

Serbian Leader Adopts Tone Of Conciliation

By Dusan Stojanovic Associated Press



Serbian President Milosevic, left, confers with Prime Minister Radoman Bozovic at parliament.

BELGRADE, Feb. 27—Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, whose Yugoslav republic has been involved in a bloody nationalist conflict with neighboring Croatia since last June, conceded today that Serbs could not achieve their political ends by fighting and called for swift settlement of the Balkan war.

"We do not consider war as a solution," he said in a rare speech to the Serbian parliament, and he pledged that henceforth Serbia would fight only if attacked. "The soldiers can finally return to their homes, and Serbia will finally be able to deal with its [economic] problems," he said. "Today, we can say that most of the agony of our country is over and that conditions now exist for the peaceful and democratic solution of the Yugoslav crisis."

gressors against Croatia, whose right-wing government he denounced as "totalitarian and chauvinistic." Milosevic also seemed to back away from his previous insistence that Serb-populated regions in Croatia and other neighboring republics be allowed to unite with Serbia, saying that "the best option" would be a union of Serbia—the largest republic in the original six-member Yugoslav federation—with Montenegro—the smallest—to form a new, smaller federation. "Even a small Yugoslavia is a much better solution for the Serbian national question than a republic of Serbia alone," he added.

Croats, has also scheduled a referendum for this weekend, in which it is expected to join Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia in voting formally to separate from Yugoslavia. The war erupted last summer when Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia—a move that outraged Croatia's large Serb minority, many of whom feared repression by Croatia's new nationalist government. Supported by Serbia and the Yugoslav army, Serb insurgents in Croatia seized nearly a third of the republic in fighting that has left at least 10,000 people dead.

Nagorno-Karabakh Victims Buried in Azerbaijani Town

Refugees Claim Hundreds Died in Armenian Attack

By Thomas Goltz Special to The Washington Post

AGDAM, Azerbaijan, Feb. 27—Officials of the main mosque in this town just east of the embattled enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh said they buried 27 bodies today, brought from an Azerbaijani town inside the enclave that was captured Wednesday by Armenian militiamen.

Refugees fleeing the fighting in Khojaly, a town of 6,000 northeast of the enclave's capital, Stepanakert, claimed that up to 500 people, including women and children, were killed in the attack. No independent estimate of the deaths was available here. The Agdam mosque's director, Said Sadikov Muan, said refugees from Khojaly had registered the names of 477 victims with his mosque since Wednesday.

Officials in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, estimated the deaths in Khojaly at 100, while Armenian officials in their capital, Yerevan, said only two Azerbaijanis were killed in the attack. An official from Baku said here that his government fears Azerbaijanis would turn against it if they knew how many had been killed.

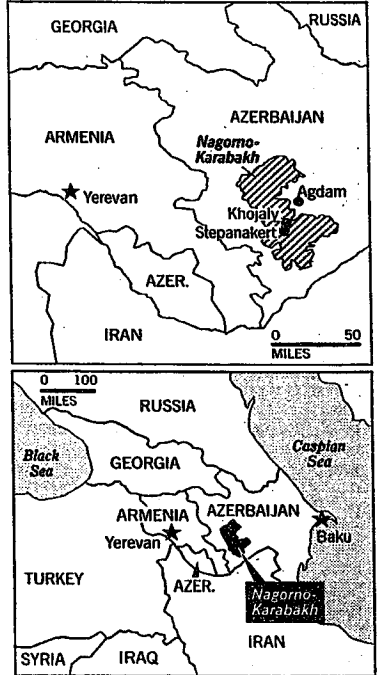
Of seven bodies seen here today, two were children and three were women, one shot through the chest at what appeared to be close range. Another 120 refugees being treated at Agdam's hospital include many with multiple stab wounds.

The Armenians who attacked Khojaly Tuesday night "were shooting, shooting, shooting," said Raisa Aslanova, who reached Agdam Wednesday night. She said her husband and a son-in-law were killed and her daughter was missing.

Armenian officials in Yerevan said Azerbaijani soldiers, backed by tanks and several helicopters, launched an attack this morning on Askeran, an Armenian-populated town just inside Nagorno-Karabakh on the road between Khojaly and Agdam.

A cease-fire negotiated Wednesday night by visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati never took effect. Velayati called off a planned visit today to Nagorno-Karabakh and headed instead for Yerevan.

More than 1,000 persons have been killed in four years of fighting touched off by Armenian demands that predominantly Ar-



BY DAVE COOK—THE WASHINGTON POST

menian Nagorno-Karabakh, an enclave surrounded and controlled by Azerbaijan, should become part of Armenia. Among the refugees who fled here over the mountains from Nagorno-Karabakh were two Turkmen soldiers from former Soviet Interior Ministry forces who had taken refuge in Khojaly after deserting from their unit last Friday because, they said, Armenian non-commissioned officers had beaten them "for being Muslims."

German, Czechoslovak Leaders Sign Friendship Pact

Associated Press

PRAGUE, Feb. 27—Germany and Czechoslovakia signed a friendship treaty today, and leaders expressed hope that the pact would allay mistrust rooted in Germany's Nazi past.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and

Czechoslovak President Vaclav Havel hailed the treaty as a milestone in bilateral ties and the post-Cold War integration of Europe. But leftists here have said Czechoslovakia made too many concessions.

Havel made clear the accord was a compromise, but he also defended its terms, not-

ing it commits Germany to aid and champion Czechoslovakia's integration into Europe.

Kohl stressed the pact's historical significance. "We have stood at too many graves in this century, and too many tears have been shed, for us not now to comprehend that we should learn from history," he said.

Finland Looks Westward In Post-Soviet World

FINLAND, From A25

Another sign of the times is that Finland is now seriously considering a bid from the U.S. manufacturer McDonnell Douglas to replace its air force of 60 aging Soviet and Swedish-built fighters. In the past, such a deal would probably have been blocked at an early stage by political considerations in both Finland and the United States.

Finland's search for a new national identity reflects the geopolitical changes taking place in many neutral and nonaligned countries now that the Cold War is over.

"Our situation has changed totally," said a foreign policy adviser to Finnish President Mauno Koivisto. "In the past, we had to be careful about everything we did. Neutrality was the only way a country like Finland or Austria could survive in conditions of bipolar confrontation. We had to give certain security guarantees to the Soviet Union."

Finland, which shares an 800-mile border with Russia, was part of the Czarist empire until 1917. There are many reminders of Russian rule in the capital, Helsinki: a statue of Czar Alexander II, an onion-domed Russian Orthodox cathedral, the same neo-classical architecture as in St. Petersburg.

The remarkable geopolitical accommodation between Finland and the Soviet Union came against the background of the "winter war" of 1939-40 and the "continuation war" of 1944. Both wars were won by the Soviets, but at the cost of hundreds of thousands of lives.

The lesson drawn by Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin was that the complete subjugation of Finland, which is the size of California with the population of Wisconsin, was not worth the effort. The lesson drawn by the Finns was that they would have to find a modus vivendi with their huge neighbor.

"Finlandization" may have been a dirty word in Germany and the United States, but for Finland it has been an enormous success. It enabled Finland to develop a thriving free-market economy at a time when much of Eastern Europe was crippled by Soviet-style central planning. The Soviet Union also supplied Finland with relatively cheap supplies of energy and a vast market for consumer and industrial goods that would have been difficult to sell in the West.

"Our economic relationship with the Soviet Union gave us the capital we needed to industrialize our economy," said a senior Finnish official, noting that Finland enjoyed an annual growth rate of around 4 percent until last year.

When Finland was part of the

czars' empire, Russians looked down on Finns as poverty-stricken country bumpkins. Alexander Pushkin, Russia's national poet, wrote condescendingly of "the poor Finnish fisherman, stepson of nature."

Over the last few decades, the relationship has been reversed. Helsinki has become a glittering shop window for capitalism, a kind of Soviet Hong Kong providing well-placed Russians and Westerners living in Moscow with otherwise unobtainable goods and services.

The collapse of the Soviet market, which gobbled up one-fifth of all Finnish exports, has created huge structural problems for Finland. Unemployment has soared to about 14 percent, and the economy is in deep recession. Dozens of factories in the eastern part of the country near the Soviet border have been forced out of business.

Finns brought up to fear Russia's enormous strength are now beginning to fear its weakness. The Finnish consulate in St. Petersburg is besieged by Russians lining up to visit their prosperous neighbor. Finnish officials complain of a significant increase in crime in the border regions, with Russian tourists resorting to petty smuggling and prostitution to make money. Many of the visitors pay for their trips through illegal vodka sales.

Finnish officials are also alarmed by the prospect of large-scale political turmoil in Russia that could lead to the installation of a hard-line nationalist regime. One right-wing Russian politician, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, has threatened to re-annex Finland if he ever comes to power in Russia. Zhirinovsky's boasts met with gales of laughter in Russia but caused anxiety in Finland.

"It is very easy to dismiss Zhirinovsky as a madman, but the fact is he got many millions of votes in the last election [for Russian president]. If there are tendencies like that in Russia, they must be taken seriously," said Finnish Defense Minister Elisabeth Rehn in an interview. "We should be prepared for things that cannot be imagined now."

Mindful of historical precedent, Finland has studiously refrained from taking any action that could seriously antagonize its eastern neighbor. On paper, the newly independent Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania might seem like natural allies for Finland. But Finnish officials reject any move that would smack of a strategic alliance against Russia.

"The Baltic states are eager for cooperation with us," Rehn said. "But we have made it clear to them that we will not sell weapons to them and will not train their soldiers."

Children's Palace advertisement featuring various toys like Barbies, action figures, and bicycles. Includes text: 'THE TOYS KIDS GOTTA HAVE!' and 'LAYAWAY NOW! SEE SERVICE DESK FOR DETAILS.' Lists items like TYCO Ariel party, Hasbro Joe Barracuda, Mattel Barbie Hair, etc.