

France and Britain on the other. These differences surfaced in debates over the recognition of seceding Yugoslav republics, over the distribution of blame and, hence, of sanctions, among the parties to the conflict, and over the employment of various international institutions. The fate of the EC's early policy in the former Yugoslavia can thus be explained partly by its internal disarray, in which member states' conflicting views of the Balkan crisis were exacerbated by their disagreements over Maastricht and European security.

Much of that rivalry has now dissipated, partly because differences of interest are bound to loom larger in times of crisis than in postwar reconstruction. Member-states continue, of course, to pursue their own agendas in the region, but these now tend to be about contracts and trade rather than geopolitics. For the EU and the international community, however, interests are still at play in another sense, reminiscent of the early 1990s. Now, as then, it can sometimes seem as if the needs of the region and its peoples matter less than the EU's need to prove itself, or than the narrow agendas of the states, international organizations and NGOs involved in the protectorates and reconstruction programmes. (Chandler) Institutional self-interest, it may be argued, is a more reliable foundation for international action than sentiment. The question, however, is whether, as the perceived risk of renewed violence recedes in Bosnia and elsewhere, and as immediate humanitarian concerns fade in the public mind, it will suffice to sustain the EU's renewed claim to leadership in Southeastern Europe.