

## CHAPTER SEVEN - ASSESSMENTS

### INTRODUCTION

In the foregoing Chapters it was concluded that democratisation strategy had done little to facilitate democracy and self-government in Bosnia. The opening section of this Chapter summarises these conclusions and highlights the trend towards greater external regulation of policy-making in Bosnia and the marginalisation of Bosnian representatives from this process. The following section then considers the response of the leading international institutions involved in democratisation to this trend, this constitutes the ‘official’ assessment. Further sections consider the alternative assessments of democratisation practice, grouping the critics of Dayton into two broad categories: the ‘liberals’, who argue for greater international intervention to democratise Bosnia; and the ‘conservatives’, who argue that there is little that the international community can do to bring democracy to the region.

In the British press the criticisms have come predominantly from the liberal perspective, led by international NGOs, such as Human Rights Watch, the Helsinki Citizen’s Assembly, and the Washington-based International Crisis Group, and the campaigning journalism of the *Guardian* and *Observer*. Liberal critics feel that the international institutions lack commitment to democratisation and that the lack of success is, to a certain extent, self-created, through the Dayton Agreement’s acceptance of the division of Bosnia into two separate entities. They argue that this problem has been accentuated by the international community’s use of electoral

accountability, believed to heighten political divisions and give authority and legitimacy to the nationalist leaders responsible for war and division in the first place.

The conservative critique radically dissents from this position and argues that democratisation is unlikely to bring about change because of the strength of ethnic segmentation. In the opinion columns of the American press, there has been increasingly strident debate provoked by the conservative critics of Dayton who assert that American lives are being put at risk through an unnecessary and ill-considered entanglement in Balkan affairs.

After outlining the 'official', 'liberal' and 'conservative' assessments of democratisation in Bosnia there is a consideration of some of the contradictions raised over the rationale for the extension of international mandates and the high-level international focus given to the Bosnian situation. This chapter concludes by highlighting the high degree of consensus at the centre of the democratisation discussion which has enabled accountability for the extension of democratisation to be shifted away from the international institutions and on to internal Bosnian factors.

### **MORE DEMOCRATISATION BUT LESS DEMOCRACY**

The Chapters which investigated specific democratisation strategies concluded that their implementation tended to restrict democratic accountability rather than develop mechanisms which could allow a transition away from international administration towards self-government. In Chapter Three it was noted that elected Bosnian institutions of government at state, entity, city and municipal levels had a largely

formal existence with little capacity to develop or implement policy independently of the international community and that minority ethnic groups lacked the protection and security of a degree of political autonomy. Chapter Four considered how the framework of human rights protection further weakened the peace-building and integrative capacity of Bosnian political and judicial institutions through placing decision-making in the hands of international institutions. International regulation of political competition and media output, analysed in Chapter Five, restricted the democratic mandates of elected politicians and limited political debate while having a marginal impact on support for the nationalist parties. Chapter Six considered the approach of ‘democratisation from below’ through support for civil society-building; support given to small unrepresentative civic groups tended to downplay the importance of democratic debate and competition for cohering support, fragmenting the political opposition while doing little to encourage popular involvement in the political process.

The empirical findings that democratisation practices operated in ways which limited the sphere of democracy are not necessarily surprising or unexpected. The proponents of democratisation argue that it is the failure of democracy to produce stable, legitimate government that necessitates an external process of democratisation. Rule by external administrators, political conditionality, electoral and media regulation, and civil society-building are seen as preconditions for a functioning liberal democracy in the future. As with the broader discussion of transition in the region, the more specific discussion of democratisation presupposes liberal democracy as the end point of international policy practices. Restrictions on democracy in the short-term are

designed to be temporary and to gradually prepare the people so that they can eventually take on the responsibilities of democratic citizenship.

International practice to date, however, indicates not only that democratisation limits accountability and autonomy but also that there is little tendency towards rolling back external regulation over the process. Over the first three years of Dayton implementation, the powers of the international community, already uniquely extensive, had grown consistently. As High Representative Westendorp declared in December 1997: 'We shall never be as strong in Bosnia as we are today' (OHRS, 1997a, par. 21). As of December 1997, after two years of international administration, talk in terms of 'exit strategies' was replaced by that of 'long-term engagement' and the mandates of the OHR, OSCE, IPTF and NATO were all extended indefinitely. Yet, the High Representative, in his speech to the Peace Implementation Council (PIC), played down this accumulation of power and emphasised that this indefinite time-extension and the use of greater powers to impose international policy did not mean an altered mandate:

Let there be no misunderstanding. I am not seeking from this Council a new or revised mandate. Not yet. But what I will need from you is your full support in the more vigorous exercise of my existing mandate ... I intend to exercise to the full the final authority in theatre, given to me under Annex 10 of the Peace Agreement. (OHRS, 1997a, pars 22 & 23)

The 'vigorous exercise' of the mandate giving Westendorp's office 'final authority', makes the distinction between an international protectorate and the situation in Bosnia

a fine one. Westendorp stated his intention of breaking the 'log-jam', caused by the lack of political support within Bosnia for international policy proposals, by resorting to decisions on the following (OHRS, 1997a, par. 24):

- \* The timing, location and chairmanship of meetings of the common institutions.
  
- \* Interim measures to take effect when parties are unable to reach agreement, which will remain in force until the Presidency or Council of Ministers has adopted a decision on the issue concerned, consistent with the Peace Agreement.
  
- \* Measures to suspend enforcement of legislation which does not comply with the Peace Agreement.
  
- \* Other measures to ensure implementation of the Peace Agreement throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Entities, as well as the smooth running of the common institutions. Such measures may include dismissal from office of officials who are absent from meetings without good cause or persistently block the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

The PIC Bonn Conference issued an extensive 26-page list of internationally prepared legislative measures that were required to be passed by certain deadlines (PIC, 1997b). These measures covered policy-making powers at both state, entity and municipal level; intervening in order to regulate policy on housing, education, the legal system, citizenship, travel, the constitution, refugee return, policing, the media, electoral regulation, economic reconstruction and regional relations. The extent of

regulation held necessary to enforce Dayton extended right down to requirements for the Bosnian sports teams at the Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan (PIC, 1997b, section II, 3).

In December 1997 High Representative Westendorp began enacting law in Bosnia, starting with the disputed law on citizenship (RFE/RL Newline, 1997h). Although it was assumed that this law would be later adopted by the Bosnian Parliament, Westendorp made clear that this would be purely formal as it would have to be assented to without comments or conditions (OHR SRT, 1997d). The same month Senior Deputy High Representative Schumacher attended the Council of Ministers meeting to announce that the High Representative had decided to enact the disputed Customs Tariff Schedule and impose other decisions that the CoM had not ratified by the PIC deadline (OHRPS, 1997). At the end of the year he presented two sets of policy proposals with deadlines to the inaugural meeting of the new Republika Srpska Assembly (OHRS, 1997b).

The German Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, openly confirmed the same month that the international community had little hesitation in moving to make decisions contrary to the will of the Bosnian people (OHR SRT, 1997c). Carlos Westendorp declared in his 1998 New Year Message: ‘As High Representative, I have to take decisions now and in the future with your best interests in mind, should your leaders fail to take them’ (OHRS, 1997c). As Bosnian opposition SDP party leader, Lagumdžija, stated on Sarajevo TV: ‘[These proposals mean] we will be left to play consideration and deciding, and when we are unable to adopt, someone else will adopt it. If that is called

a protectorate, that is a matter of speaking, someone else decides for us' (OHR BiH, 1997).

After the extensions of the international community's powers, ratified at the PIC conferences in Sintra and Bonn in 1997, and Luxembourg in 1998, the elected institutions of Bosnia have even less of a formal say in their own affairs. As the Dayton democratisation process continues, the token nature of the elected assemblies at both state and entity level becomes increasingly exposed. Even the presence of Bosnian representatives is now openly seen as superfluous. Robert Gelbard, Special American Envoy for the Balkans, stating that should the High Representative remove any Bosnian official for a failure to co-operate, and the party affected fails to appoint a replacement, the institution concerned will continue to operate normally (OHR SRT, 1997c). The Bonn and Luxembourg PIC conferences may not have declared an international protectorate, but this is surely semantic given the indefinite time-span of international mandates and that failure to ratify policy within set deadlines leading to the dismissal of elected representatives and policy being enacted regardless by the High Representative.

Democratisation in Bosnia would appear to have little to do with democracy as traditionally understood. It seems contradictory that the process of democratisation has taken Bosnia through a series of stages leading further away from democratic accountability:

\* Stage one - the Dayton Agreement, in December 1995, which established a one-year transitory regime of international peace-building preparatory to elections, which were declared to be free and fair.

\* Stage two - the announcement of a two-year regime of 'consolidation', in December 1996, with the High Representative having increased powers of economic regulation.

\* Stage three - an indefinite regime of international regulation announced a year later, in December 1997, with the High Representative empowered to overrule and dismiss elected representatives and directly impose policy.

Along with the increase in international authority, political discussion has been marginalised through the clamping down on criticism of international policy-making. As Ted Galen Carpenter of the Cato institute noted in the *Washington Times*:

The US-led democracy mission in Bosnia has become a grotesque parody of democratic principles ... we are teaching ... the virtues of democracy by showing ... that an outside power, if it possesses enough military clout, has the right to overrule court decisions, establish political purity tests for candidates for public office and suppress media outlets that transmit politically incorrect views. (Carpenter, 1997)

From the evidence of three years of externally imposed democratisation, it would seem that far from just limiting democracy in the short term, an argument could be made to demonstrate that democratisation has a dynamic towards the limitation of representative democracy per se. If Bosnia is more democratic after three years of

internationally managed transition to democracy, then democracy has been redefined out of recognition. If Bosnia is less democratic then this raises prima facie evidence to suggest that democratisation implementation, or the initial assumptions about its effectiveness, seems to be flawed.

Noting an empirical trend away from democracy and the developing gap between policy aims and outcomes does little to provide an explanation for the extension of the democratisation process. The following sections discuss ‘official’, ‘liberal’ and ‘conservative’ assessments of the democratisation process in Bosnia and highlight the nature of the ideological consensus which makes democratisation a low-risk policy option with little accountability for success or failure.

## **OFFICIAL ASSESSMENTS**

Despite the exhaustive monitoring mechanisms put in place in Bosnia by international institutions and NGOs, to ensure the compliance of Bosnian parties with international requirements under the Dayton Agreement, there has been little monitoring of how effective international policy has been in giving greater accountability to the Bosnian people over the political process.(1)

Considering the alleged centrality of success in Bosnia to the international community and the experimental and unique nature of many of the democratisation initiatives, it is perhaps surprising that there is very little critical evaluation of international practice in Bosnia. The international regulation of Bosnia is accountable to the Peace Implementation Council through the reports of the UN High Representative, but there

is little analysis beyond the short-term impact of international policy on compliance with Dayton. The fact that many of these international policy initiatives depend on enforcing compliance on the Bosnian leadership, as opposed to building support for international policy within Bosnian society itself, seems not to be considered. The policy aim would appear to be the acceptance of the Dayton framework, with little thought of the impact that reducing the capacity and accountability of elected representatives may have for the long-term consequences of the democratisation process.

The high-level biannual international conferences of the Peace Implementation Council present a peculiar assessment of democratisation strategy. If the extension of the Dayton mandates is a sign of failure then it is a failure which seems to have little effect on the nature of policy-making in Bosnia, and a failure which is in danger of being replicated on a broader scale as international mandates are extended. If three years of international regulation by the most powerful institutions in the world, such as NATO, the UN, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, in co-operation with the world's most powerful states, including the United States, Russia, Germany and Japan, can not make a serious impact in a small, weak and economically and politically fragmented state with little internal or external sources of alternative support, then it would seem that either there is something seriously wrong with the policies being pursued or that no external intervention is going to make much of a difference. The fact that all the institutions and states seem to be content with sticking to the Dayton mandates and extending them would indicate that something was happening in Bosnia that was seen as useful and important enough to merit not just

the uncritical continuation of the policy but also the continued high-level attention of the world's most powerful statesmen and policy advisors.

If the extension of the mandates is a sign of success then this makes little difference to the question posed above. If it is a success then what is successful about it? There would seem to be little evidence of success on the ground in Bosnia beyond traditional peace-enforcement stabilisation. For the last three years there has been a stand-off between the three politically- and ethnically-cohered groups, little different to the pre-war situation, and there is little tendency either towards conflict or greater co-operation. Political insecurities are still rife as to the political autonomy of the Serb entity and Croat areas of the Federation, and the central political authority of the state remains very weak with state authority as reliant on outside support as when Bosnian recognition was called for in 1991. The fighting has stopped, but many commentators argue that war may not have broken out, and the conflict been so prolonged, if a negotiated power-sharing solution had been acceptable to the United States, either when recognition was being considered by the international community or during the European- and UN-led peace negotiations (Boyd, 1995; Petras and Vieux, 1996; Woodward, 1995, pp. 302-32; 1996b, pp. 164-72).

It could be argued that the remit of the Peace Implementation Council is not primarily that of ensuring democracy, but the broader task of preventing conflict and ensuring stability. The Dayton Agreement itself mandates the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) 'to lay the foundation for representative government and ensure the progressive achievement of democratic goals' (GFA, 1995, Annex 3, Preamble). However, the OSCE Democratisation Branch similarly appeared to place

little emphasis on Bosnian self-government and democratic accountability. As Siri Rustad, Deputy to the Head of Mission for Democratisation, stated:

It is difficult to measure the overall democratic level of the country. We measure different levels - the running of institutions, the role of NGOs, the views of the Peace Implementation Conference etc. We don't have a broader theoretical approach at all. That's how the Mission works - its concerned with practical results.(2)

She expanded on these three levels. Firstly, the democratic functioning of the state institutions, suggesting that the Constitution should be universally in force and a legal framework, up to European standards, clearly established. She stated that 'political institutions should follow the rules, as long as they are not following the rules - then it is not democratic'. However, the institutional framework and the rules governing it have never been approved by the Bosnian people, a legitimate test of a democracy, but are set down and interpreted by the international community. Secondly, she proposed 'gaining an impression of how much power is distributed through informal channels'. In many democracies, the distribution of power through 'informal' and unaccountable mechanisms would be seen as anti-democratic. However, for Rustad, the influence of citizens' groups and NGOs, 'independent sections of civil society', on political decisions through the lobbying process was indicative of a free society. The third level highlights the shift in accountability from the Bosnian people to the international community, already implicit in her approach: 'There is also the level of the Peace Implementation Conference and the fulfilment of the Dayton Peace Accords. If they are satisfied it is a way of saying it is a democracy or a society that can, by itself, develop democracy further.'

None of these indicators refer to the accountability of the Bosnian government to the electorate. Christian Ahlund, the OSCE Director General for Human Rights, similarly saw democracy as residing in the international institutions.(3) He stated that the OSCE's role was a 'pedagogic' one of informing Bosnian people about international standards and 'telling them what democratisation is all about'. For him it was impossible to imagine the Dayton process as a barrier to democracy as it guaranteed the same rights and freedoms as the best states in the world and therefore any democratic activity would be in accordance with the constitution. Political parties which did not agree with the international community did so because they were not democratic. As he stated: 'Elections are just the first primitive stage of democracy. Political parties are still a pretty blunt form'.(4) OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Niels Helveg Peterson, has condemned Bosnian voters, describing their 'political level' as 'not very high' which has led to elections, such as those in September 1997, that 'fell far short of normal democratic standards' (RFE/RL Newswire, 1997f).

This negative view of representative democracy in Bosnia was shared by the Office of the High Representative. Spokesman for the High Representative, Duncan Bullivant, has publicly stated that 'Bosnia is a deeply sick society, ill at ease with even the most basic principles of democracy' (Washington Post, 1997). High Representative Carlos Westendorp's critique of democratic accountability has a distinct ring of Rudyard Kipling's 'White Man's Burden': 'They [Bosnian representatives] have a wrong perspective. They are not serving their population properly, the real interest of the population, which is to co-operate with the international community, because the

interest of the international community is that the country is prosperous and democratic' (Coleman, 1997).

It is this view of Bosnian people and their representatives as lacking democratic capacities that has legitimated the extension of policy-making by international institutions. The implication of this approach is the end of formal democracy, of legitimacy through accountability to the electorate. Democracy is redefined as its opposite, adherence to outside standards not autonomy and accountability. This approach is also pursued in official statements of world leaders such as American President, Bill Clinton, who has successfully pushed for the 'exit strategy' to be replaced by a series of vaguely defined externally-set goals for civilian and economic management, such as rooting out corruption, reforming and retraining the police, restructuring the media, increasing refugee return and indicting more war criminals (RFE/RL Newslines, 1997i). The indeterminate nature of the number, let alone the content, of these benchmarks for NATO and UN withdrawal was illustrated in July 1998 when Clinton stated there were ten while US Ambassador Robert Gelbard referred to twelve (Clinton, 1998).<sup>(5)</sup> The decision on what the required standards of democracy are and whether they are met is without question assumed to be a matter for international agencies not the Bosnian electorate or their representatives.

The explanation for the ease with which international administrative powers can be legitimised as facilitating democracy has been the redefinition of democracy within the democratisation framework. As considered in Chapter One, democracy is no longer defined as the outcome of popular decision-making but as an adherence to democratic ethics and values. Because these ethics and values are held to reside in

Western governments and international institutions, it has been easy to transform democracy-building - democratisation - into a process of meeting external targets prescribed by the international community. It is this 'de-politicisation' of democracy that makes the view, expressed by the most senior OSCE Democratisation Supervisor, next to the OSCE Head of Mission himself, that there was no 'broader theoretical approach at all' unsurprising. The official assessment of democratisation indicates that there is little conception of Bosnian self-government as a priority for the democratisation process nor any assumption of a merely temporary role for the OSCE, NATO, UN Office of the High Representative and other international community bodies.

The power of this consensus and lack of critical assessment of democratisation practice in Bosnia appears to be unexceptional. Thomas Carothers draws similar conclusions from his analysis of US democracy assistance programmes (1997b). He makes the point that US democratisation strategy is not drawn from historical western experience or from academic writings about transition processes, but is focused on reforming institutions to make them compatible with an idealised Western model. He concludes that US democracy assistance:

... tends to ignore the power relations that underlie and in many ways determine a country's political life ... with little reference to the social, political and economic forces that actually shape those sectors. Democracy assistance providers operate as though it is possible to change the basic functioning of key institutions ... without grappling with the deep-seated interests of the actors involved. (Carothers, 1997b, p. 122)

Carothers sees the ‘artificial technical quality’ of democracy assistance as a central problem, which can mean that democratisation practice tends to ignore ‘the stubborn reality that politics involves competing interests, struggles over power, conflicting ideologies and clashing values’ (Carothers, 1997b, p. 123). The overview of the democratisation approach in Chapter One and the analysis of its operation in Bosnia in the following Chapters would seem to reinforce Carothers’ view that ‘stubborn realities’ can easily be interpreted, from within the democratisation approach, as cultural ‘incapacities’ and thereby as barriers to democracy.

As seen in Chapter Six, the response of the official democratisers in the UN and OSCE, to the lack of success in imposing an external framework which pays little heed to Bosnian concerns, has not been to question the theoretical framework which informs the approach of top-down imposition and bottom-up empowerment, but to tinker with the programmes and call for greater mandates and more resources.

## **THE LIBERAL ASSESSMENT**

Liberal assessment of democratisation strategy is critical of the official institutions, however their critique does not highlight the lack of democratic accountability or political autonomy. Liberal critics, in fact, take the opposite approach and argue that the goals set for external accountability to international institutions are too low. They argue that this unwillingness to impose policy on the Bosnian parties has led to the problems of civilian implementation. The main source of criticism is the belief that the three-way division of Bosnia is not a product of the wishes of the Bosnian people,

but the actions of the international community. While the international institutions see Dayton as the yardstick for democratisation and above question, the liberal critics see Dayton as a compromise with the nationalist elites seen to be responsible for the war and division:

Its military aspects (establishing a cease-fire, isolating heavy weapons etc.) have proceeded quite smoothly ... But on the civilian side there has been no progress at all towards building stable relationships between the two rival 'entities', let alone towards recreating a multi-ethnic spirit. (Guardian, 1997)

The reasons for this international failure of purpose in acting to impose a unitary multi-cultural Bosnia are usually explained to be either a product of a racially biased approach to the region, which has generated a fatalist perspective that nothing can be done to overcome 'ethnic rivalries', or the placing of self-interest above justice for Bosnia. Liberal critics argue that imposing democracy is seen as either too costly or too dangerous and therefore the major powers are willing to compromise with nationalist leaders pursuing divisive strategies. For example, Bradford University Peace Studies author Tom Gallagher writes:

Western policy-makers have been adverse to acting as organisers, leaders, or peace-makers in the region because they are imbued with a sense of fatalism about the potentialities of its local elites and their populations to aspire to good government and modern forms of conduct. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that the problems of the Balkans are seen as culturally determined and historically recurring and therefore beyond capable solution. (Gallagher, 1997, pp. 32-33)

Perversely, the lack of success of democratisation initiatives is often put down to the Bosnian politicians having too much power in relation to the international institutions. According to Mary Kaldor a stronger mandate is required by the international community because: 'the relationship between the International Community and the Parties is changed, because the International Community has become too dependent on the Parties for the implementation of the Dayton-agreement, which makes itself foolish' (Kaldor, 1997, p. 27). Mient Jan Faber, Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (HCA) co-ordinator in The Hague, believes that: 'The International Community has made itself dependent on the "manipulations", "tricks" and "demands" of the Parties. It is not in charge, it does not even control its own activities in Bosnia' (HCA, 1997, p. 16).

Many international commentators feel that the leading Bosniak, Serb and Croat politicians should not be allowed to play a role in Bosnia's future. Kaldor explains the lack of progress of Dayton as due to the fact that 'those responsible for implementing the agreement were the parties to the agreement, i.e. those nationalists who favoured separation' (Kaldor, 1997, p. 29). The *Guardian's* Martin Woollacott writes that Western pressure on Milosevic and Tudjman to police the Bosnian Serbs and Croats is perpetuating resistance to Dayton and avoiding the 'confrontation' he sees as necessary to force through a solution: 'America and Europe still base their policy on accommodating to the strength of the local actors ... it remains the case that the West still shields itself from the cost and confrontation by working with rather than *against* the lines of strength in the Balkans' (Woollacott, 1997b).

The OSCE and the Office of the UN High Representative have generally taken an ambiguous approach to elections setting them up as democratic enough to legitimise the governing institutions, but not legitimate enough to allow the dominant parties to challenge the OHR's right to shape policy. However, the liberal critics see elections as highly problematic and have been much more vocal about the necessity of distancing the holding of elections from democratisation. For these critics of the OSCE, elections merely provide nationalist politicians with legitimacy which is then used by the international institutions to justify compromise solutions.

Nearly all the liberal critics argue that elections are not just an unreliable indicator of democracy but bad for democracy in Bosnia *per se*. Woodward writes that:

In fact, by declaring elections the precondition for the exit of US military forces, the Dayton negotiators determined that all aspects of the implementation process in the first year would be dominated, and in some ways distorted, by the electoral motives of the three political parties. (Woodward, 1996a, p. 34)

Calling elections gave credibility to the leading parties and the opportunity to acquire resources and use them for partisan gain. Woodward puts the political disagreements over Dayton implementation down to the fact that the political parties were competing in what was in effect a year-long election campaign. This competition for potential votes exacerbated conflict as 'territorial demarcations, humanitarian aid, economic assistance, electoral laws, government ministries, and population resettlements all provide resources for winning elections' (1996a, p. 34). In fact, merely holding elections, on this logic, contributed to an undemocratic climate:

The goal of winning at the polls has thus had the opposite effect of the conditions that foreign monitors identify as necessary to elections and to peaceful implementation. It has created a climate less open to dissent and fairness, poorer conditions for independent alternatives, and increasing restrictions on freedom of movement and resettlement. (Woodward, 1996a, p. 35)

If even calling elections was considered to be anti-democratic, it was little surprise to see that the outcome was roundly condemned by the liberal critics. The September 1996 state-level elections were judged to be ‘deeply flawed’ merely ratifying the consequences of the war, legitimising the three nationalist leaderships and allowing them to consolidate their hold over power (Gallagher, 1997, pp. 19-20). Their ratification by the OSCE as ‘free and fair’ was written off as dictated by the American agenda of achieving a foreign policy success before the Presidential elections (Gallagher, 1997, p. 20; Williams, 1996, p. 13). Liberal critics on the ground in Bosnia nicknamed the OSCE the ‘Organisation to Secure Clinton’s Election’ and sought to downplay the significance of the elections.(6)

After the September 1996 elections, some commentators, such as Mary Kaldor, argued that the only reason for the success of the nationalists was the short-comings of formal democracy:

Elections were held in September without meeting the basic preconditions laid down in the Dayton Agreement ... While the conduct of the elections, although not the preceding campaign, was largely peaceful, thousands of people were unable to vote

because so few were able to return to their places of origin and where they did there were problems with voter lists, and because absentee polling stations were inadequate. The consequence of all this was that the nationalist parties won the elections (Kaldor, 1997, p. 28).

However, the facts of the matter invalidated Kaldor's assertion. While it was true that up to 30,000 displaced people from the Federation did not take the opportunity to vote in person in Republika Srpska it is difficult to establish the exact reasons why. Certainly there were problems with the organisation of the polling stations and problems with the voter lists, also many of those entitled to vote did not cross the IEBL from fear of intimidation, a lessening of interest after the postponement of the municipal elections, lack of information about transportation arrangements, and the realisation they would not be allowed to visit their previous homes. However, those 30,000 votes would have made little impact on the success of the nationalist parties, in this case the Serbian SDS. The winners of the Serb seats for the Bosnian and the Republika Srpska Presidencies received 350,000 and 400,000 votes over their nearest rivals and to gain a fourth seat in the Republika Srpska House of Representatives the Bosnian Muslim SDA would have needed 40,000 additional votes. According to the OSCE the maximum impact of the 30,000 displaced person vote would have been to give an additional three seats in the 83 seat Republika Srpska National Assembly to the SDA or another opposition party (OSCE PEC, 1996b, pp. 167-72).

Once the claim that the election results were invalid for procedural reasons no longer held, the liberal critics followed the official view that the success of the nationalist parties was a product of ethnic division accentuated by patronage relations, media

misinformation and the lack of political awareness of Bosnian voters. Under these conditions, most commentators argued the elections could not result in democratic outcomes and the OSCE was generally criticised for a failure to challenge the domination of nationalist parties. The International Crisis Group, for example, have suggested an alternative system of weighted voting, that maintains the ethnic key but weakens the attraction of nationalist politicians. They suggest that the ethnic results of all elections should be set in advance and the Bosnian electorate divided into Serb, Croat and Muslim electoral rolls with every elector having a weighted vote for all three ethnic categories in order to promote moderate candidates (ICG, 1998a, pp. 3-4).

The liberal approach to democracy was illustrated in the discussion at the round table seminar 'Dayton Continued', organised by the Law Centre and the HCA in Sarajevo at the end of 1996. It was attended by international institutions, political parties and citizen group NGOs whose dominant response to the state-level election results was a call for an international protectorate to be enforced. Mient Jan Faber argued for a new mandate 'close to that of a Transitional Authority' (HCA, 1997, p. 16); Vehid Sehic, President of the Tuzla Civic Forum, and Mujo Kafedzic, Vice President of MBO, both called for a protectorate, Kafedzic suggesting:

... the international community should introduce a protectorate in Bosnia Herzegovina, by suspending all governments, and taking power for the next two years ... De facto we have a semi-protectorate already. The international community does what it likes to do, and restricts what it does not like. Why doesn't it take over

completely, appoint a governor and remove everybody spreading the germs of hatred, particularly from the media. (HCA, 1997, pp. 25-26)

As noted above, the international institutions and leading Western states involved in democratisation are wary of presenting their policy enforcement as a new form of international protectorate, stressing that the Dayton mandates have not been changed and that at the end of the day the success of Dayton depends on the Bosnian leaders and their constituents. However, the liberal critics of Dayton have few qualms about using language previously associated with the colonial past and many have openly called for a protectorate as the best way of safeguarding democracy. Guardian leader-writers and columnists have consistently called for the end to elections and instead an 'open-ended occupation' or 'benign colonial regime' (Woollacott, 1996; Borger, 1996). The less formal democracy there is, the more positive liberal critics are about internationally-led democratisation. One striking example of this dynamic was the *Guardian's* response to the OSCE ratification of the municipal elections in September 1997. Jonathon Steele, noting the 'imperial nature of the international presence' and Ambassador Frowick's ability to decertify winning candidates, complained not about the powers but Frowick's possible lack of use of them, raising the danger that he may 'cede to the nationalist majorities' (Steele, 1997a).

The International Crisis Group (ICG) at least formally acknowledge the gap between democratisation and democracy, however, their response to this serves to highlight the diminished nature of the liberal critics' view of democracy in Bosnia. The ICG argue that:

Respect for Bosnian authorities and basic notions of reciprocity argue for at least the degree of transparency necessary for the Bosnian authorities and people to understand the basis for decisions, and the decision-making processes, that so affect them. If the point of the international encampment in Bosnia is to ‘teach’ democracy, tolerance and good governance to the Bosnians then there is no better way to start than by example. (ICG, 1996c, p. 17)

In this case democratic accountability is reduced to ‘transparency’. ‘Teaching democracy’ ends up as a call for international institutions to widely make available their future plans and policy goals for the region. The Bosnian people have no active role in decision making and instead are reduced to passive onlookers.

These critics of democratisation strategy in Bosnia do not argue that there is too little autonomy but that there is too much. Deacon and Stubbs, for example, argue that even local government questions of social policy should be ‘implemented by non-elected impartial authorities appointed from outside [Bosnia]’ (Deacon and Stubbs, 1997, p. 11). The barriers to democracy appear to be the Bosnian voters and their representatives and the democratic solution appears to be that of an international protectorate. International withdrawal from Bosnia is raised as a sign of failure and the product of a negative and prejudicial view of the region while the extension of the international mandates is seen as a sign of commitment and as making a positive statement about the role and values of the international community.

## **THE CONSERVATIVE ASSESSMENT**

Like the liberals, the conservatives are highly critical of democratisation policy in Bosnia, in this case, not because the external goals are too low but because they are too high. The conservative critique centres on the view that ethnic division makes democracy promotion an unwise policy guide. They tend to see liberal democracy as an impossible short-term goal in an ethnically segmented society, making international attempts at 'nation-building' dangerous and destabilising.

The conservative critics, like the liberal ones, stress the failure of the civilian side of Dayton (Johnson, 1997; Kenney, 1997a; 1997b; Kissinger, 1997; Mearsheimer, 1997). They highlight that the Croatian areas of Bosnia are de facto part of Croatia and that the common institutions imposed on the Federation and the Bosnian state are sham external constructs. Former US Foreign Secretary Henry Kissinger, a leading conservative critic, flags-up ethnic division within the US-engineered Federation, with no Muslim or Croat officials outside their own areas and few Croats in Sarajevo itself (1997). John Mearsheimer alleges that the positive assessments of international regulation, especially when it comes to the central institutions and refugee return, 'are based on theology, not on the facts on the ground' (1997). Writing in October 1997, he notes that, in terms of ethnic integration, since Dayton 30,000 refugees had returned to areas in which they were a minority group but 80,000 had left, making Bosnia less integrated after two years of Dayton (Mearsheimer, 1997).

The difference between conservatives and liberals is that the failure is not put down to the lack of international commitment but the nature of Bosnia itself. The conservative critics argue that democratisation policy is unrealistic. It is criticised as a pretence that three hostile ethnic groups can live together within a single country, Michael

O'Hanlon, from the Brookings Institution, for example, asks: 'Where is the precedent - or the logic - for that arrangement' (O'Hanlon, 1997). Kissinger writes:

... for the Bosnians, the overwhelming reality is their historical memory, which has sustained their ineradicable and unquenchable aspirations for centuries ... Throughout their histories, the Serbs and Croats have considered themselves defenders of religions, first against a Muslim tide, then against each other ... The deep-seated hatred of each party for all of the others exists because their conflict is more akin to the Thirty Years War over religion than it is to political conflict. (Kissinger, 1997)

For conservatives, the failure to recognise the importance of ethnicity has meant that international intervention in Bosnia has been flawed from the start. The West's desire in 1992 to create a single independent nation, is seen as 'Western arrogance and insensitivity about Bosnian reality [which] resulted in a war among three ethnic groups' (Rosenthal, 1997). The Dayton process is seen as an extension of this mistaken policy in attempting to create a federation composed of three warring parties. According to Charles Krauthammer: 'Everyone with an ounce of sense knows this is an impossible objective' (1997). John Mearsheimer writes:

American forces are stuck in Bosnia because they are there to carry out an untenable accord, the 1995 Dayton agreement. That agreement calls for unifying Bosnia's three hate-filled ethnic groups in a single state. But that goal is infeasible. The Croats and the Serbs want no part of a multi-ethnic Bosnia - that is why they fought the war in the first place. They want partition. Even the Muslims, who favoured integration only

because they would dominate a united Bosnia, now talk openly of partition.  
(Mearsheimer, 1997)

For these commentators, every intervention taken by the international community to enforce the central state authorities means risking instability and opposition, to the extent of possibly re-igniting the war. Henry Kissinger writes:

The same flaw that attended the birth of the Bosnian state lies at the heart of the dilemmas of the Dayton accords ... Its military provisions separate the parties substantially along the lines of the ethnic enclaves that emerged as hostilities ceased. But the political provisions do the opposite: They seek to unite these enclaves under the banner of a multiethnic state that caused the explosion in the first place.  
(Kissinger, 1997)

Because of the depth of division, conservatives, like Charles Krauthammer, argue that democratisation is not a neutral policy. Without any consensus on the legitimacy of the new Bosnian state, democratisation policy only antagonises groups and plays on divisions instead of attempting to build bridges and reconcile them. Under these circumstances international interference means the risk of involving the US in a new war, one provoked by the international community. He concludes that democratisation policy 'may assuage the conscience of armchair moralists living 4,500 miles away, but it will kill a lot of people on the ground' (1997).

O'Hanlon agrees that Dayton is perpetuating ethnic tensions: '[Dayton] keeps Muslim hopes for resettlement of refugees and ultimate reintegration of the country

unsustainably high and therefore keeps the Serbs on edge and paranoid about losing war-time gains' (1997). The conservative critique directly challenges the positive gains for Bosnian society alleged to flow from democratisation. Considering the depth of ethnic segmentation, the conservatives hold that elections can play no role in solving ethnic division. Kissinger, for example, writes: 'elections are not about alterations in office but about dominance determining life, death and religion'. For this reason, he sees the OSCE strategy of using absentee voting in municipal elections to encourage multi-ethnic rule, in areas that are currently mono-ethnic, as a waste of time or generating renewed conflict; either the current ethnic division is consolidated or there is the risk of conflict as absentee voters regain the right to rule (Kissinger, 1997).

The conservative critics fear that US commitment to democratisation is symbolic of a loss of direction in foreign policy. This would seem to be warranted when the justification for the extended mandates is compared to the statements made by policy-makers at the outset of the Dayton mandate for a one-year external international administration. Dayton negotiator Richard Holbrooke at that time stated: 'We are not going to leave behind a force [after this] ... If a year doesn't work, two, three, or five years won't do either' (G. Rose, 1998, p. 65). Even the Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman John Shalikashvili said, at the time, that 'I cannot imagine circumstances changing in such a way that we would remain in Bosnia [beyond a year]' and, after the two-year extension was decided, in December 1996, admitted 'everyone I've talked to has been unable to explain to me what it is that is going to happen during the period of time that would make the conditions at the end of [the SFOR deployment] worth taking the risk of bringing in a new force' (G. Rose, 1998, pp. 65-66).

Conservatives express concern that unrealistic expectations will draw the US increasingly into the sphere of Balkan rivalries with no achievements to show for it. For the critics, extending the international regulation beyond keeping the peace is dangerous 'mission creep' and they see no strategic interest in staying. For Henry Kissinger: 'America has no national interest for which to risk lives to produce a multiethnic state in Bosnia. The creation of a multiethnic state should be left to negotiations among the parties' (1997). The Chicago Tribune has editorialised in similar vein:

The United States has no vital national interests at stake in Bosnia. There is no fundamental need for a US military involvement that threatens to drag on indefinitely. If our European allies believe there is a need for armed peacekeepers in Bosnia beyond next spring, they are capable of handling the job on their own. (Chicago Tribune, 1997)

In a rare voice of conservative dissent from Britain, Simon Jenkins argues in the *Times* that American policy has sucked Britain into a 'morass' where there is no clear military objective, no exit strategy and no national interest, yet it appears that British troops will be stuck for ever (1997). Charles Krauthammer complains that despite promises of withdrawal, the US government will:

... as is our custom, proclaim the great success of our expeditionary force, change its name and essentially leave it in place. It started as IFOR (implementation force). It then became SFOR (stabilisation force). SFOR will surely be retired, too - and then

remain in Bosnia renamed ... My suggestion is BFOR, baby-sitting force. What is the new mission? No one really knows. (Krauthammer, 1997)

Chris Hedges, in the *New York Times*, noted in early 1997 that boredom was the main problem for the US forces, that 'there was no clear enemy; the mission is difficult to define; there is no conflict looming to motivate troops through the period of routine and drill' (Hedges, 1997). Ernest Blazar, asked in the *Washington Times*, why, with universal agreement on the success of the military aspects of Dayton, the NATO forces were not being withdrawn in line with previously set deadlines? The reason given for extended NATO mandates, the need for troop enforcement of the civilian implementation of Dayton, he thought was weak. The seizure of the Serb TV transmitters, for example, was justified on the grounds of protecting NATO from hostility within Bosnia, however, Blazar commented: 'Talk like that borders on the elliptical; that US troops are in Bosnia to defend themselves. It's surely not what Pentagon leaders privately think ... But absent more candour on what US troops are doing in Bosnia and for how much longer, it's nearly all the American people are getting lately' (Blazar, 1997). Other conservative critics have compared the Bosnia deployment to the moon landings, with the principal objective appearing to be to send men far away and bring them back safely (G. Rose, 1998, p. 66).

Conservatives often seem to be at a loss to understand what the international community is doing or why it is there. General George Jatras and General Charles Boyd, among other leading former US military commanders, have denounced US policy in the belief that this mistaken intervention is a product of media portrayal of the conflict as an external Serb invasion of a mythically multi-cultural Bosnia (Jatras,

1997; Boyd, 1995; 1998). George Kenney, who resigned from the US State Department Yugoslavia Desk in protest at US policy ignoring the 'genocide' in Bosnia, later felt that US policy-makers had been influenced by Muslim 'black propaganda' and came to see this as the explanation for the irrational extension of US engagement, in an attempt to support Muslim war-aims against the Serbs (1997a).

Other conservatives view US meddling as the result of the White House falling prey to 'political correctness'. Ted Galen Carpenter, criticising the US entanglement in complex political rivalries, sees democratisation policy as driven by a 'Frankenstinian experiment' in 'politically correct micro-management' (1997). For many, the intervention on the side of Plavsic in the September 1997 Republika Srpska Parliamentary Assembly elections, when there was little to choose between her and Krajisnik, and even less to be gained by interfering, was the last straw. Republican senator Kay Bailey Hutchison writing that: 'The Clinton Administration has decided, without Congressional consultation, to change our role in the Balkans. Beyond serving as neutral peacekeepers ... We have become partisans in a local struggle' (1997).

At the heart of the conservative critique is the question of why so many international resources are going into Bosnia when it seems unlikely that the policy will result in any qualitative improvement and quite likely make matters worse? George Kenney sums up this approach in the *Washington Times*, saying that the two intelligent options would be either the 'full-scale occupation and administration of Bosnia' or the 'Cyprus-like partition solution', democratisation just 'pours resources down a bottomless black hole' (1997b).

## **THE CONTRADICTIONS OF THE EXTENDED DEMOCRATISATION MANDATES**

The official response to the conservative critique has been a contradictory one. On the one hand, the international community is said to be making headway and have majority support for the new state, on the other, there are so many barriers that the international missions have to be extended into the indefinite future with stronger mandates and no fixed exit goals. It is this fine balance between success and failure that keeps the democratisation bandwagon on the road and understanding this process is the key to unravelling the source of the contradictions involved in democratisation.

The conservative critique draws out the contradictory dynamic at the heart of democratisation. When conservatives argue that most people oppose Dayton and the international community are wasting resources to change little, they are met with the response that international policy is a good use of resources and achieving a lot with the support of most of the population. Against the conservative doomsday scenarios of the potential instability and cost of intervention, US Dayton architect Richard Holbrooke responds that it is the conservatives who are out of touch with ‘reality on the ground’, stating: ‘We can well afford the costs, and there have been no US or NATO fatalities from hostile action in 21 months - an astonishing record’ (1997). Holbrooke astutely points out that ‘the clash of civilisations can be much overstated’ (1997).

The observation by Holbrooke about the 'overstatement' of the dangers of ethnic violence seems to well grounded in practice as over the last three years the threat of nationalist extremism has seemed constantly to be on the other side of the horizon. The lack of such opposition to Dayton recalls the late Bill Hicks' observation about Saddam Hussain's feared elite Republican Guard, during the 1991 Iraq war, which after several weeks of US carpet-bombing, and not one response, went from being described as 'the elite Republican Guard' to 'the Republican Guard' to 'the Republicans made this all up' (Hicks, 1992). Like the alleged threat posed by the Iraqi leader, the power of hard-line Serb nationalists to use intimidation and Nazi-style propaganda to undermine the international community seems to be more State Department invention than considered analysis.

While it is an open question whether the majority of the Bosnian electorate support the Dayton Agreement, the lack of viable alternatives is also striking. For most Bosnian citizens the most pressing concerns are mundane issues of work and security and there is little desire to see further instability (see Boyd, 1998, p. 51). Neither the feared backlash amongst Serbs and Croats, nor attempts by the Muslims to make use of their military superiority to make further gains have materialised. Instead of greater division and renewed conflict, expected by both liberal and conservative critics, passive acceptance has been the underlying response by Bosnians of all ethnic groups, and even those factions expected to be most antagonistic towards it increasingly see the Bosnian state as a non-negotiable institution.

Biljana Plavsic, the President of Republika Srpska, argues that only the international community can maintain the autonomy of the Serb entity and that as Dayton

guarantees the Serbs one-third of all positions in joint Bosnian institutions this is the best way of ensuring Serb interests will be protected (RFE/RL BR, 1997). Plavsic has also, on various occasions, called for the RS army to be involved in the US 'train and equip' programme, these calls have been welcomed by the Bosnian Muslims as a first step to creating a joint army and qualifying for NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, but have been rejected by Washington (RFE/RL Newline, 1997b; RFE/RL Newline, 1997e). Plavsic represents a growing view among Bosnian Serbs, fearful of the consequences of international isolation. As she told the SRNA news agency: 'integration processes have started and whoever rejects them has no sense of reality' (RFE/RL Newline, 1997d).

Among Bosnian Croats there is also a realisation that Dayton and their formal separation from the Republic of Croatia is beyond contestation. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, nearly 30 per cent of Bosnian Croats have left Bosnia since the Dayton Accords were signed, many resettling in the formerly Serb-inhabited Croatian Krajina (Boyd, 1998, p. 44). The perpetuation of the Croat para-state as the 'Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna' has been more an attempt to shore up the domination of the HDZ in the region than an expression of opposition to Dayton. Meetings of this body have been held without the participation of the opposition Croatian Peasants' Party which has argued that attempts to re-establish the organisation are counterproductive (RFE/RL Newline, 1997a). In June 1998 the Croatian HDZ split, with the Croat member of the Bosnian Presidency, Kresimir Zubak, establishing a new pro-Dayton party to compete in the September elections (SAFAX, 1998d; RFE/RL Newline, 1998d; AFP, 1998).

In all three communities there is little hostility to the international community or sense of alternatives. This is reflected in the fact that even those political parties with most support are commonly seen to be self-serving elites. The dominant sense is disillusionment, quite the opposite of the image of fervent ethnic-nationalism. In November 1997, an *RFE/RL* correspondent asked people in the 'hard-line' SDS stronghold of Pale what they expected from the elections and noted: 'Almost all respondents said that they expect nothing, and that they are apathetic about Bosnian Serb politics. One woman concluded that none of the politicians offer a real vision for the future' (RFE/RL BR, 1997). A *Times* journalist reflected this pessimism in Prijedor in November 1997, a young local journalist telling him: 'We have reached the point where we no longer care about issues like war criminals ... There is a desperation among young people to leave this environment ... to improve their living standards. Whether Muslims come back is a minor issue' (T. Walker, 1997b).

At no point in the democratisation process has it been suggested that there is a danger of formal democracy being undermined by Bosnian opponents, by the cancellation of elections or the interference of the military in the political sphere. At the Joint Military Commission, held in August 1997, SFOR reported that the situation remained 'calm' and the commanders were congratulated on keeping the military out of the political tensions (OHRB, 1997y). Apart from displaying Karadzic posters in defiance of international edict and a few incidents of stone throwing, there has been little sign of any popular opposition to the international community. In September 1997, when the SDS held an election rally in Banja Luka to oppose President Plavsic, this was alleged in some Western media reports to have been an attempted coup. The reality was rather different, NATO troops stopped buses of SDS supporters from

attending and eventually had to rescue the SDS leadership, described by Jaques Klein later as a 'pretty sorry bunch', from angry crowds outside the Bosna Hotel (T. Walker, 1997a).

Attempts to talk up the media threat to IFOR appear similarly forced. What these 'extremists' allege in the Bosnian Serb media is little different to what some prominent conservative American critics have argued in relation to war crimes, the Hague tribunal and NATO policy (OHR SRT, 1997a; ONASA, 1997). Western officials' interpretation of these criticisms as a call for Serbs to 'take up arms' implied that criticism was on the same par as physical violence. This was supported by a NATO official, who stated: 'It was a direct attempt to demonise SFOR, which is a direct threat' (Dinmore, 1997). Media analyst William Woodger directly questions whether it was the international community's concerns about violence which led to them seizing Bosnian Serb transmitters in the run-up to the RS Parliamentary elections: 'With 35,000 heavily armed troops in Bosnia, is NATO worried about "violence" which has so far only been provoked by NATO action - and amounts to verbal abuse, stone and bottle throwing and a couple of Molotov Cocktails?' (Woodger, 1997).

Momcilo Krajisnik, the Serb member of the Bosnian presidency, often held up as the main opponent of Dayton, seems to have little power vis-à-vis the international community. As the *Washington Post* reported, Principal Deputy High Representative, Jacques Klein could gloat after the NATO seizure of the SRT transmitters: 'He [Krajisnik] wasn't happy. But all he can say is, "I don't like this". Well, I'm sorry ... Before, if they had their hand in the cookie jar it was just slapped. This time someone

took the cookie jar away' (Hockstader, 1997b). Apart from being treated as a naughty child, Krajisnik suffered the further indignity of being punished after displaying good behaviour. As one European official commented: 'The irony is, they were co-operating in general. The Americans were looking for one misstep, and when they finally got one, it was a whopper' (Hockstader, 1997a).

The contradiction at the heart of the democratisation process is that if there is not much resistance to it and the international community are in control, why has it been necessary to devote so many resources to Bosnia? Similar sentiments were expressed by Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the UN Secretary-General, when he stated that Bosnia had 'dominated the [UN] Organisation's peace-keeping agenda and distorted its peace-making efforts at the expense of other parts of the world' (UN, 1995b).

It could be argued that the biggest problem facing the international community in Bosnia is what to do with the power that they have accumulated. One example, picked up on by commentators, was the seizure of the Bosnian Serb TV transmitters. William Drodziak noted that 'NATO commanders found themselves in the uncomfortable role of television programmers' and Lee Hockstader that 'officials conceded privately that they have no firm idea of exactly how to proceed' (Drodziak, 1997; Hockstader, 1997a).

It seems that the conservative argument that the tensions of democracy in Bosnia will be so severe as to necessitate a permanent presence are fully agreed with when it comes to arguing for the mandates to be extended. The response of the liberal democratisers to withdrawal and the termination of the externally-led democratisation

process is always to find some reason or threat that necessitates international involvement. In order to justify the extension of international mandates, the institutions involved in democratisation have been forced to contradict themselves and talk up the opposition from within Bosnia. Holbrooke, for example, argued that pulling back would mean: 'surrender ... to the worst elements in Bosnian society, those that preach and practice ethnic hatred, using techniques Goebbels would have admired' (Holbrooke, 1997). The International Commission on the Balkans argue:

Without an indefinite international military presence - IFOR II, or IFOR 'light'- the Dayton framework and the process of peace-building might fall apart as soon as the more obstreperous local actors felt free of the constraints inherent in the presence of foreign forces on the ground. (ICoB, 1996, p. 3)

High Representative Bildt felt that the risk that uncertainties about withdrawal would influence political developments in the present meant that structures of long term regulation were necessary to prevent a renewal of hostilities (OHRB, 1997n). *Guardian* journalist, Jonathan Steele argued that: 'Annual arguments about whether to leave create uncertainty from which the wrong people benefit. Europe's government[s] should have the sense to say we are in Bosnia to stay' (Steele, 1997b, p. 17). Before the extension of the NATO presence beyond June 1998 was confirmed, High Representative Westendorp argued for an extension 'to keep former warring factions in check and to give people a clear message that there will be no new war'. He asserted that only a military presence in Bosnia would be adequate:

Over the horizon is not a good solution for Bosnia's security ... [this] would lead to an over the horizon international community and Dayton cannot be implemented from such a position ... The international community needs to be on the spot, in a secure environment, giving immediate treatment to Bosnia's pains. (OHRB, 1997B)

The deep feeling that the Bosnian people can not really be trusted with democracy, and that once the international community has left they will re-start hostilities, has allowed international agreements to be overridden before the ink has dried, this includes pre-Dayton agreements between the US and Croatia over the Federation and aspects of Dayton itself, such as the Brcko arbitration time limits and agreements on international withdrawal (for example, see OHR BiH, 1997). As the conservatives point out, the original goals of international involvement seem to have disappeared into the background as 'mission creep' has transformed an humanitarian and military mission into a highly politicised one. Over the last three years the liberal interventionists have rewritten Dayton in flexible terms. The dynamic of external democratisation, and the shifting policy goals, was illustrated by High Representative Bildt's statement that: 'each step forward we have taken has also demonstrated how many more are the steps which must be taken for the peace process to be self-sustaining and stable' (OHRR, 1996d, par. 100).

The experience of the High Representative, that the more international involvement there is, the greater are the calls for this involvement to be extended, has been constantly played out in practice. At the start of 1998 the OHR's office secured the election of a Republika Srpska parliament that excluded the dominant nationalist parties, this then created a new set of tasks as the priority became the support of the

weak sectional government through stepped up military and police patrols and economic support. In Brussels, the High Representative reiterated how the multitude of new tasks extended to paying government salaries, help in housing and refugee resettlement, and restoring water and sewage systems (M. Walker, 1998a). Once one election had finished it was time for the OHR to prepare for the next one and ensure the new government retained power.

It was not just in RS that external regulation was extended. As Deputy High Representative Schumacher indicated, success in one area became the justification for new goals being set in others: 'If this democratisation process really continues, and if [RS Prime Minister] Dodik only delivers even a few of the promises he's made, then very quickly the political emphasis will have to shift to the Muslim-Croat Federation' (Wilkinson, 1998). With increased success in undermining resistance to international policy-making in the RS there has been growing pressure on the Muslim and Croat Federation partners to, in Robert Gelbard's words, 'retain their "moral authority"', if they want to secure international funding (R. J. Smith, 1998b). This has involved opening-up their policy-making further to international supervision under pressure of claims that 'now the Muslim side of Bosnia is less pluralistic, less open, less democratic than [Republika] Srpska' (Washington Post, 1998). In a joint declaration, in February 1998, the US, OHR and European Commission issued deadlines for refugee return and measures on the distribution of job and school placements in Sarajevo with the threat of unspecified 'non-compliance' measures (R. J. Smith, 1998b). As William Woodger has noted the Dayton agreement has become increasingly irrelevant as new tasks are built in under the 'spirit of Dayton' (Woodger, 1997).

## CONCLUSION

Although the assessments of democratisation practice vary widely with critics arguing a range of perspectives from a full protectorate to international withdrawal and partition between three separate entities, there is little challenge to the democratisation approach that international regulation is necessary and little consideration of the impact of the international administration on the Bosnian political sphere.

The liberal critics essentially argue for more of the same and view the only limitation to internationally imposed democratisation as the lack of will of the international community itself. The conservative critics argue that the problem with international policy is that Bosnian culture and ethnic divisions make it an idealistic proposal which could entail international embroilment in Balkan affairs with little possibility of a solution to the complex questions of ethnic division.

The common ground across all these assessments is that the Bosnian people, or Bosnian 'culture' itself, are perceived to be the barrier to international community attempts to bring democracy to the new state. In relation to the historic or cultural roots of Bosnian resistance to democracy the international institutions appear to be powerless. As Michael Ignatieff notes: 'A very great deal of exculpatory moral disgust circulates around the failures of the new world order, a self-excusing sense that "we" tried and "they" failed' (Ignatieff, 1998, p. 99). This perception of powerlessness means that the international community never sees its own role in

institutionalising divisions or preventing compromise solutions. NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana has declared that the struggle between the international community and nationalist Bosnian elites is so balanced that criticism of international policy could be dangerous and encourage resistance to Dayton (Solana, 1997).

With powerlessness also comes the lack of responsibility. This was starkly demonstrated when former US Secretary of State Warren Christopher declared Bosnia ‘a test case of America’s ability to nurture democracy in the post-Cold War world’ and the following month argued that Bosnia was ‘an intractable “problem from hell” that no one can be expected to solve ... less as a moral tragedy ... and more as a tribal feud that no outsider could hope to settle’ (Woodward, 1995, p. 307). A similar lack of responsibility was voiced by Clinton at the beginning of the international administration over Bosnia: ‘If we leave after a year, and they decide they don’t like the benefits of peace and they’re going to start fighting again, that does not mean NATO failed. It means we gave them a chance to make their peace and they blew it’ (G. Rose, 1998, p. 65).

As will be considered in the following Chapter, the democratisation approach’s facilitation of an international co-operative project where there is little accounting for success or failure has made intervention in Bosnia highly attractive for institutions of the international community looking to project themselves on a world stage.