

The Last or the Lost American Ambassador?

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Warren Zimmermann's article "The Last Ambassador," sub-titled "A Memoir of the Collapse of Yugoslavia", published in *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 74, No. 2, is a remarkably interesting account written by a man with an undeniable literary talent. At the same time, it is an important historical document because it was not written by just any casual voyeur of Balkan post-communist democratic revolutions and wars, such as a journalist or a scientist, for instance, but one of the few foreign diplomats who had a hand in creating history, and had a real opportunity to change its course, because he was the last American ambassador to Yugoslavia, from 1989 to 1992.

Since I myself played a similar - although not so important - role of witness and participant in the events described by the former US Ambassador in his story (I was the personal advisor of the Croatian President from April 1990 to March 1991), it seems logical for me to write my story from a different, Croatian perspective.

It must be said from the outset that Zimmermann's "Memoir" is a typically American view of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the causes of the conflict, but it is also an interesting account of his experiences with the key protagonists in this tragic history. The "American" aspect of the story is patent insofar as the author assesses Balkan vicissitudes through the lens of what Robert N. Bellah calls the (American) "Habits of the Heart"¹ or "Civil Religion"², and what has been called the "American Social Character" by some other authors. In practice, this means that Warren Zimmermann observes all processes, people and events in the former Yugoslavia through the lens of a political "religion" which deeply believes in the individual, the federalism, the rule of law, liberal democracy and cultural tolerance, and sincerely despises any form of racism, xenophobia, nationalism, authoritarianism or "Balkanisation."

This is why Zimmermann's "memoir" is a kind of "American mirror", or "the West Side Story" of the Croatian, Slovenian, Bosnian and Serb consciousness and reality in the period between 1989 and 1992.

All the key figures in that reality - Slobodan Milošević, Vuk Drašković, Franjo Tuđman, Radovan Karadžić, Vojislav Šešelj, Alija Izetbegović, Kiro Gligorov, Ante Marković and the author himself - were known personally to Zimmermann, who gained, as he believed, an almost psychoanalytical insight into their social-psychological being.

The American "Yugoslav - dream"

For the US Ambassador, love is the justification for his outspoken and sincere account - sometimes not very considerate of the protagonists' feelings - of the leaders, peoples and events that have been rocking Europe and the world for five years. At the beginning of his article, he says of Lawrence Eagleburger and himself that they

"shared a love of the country (Yugoslavia, S.L.) and its people" (page 2). As far as his love of Yugoslavia and the "Yugoslav people" is concerned, I can confirm the following: everyone who has met and known him³ can testify that his love for the people and sights of the former Yugoslavia was deep and sincere.

Unfortunately, Warren Zimmermann's real - but blind and platonic - love for "Yugoslavia" and the "Yugoslavs" was not just limited to natural beauty and people, but also embraced the state and the political system, which Zimmermann believed to be worthy not only of his personal love, but also of the love of the United States. He obviously thought that for Tito's Yugoslavia, which he knew well, to be worthy of all-embracing (i.e. Serb, Croat, Slovenian, American, Albanian etc.) love, it only needed true westernisation or Americanisation, i.e. democracy, true federalism, true protection of human rights, and a true market economy.

I would like here to repeat his words: "a (second) major mistake."

In the early 1990s, and in 1995, Warren Zimmermann saw the vision and reality of such a federalist, multicultural, democratic and market-oriented Yugoslavia only in the personality and reformist project of Ante Marković. In his story, Ante Marković is the only positive, albeit naive and tragic, figure.

In general, it can be said that the key to understanding all Zimmermann's sound judgments, as well as his preconceived ideas, errors and mistaken views (and wrong decisions) regarding the events and people in the former Yugoslavia, is to be found in his attitude to nationalism: "Nationalism is by nature uncivil, antidemocratic and separatist because it empowers one ethnic group over all others". (page 7)

With a deeply ingrained imperative of the American "civil religion", discussed above, which is only aware of separatist nationalism (and which attaches an *a priori* negative meaning to the very notion of confederalism, let alone secession), Warren Zimmermann could not understand, and still does not seem to understand, the essence of Greater Serbian post-Communist nationalism. This nationalism is basically "federalist" and "anti-separatist", i.e. its goal is either absolute national domination (based on the dogma of the superiority of the Serb people) or military conquest.

Zimmermann's culturally imposed or learned inability to grasp the expansionist, imperialist and criminal nature of Greater Serbian nationalism (which logically led to concentration camps, ritual and mass murder, rape and the destruction of all material signs of the historical presence of non-Serb populations in the conquered territories) affects his judgment throughout the article. Since he is not aware of, and does not recognise, "federalist" (i.e. "expansionist") nationalism, Zimmermann does not see Slobodan Milošević as a

nationalist: "Milošević is an opportunist, not an ideologue, a man driven by power rather than nationalism" (page 5, the bold characters are my own).

The reduction of nationalism to separatism, and the overlooking of the fatal fact that in the case of Milošević we are faced with the worst form of militant national-socialism, are both present throughout the text.

Comparing the Serbian and Croatian presidents, Zimmermann says: "Unlike Milošević, who is driven by power, Tudman is obsessed by nationalism" (page 7)

In general terms, Zimmermann sees no nationalism in Serbia, but only "Milošević's aggressive tactics" (page 8). While seeing various forms of "naked nationalism" in Slovenia and Croatia, in Serbia he sees only a form of power politics.

Zimmermann calls Slovenian nationalism "Garbo nationalism" and describes it in the following words: "... they just wanted to be left alone. Their vice was selfishness. In their drive to separate from Yugoslavia they simply ignored the 22 million Yugoslavs who were not Slovenes. They bear considerable responsibility for the bloodbath that followed their secession (page 7)."

There is no doubt that he saw the position and role of the Slovenes and Slovenia through the prism of the American Civil War, in which the separatist South (in this case the secessionist north-west) was cast as the bad guy.

However, Croatian nationalism is definitely the worst kind of nationalism in his story: "... Croatian nationalism is defined by Tudman - intolerant, anti-Serb, and authoritarian. These attributes - together with an aura of wartime fascism, help to explain why many Serbs in Croatia reject Croatian rule, and why the core hostility in the former Yugoslavia is still between Serbs and Croats" (page 8). Only pages later does he generously concede: "Albanian nationalism was, like Croatian nationalism, to some degree a reaction to Milošević's aggressive tactics" (page 8).

"Serbian nationalism" as a phrase appears only once in his article: ("During 1990, Serbian nationalism under Milošević became even more aggressive" - page 8), and it is quite obvious that Zimmermann is unaware of it as a cultural and political phenomenon in its own right. There are only individual Serb leaders who may be fanatical, extreme and monstrous nationalists. Some of them are "fanatic nationalists like Vojislav Šešelj" (page 12), others, such as Vuk Drašković, are "pro-Serbian extremists", yet others, like Radovan Karadžić, are "monsters" - but "Serbian nationalism" does not exist as a collective evil. In Zimmermann's consciousness, it cannot exist, because he knows and recognises only separatist nationalism.

All Zimmermann's views on the key protagonists of these events stem from his utterly negative attitude to any form of separatist nationalism, and his benevolent attitude towards "federalist" nationalism (in Slav languages, this form of nationalism is encompassed by the notion of "unitarism", which has very negative connotations), even when it is based on a racist and militarist ideology of the all-Serbs-in-one-state type, and on the method of genocide called "ethnic cleansing".

Thus, Radovan Karadžić and Ante Marković are seen as representing opposite poles, Karadžić as the epitome of the bad guy, and Marković as his antipode, with all other figures situated somewhere in between.

The Bad Guy Radovan Karadžić

The position and labels attributed to Radovan Karadžić correspond to his true demonic nature and to the crimes he has ordered or tacitly condoned, but they also reflect the author's system of values. For Zimmermann, Radovan Karadžić is both a war criminal and a "separatist nationalist" aspiring to break up Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is seen by Zimmermann as the embodiment of the ideal state: federalist, democratic, multicultural etc.

Here is how Zimmermann describes Karadžić: "He was the architect of massacres in the Muslim villages, ethnic cleansing, and artillery attacks on civilian populations. In his fanaticism, ruthlessness, and contempt for human values, he invites comparison with a monster from another generation, Heinrich Himmler" (page 18).

Although the metaphor "architect of massacres" is questionable - since the concepts of ethnic cleansing and territorial conquest had already been established in Serbia, and thus Karadžić can only be called the high priest and practitioner of massacres, not its architect, since that name would imply that he was the intellectual begetter of the idea of such evil (that he worked out the technique and timing of the crimes, and probably ordered them to be committed) - all his other judgments on Karadžić are quite sound. The following descriptions and opinions are also valid: "his disdain for the truth was absolute" and "his apartheid philosophy was as extreme as anything concocted in South Africa" (page 18).

The Good Guy Ante Marković

On the other hand, the author presents Ante Marković as the absolute opposite to the demonic nature of Radovan Karadžić. In a way, Marković is the ideal (but quite unrealistic) expression of the American "Yugoslav dream," which is based on the belief in human rights, democracy, federalism and the "melting pot of nations".

Describing Ante Marković, Zimmermann describes and justifies both himself and the American policy, which, even after the destruction of Vukovar and the attack on Dubrovnik, believed in the last Yugoslav Prime Minister: "Marković still departed as a symbol of everything his country needed: a modern, stable economy, the rule of law, ethnic tolerance. He had treated Yugoslavia like a patient with a serious cancer - nationalism. A semi-heroic, semi-tragic figure, Marković failed, but at least he had fought the cancer instead of adjusting to it. He had aspired to be Yugoslavia's saviour. Instead, he turned out to be the Yugoslavian equivalent of Russia's last leader before the Bolshevik deluge, Aleksandar Kerensky" (page 17). The literary form "he had fought the cancer instead of adjusting to it" unerringly suggests that in the eyes of the last ambassador, Marković is some kind of mythical, i.e. unquestionably tragic, hero (who is aware of the futility of his tragic sacrifice, but consciously chooses his fate).

Unfortunately, Ante Marković is, like Warren Zimmermann himself, more of a loser (it is my opinion that he deeply believed he would win in the polls in Bosnia and ultimately defeat Slobodan Milošević, Milan Kučan and Franjo Tudman).

By describing Ante Marković as a tragic figure, Warren Zimmermann shows a sad ignorance of the personality of the last Yugoslav Prime Minister but also his ignorance of tragedy as an art form.

According to the ancient Greeks, tragedy is a lofty form of drama in which the fate of the chief protagonist is always determined in advance. In a series of tragedies, history has cast Ante Marković in a marginal and farcical role. His "dramatic" scenario for the building of a "new kind of socialism" was halfway between a historic farce and a provincial comedy: while the JNA was concocting plans for a military coup and the scenario for the salvation of communism, he was planning to set up a reformist party. Of course, he had had his chance to change his role into a semi-heroic, semi-tragic one. If he had stood before the tanks setting out to destroy Vukovar and said something along the lines of: "Take or kill me, but let this wonderful town and its inhabitants live in peace - they have not done anything wrong!" Ante Marković would have earned the description of hero or tragic figure. There is no doubt that Aeschylus and Shakespeare would have written such a role for him before bestowing on him the aura of tragic figure or hero.

The Message to Belgrade

Instead, he sat on quietly in Belgrade until the last moment, when nobody, as Zimmermann himself says, even noticed his "protest" resignation. After this, he settled in Vienna, probably convinced that his project was too noble for the barbarians living south-east of that city. Thus, Ante Marković was not, and could not be, even a semi-hero or a semi-tragic figure because he was by nature an opportunist, bureaucrat and careerist, who in his pre-Zimmermann career played the role of a Communist "aparatchik", and in the Zimmermann period switched to the role of an opportunistic "democratchik." Instead of taking on the role of "divider" of Yugoslavia himself (brilliantly played by Vaclav Havel a few years later), he took on the role of "tragic" saviour, thrust upon him by the US Administration (including Warren Zimmermann). To use Zimmermann's metaphor, we could say that this was an example of "Garbo federalism" and that, as far as responsibility was concerned, Marković himself and the US Administration represented by Warren Zimmermann "bore considerable responsibility for the bloodbath that followed Marković's reformism."

Instead of a strategy of gradual delegitimization of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ), which could have begun in the autumn of 1990 the chimeras of "reformism" and "federalism" were encouraged, which enabled the JNA and Serbia to prepare for aggression undisturbed. The moment the aggression began, the US Administration introduced an additional means of punishing the victims by imposing an arms embargo.

Warren Zimmermann's article clearly reveals how the Bush Administration's policy, mediated and/or suggested by the ambassador himself, was wrong from the beginning.

The honesty with which the lost ambassador rationalises what is arguably the biggest foreign policy and diplomatic mistake committed by the US State

Department this century is especially interesting: "Eagleburger and I agreed that in my introductory calls in Belgrade and the capitals of the republics, I would deliver a new message: Yugoslavia no longer enjoyed the geopolitical importance that the United States had given it during the Cold War." (page 2).

The Yugoslavia to which Zimmermann refers is not so much a State as a corridor, a geopolitical corridor. And this is where the error lies: Even though the fall of Communism and the creation of democratic and free-market institutions were the most important strategic interests of the US and Western civilisation, on the brink of a possible "democratic revolution" in the Balkans, Zimmermann openly proclaimed that this corridor no longer had any geopolitical interest for the United States. In terms of the power relations in the former Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milošević and the leadership of the JNA understood this message in only one way: You can do whatever you want!

The oft-quoted message delivered by James Baker in Belgrade on June 21 1991 was "read" in a similar way.

Warren Zimmermann views Baker's statement in a very positive light: "Listening to Baker deal with these complex and irascible personalities, I felt that I had rarely, if ever, heard a Secretary of State make a more skillful or reasonable presentation" (page 11).

For everybody who lived in the former Yugoslavia with the awareness that the JNA was fully prepared to attack Slovenia and Croatia, James Baker's words that he supported the unity of Yugoslavia, and that only the reformist Ante Marković had the backing of the US Administration, were taken as a go-ahead to the JNA to attack Slovenia.

The lay psychological descriptions of other key protagonists of this tragedy, which Zimmermann offers his reader, include many lucid observations, but also some quite superficial and wrong impressions.

President Franjo Tuđman

To illustrate my meaning I will confine myself to the Croatian President Franjo Tuđman. One of Zimmermann's descriptions of the Croatian president is the following: "If Milošević recalls a slick con man, Tuđman resembles an inflexible schoolteacher. He is a former general and communist, expelled from the party under Tito, and twice jailed for nationalism" (page 7).

An author interested in the facts and truth would not have accepted so easily the stereotype that Tuđman was "twice jailed for nationalism" - he would at least specify when, and what offence he had been convicted of.

The Croatian president was convicted the first time because he publicised the results of his research on the number of World War II victims in Croatia (his figures were several times lower than the official statistics of the communist regime) and the second time because of an interview given to a foreign reporter. If he had specified these facts, Warren Zimmermann could have freely expressed his opinion that the papers in question advocated, for instance, revisionist, nationalist or any other values or political judgments.

To say merely that Tuđman had been "twice jailed for nationalism" is to accept the communist, totalitarian

view of human rights, which banned the freedom of the press and all forms of expression guaranteed under the constitutions of democratic nations - including the First Amendment!

When listing the possible faults of the President of Croatia, an objective analyst would have mentioned at least some of his virtues: (1) he is the only active anti-fascist combatant among all post-communist statesmen; (2) he is one of the few scholars or Ph.D.s among post-communist leaders (he has written about a dozen books⁴); (3) he was a dissident during the communist regime, a political prisoner and outcast, a citizen who had been deprived of almost every human right for twenty years (along with his family) because of his theoretical and political convictions and (4) President Tuđman is the head of a state which was, and still is, a victim of pan-Serbian aggression, the leader of a nation which has been, with the consent of "the free world," disarmed and deprived of its right to self-defence.

In his long political life, the Croatian President has been a Communist and an anti-Communist, an internationalist and a nationalist, an atheist and a believer, both a great admirer and an opponent of Belgrade, an elitist and a populist.

During World War II, the Tuđman family was, like the majority of the Croatian people, tragically divided by ideology and party affiliation. The only common family feature was anti-fascism. Everything else conspired to disunite the family. The parents of Dr. Franjo Tuđman were members of the Croatian Farmers' Party, that is, peace-oriented, but also nationally and religiously conscious, with a more or less pronounced anti-communist bias (however, during the war his father joined the Communist Party). The three sons of the Tuđman family joined the anti-fascist partisan movement, but they were also dyed-in-the-wool Communists, atheists and idealists, passionately believing in Yugoslavia and the revolution. The president's younger brother, Stjepan was killed fighting against the Ustasha.

The divisions in the Tuđman family, the divided identity (and loyalty) between "Yugoslavhood" and "Croathood" are typical for the majority of Croatian people.

Croatian and Serbian "Yugoslavhood"

In general terms, one can say that the Croatian and Serbian views of "Yugoslavhood" had been fundamentally different from the very beginning, that is, since the integration of the two states: For the Croatian people, who had lived in a subordinate position in complex, multicultural unions (the Hungarian and Austro-Hungarian Empires) without the right to their own (national) state and national identity, "Yugoslavhood" was a symbol of freedom, equality, and their aspirations to a state of their own (all Croatian myths are dominated by the idea of powerful Croatian states and kingdoms during the early Middle Ages). Escaping from one developed complex state (the Austro-Hungarian Empire) which was, by its name and political order, a negation of Croatian national identity and statehood, the Croats did not just want any Yugoslavia, but had a definite idea of the kind of Yugoslavia they wanted. They wanted a federal state

of the Southern Slavs, which would recognise the national identities and statehoods of its federal states, and which would be based on the rule of law, democracy, pluralism, multiculturalism and federalism. Such a federal and multicultural "Yugoslavhood", which contains some elements of American federalism, but also certain elements of the Swiss confederal model, is a home-grown Croatian intellectual and political ideal. All, or nearly all, political projects and programs, as well as the mythologies and ideology of federal and democratic "Yugoslavhood" were created by Croats: Fran Supilo and Stjepan Radić created the political philosophy of Southern Slav federalism (which was the reason why Radić was treacherously and perfidiously assassinated in the "federal" Parliament in Belgrade in 1928); Josip Juraj Strossmayer preached and practiced the ideas of Southern Slav religious tolerance and ecumenism; the sculptor Ivan Meštrović transformed his "Yugoslavhood" into sculptures, statues and mausoleums ordered by Aleksandar Karađorđević; Vladimir Dvorniković discussed the philosophical and psychological implications of the so-called character of Yugoslavhood, and Miroslav Krleža did the same work in the field of encyclopaedias. Even Communist "Yugoslavhood" was the work of Josip Broz Tito, a Croat. Even if this "Yugoslavhood" had many primitive and undemocratic traits, it retained some elements of (con)federalism, such as upholding the statehood of the republics that made up ex-Yugoslavia.

While the Croatian idea of "Yugoslavhood" is based on the "right to difference", the Serbian concept is based on a negation of differences in language, culture, religion, classes and interests. Cross-cultural differences in the understanding of the "brotherhood and unity" tenet are the easiest to examine in the ostracism of so-called nationalism in the periods of monarchical and Communist Yugoslavia. Thousands of Croats were brought to trial for singing the Croatian national anthem or certain folk songs, hoisting the Croatian flag, saying the name of the Croatian viceroy Josip Jelačić, using certain Croatian words and phrases which were labelled as "nationalist," or for merely stating their Croatian national affiliation in a public place. The statistics of political criminal trials and verdicts in the period between 1970 and 1990 show that over 70% of the convicts were Croats.

The Serbian idea and political model of "Yugoslavhood", diametrically opposed to its Slovenian and Croatian counterparts - which the National-Socialist movement led by Slobodan Milošević wanted to restore and impose by force on all non-Serbs in 1986 - is based on the principles of territorial expansion and the political domination of only one "chosen" nation - the Serbian nation. The right "to be a chosen nation" and dominate others is mainly based on the mythological consciousness of the greatness, heroism and Piedmonte-style sense of mission of the Serb nation, which is surrounded by allegedly upstart, genocidal, and, in every way inferior, nations: Croats, Slovenes, Albanians, Macedonians and Muslims. The Serbian idea of "Yugoslavhood" does not know or recognise any form of federalism and multiculturalism as a political value or constitutional principle.

For Serbs, who (unlike Croats and Slovenes) did not have the historical experience of living in complex state

unions, "Yugoslavhood" always meant something else: the territorial expansion of Serbia, the negation of differences, the domination and negation of religious (that was the purpose of militant atheism) and cultural differences. In Serbian philosophy and realpolitik, federalism is not a recognised positive value. The key slogan of communist Yugoslavia, "brotherhood and unity" expressed this concept of "Yugoslavhood", which did not recognise the other two key slogans of the French revolution: the freedom and equality of citizens and nations, as well.

The Real Causes of War

The conflicts in the former Yugoslavia after the eighties were about the understanding of the fundamental political and constitutional principles upon which the post-communist "Yugoslavia" was to be based.

While Slovenia and Croatia aimed for freedom, federalism, human rights, a multi-party system, and a market economy, the movement that simultaneously emerged in Serbia and the JNA leadership aimed for the negation of these ideas and principles.

Nationalist and secessionist movements in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia were therefore not the cause, as stated by Warren Zimmermann, but the inevitable consequence of the pan-Serbian National-Socialist and racist movement which openly threatened to undermine all the federal and democratic institutions (which were defective anyhow), and forcibly prevent the emergence of a multi-party system and private ownership, and promoted the racist negation of all ethnic and cultural differences (racist rhetoric and practice were initially directed against Albanians in Kosovo, and were gradually expanded to include all non-Serbian peoples).

The actual roots, causes and motives of the post-communist wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia are to be found in the Serbs, Serbia and the JNA. The National-Socialist movement led by Slobodan Milošević since 1986 had not wanted to accept either a true federalisation or the democratic transformation of the SFRJ. The goal of this movement was either total Serbian domination or aggression. Some of the causes and reasons for this aggression are also to be found in the JNA: all the elements of the new political movements in Croatia and Slovenia were absolutely unacceptable to the ideologically xenophobic communist army. The demands for a multi-party system, market economy and democratic federalism were, for the JNA, the immediate reason for a coup or war.

The causes and reasons for the wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina do not, as Warren Zimmerman believes and claims, lie in nationalism *per se*, but in the specific forms of nationalism (National Socialism) and totalitarianism which developed, both

spontaneously and on an organised basis, in the leadership of the JNA, and in Serbia in the mid-eighties.

Finally, by the time the multi-party system and the first intimations of secessionist movements began to emerge in Slovenia and Croatia (in the period between 1989 and 1990), the National Socialist movement in Serbia had had some four or five years of destructive and racist practice (Slobodan Milošević had come to power in 1986).

At the time the new political elites and their parties came to power in Slovenia and Croatia, the National-Socialist movement in Serbia had already completed all its preparations for overthrowing these elites, or waging wars of aggression against these countries.

At the moment when people in Croatia and Slovenia were just beginning to seriously ponder multi-party elections and the overthrow of Communism in the fall of 1989, the various projects for the military overthrow and aggression against Croatia and Slovenia were already completed.

As Slavenka Drakulić put it: "The war is not difficult to understand at all: There existed a Serbian political elite determined to start a war; it controlled the army; it controlled the media, and it had four years of systematic nationalist propaganda behind it. This is all it takes to start a war." (Los Angeles Times)

As a direct witness, and for a time, a participant in these events, I can state that the Croatian Government was aware of the above-noted preparations for aggression on the part of the Yugoslav Army and Serbia.

Given that the mechanism of this aggressive and imperialistic Greater-Serbian attitude could not be changed, the Croatian Government tried to prevent aggression by limiting the potential of ethnic conflicts, then by proposing a "confederation" designed to peacefully transform the former Yugoslavia into a commonwealth of sovereign south Slavic states.

The scholarly underpinnings of the confederation agreement were completed by August of 1990, and were drafted along the lines of the European Community prior to the 1992 model, retaining: a customs and monetary union, a confederate judiciary for human rights, and also a defence organization for the confederation modeled after NATO.

This proposal was offered for discussion and debate to all the republics of the former Yugoslavia, but for various reasons it did not obtain their support. The proposal to peacefully transform the Yugoslav federation into a commonwealth was also submitted to representatives of the Bush administration (in the middle of September of 1991), which did not receive their diplomatic support either, but on the contrary, was opposed by a stance in favor of the unity of the communist Yugoslavia and the reformist government of Ante Marković.

¹ Bellah, R.N. and others (1985), *Habits of the Heart*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

² Bellah, R.N. (1967) *Civil Religion in America*. *Daedalus* 96:1-21

³ I had the pleasure of meeting him several times: we dined together, three times, and we also took part in a VIP tennis tournament at Rogla, Slovenia, in 1990, after which the Serb press accused us both of having conspired to break up Yugoslavia under the guise of playing tennis.

⁴ In his book "Great Ideas and Little Nations" he presents an interesting thesis: neither communism nor fascism are specific to little nations, but appear when their consciousness becomes possessed by, and wrapped up in, "great totalitarian ideas" (i.e. ideologies) that they receive from a wider, European context.