



Picture: AP

The face of hate that drives an army on

THIS IS the face of hard-line Communist General Blagoje Adzic.

He is the 63-year-old Serbian chief of staff of Yugoslav military who today mobilised his army against Slovenia.

His decision surprises nobody who knows anything of Adzic's background. He saw his entire family wiped out by Croatian forces during the Second World War.

That left him with a "deep loathing" of Croatsians.

Adzic perhaps personifies the hatred Serbs have for Croations — a hatred which can be summed up in two words — Ustacha and Chetnik. Words which send a shudder through Yugoslavia.

The Ustacha were the Croatian fascist regime which ruled the independent state of Croatia in World War II.

Given their dream of independence by Hitler, they defended it with a brutality which made even hardened Nazis squirm.

Hitler needed little to make sure that conquered Yugoslavia should be freed of Jews and Gipsies and of the "subhuman" southern Slavs. The Ustacha did not even have to be asked.

They imprisoned, tortured and exterminated with such vigour that the memory is still etched into the minds of the Serbs to this day.

The Serbian answer to the Ustacha were the Chetniks, an equally fascist but anti-Nazi group who made up in brutality what they lacked in numbers. Today, the Serbs

**from Tim Barlass
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see distinct parallels to what happened then and what is happening now.

Then, as now, Croatian opposition, backed by Roman Catholic Church, sought support in Italy and in Hungary, which provided them with weapons.

Then, as now, the Croations pressured the Serbian and other minority ethnic groups on their territory.

The Serbs living in Croatia are terrified beyond all reason about what the Croations might do to them if agressions were unleashed and Serbian protection was withdrawn. Their memories are long and vivid.

Gen Adzic has declared: "We have to accept war because we can't accept giving up. We will find those persons who are now hiding in their holes."

He believes the federal army has a right to defend Serbian ethnic minorities. But he also believes an example needs to be made of Slovenes.

The logic of Azdic considers that to be one way of teaching the Croations a lesson.