columnists have already begun to conflate the policies of Reagan and Bush. The latter was a continuation of the former, we will be told, and in the end they both failed. Bush's campaign strategy makes such revisionism all the easier. He has been trying to sound like a conservative—this being the autumn of a leap year—and now the press is happy to cooperate. They figure it's too late for him to recover anyway. If Bush campaigns as a conservative and loses, it will be that much easier to portray his defeat as a rejection of conservatism by the electorate.

Members of Bush's entourage will themselves contribute to such a

post-election analysis. Budget Director Dick Darman told friends in New York the other day that "if we lose this thing," it will not be difficult to apportion the blame: first, to the "Reagan deficits"; second, to a rather inoffensive, mid-level White House aide named James Pinkerton. (Despite harboring conservative inclinations, Pinkerton has been permitted to survive as window-dressing on the White House staff. He achieved a moment of fame for promoting something very vague called the "new paradigm." Darman didn't like it, apparently.)

Well, thanks Dick, and goodbye.

I believe that Jude Wanniski of Polyconomics was right when he said a year ago that there has been no criticism either of Darman or of Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady in the news columns or editorials of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, or the TV networks over the past four years.



Bill Clinton will be a most ungrateful President if he does not reward the perfidious "budget czar" with an ambassadorial plum. (He would be well advised, however, to keep him away from the levers of power.)

The reality is that throughout his administration Bush repudiated conservative ideas, especially in the economic realm, where he seems to have been guided by a half-remembered Keynesianism. What we are about to see, if Clinton wins, is a media analysis that will represent Bush's repudiation of conservatism as the electorate's repudiation of it. Bush would have done better to have taken the advice of his "moderate" inner circle and moved to the center, we will be told. We will be shown clips of Patrick Buchanan, Pat Robertson, Phyllis Schlafly, Bill Bennett, Jack Kemp, and Marilyn Quayle speaking at the GOP convention—and for those who still don't get it the lesson will be repeated.

Bush clung to the discredited Reagan line when he should have moved away from it! Even though the electorate is fed up with right-wing hate-mongering, Bush allowed himself to remain the captive of the right. And so on.

Judging by recent history, President Bush ought to be able to pull this election out of the bag, even at this late stage. If Perot is in the race, Bush will be running against two candidates who have promised to raise our taxes. Bush himself has said that he will cut them—not very convincingly, of course, but at least he has not said that he will raise them. In almost all elections in recent years, including the British general election last spring, tax cutters have defeated tax-raisers.

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator's Washington correspondent.