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Verzonden: woensdag 16 februari 2000 0:18
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"Duma": West will find out who the Albanian terrorists are

February 15, 2000

Terrorist turn the weapons against the patrons <http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/sofija.jpg>
Terrorist turn the weapons against the patrons

Sofia, February 15 - Albanian separatists turned against those who were their "protectors" and "partners" during the NATO aggression on FR Yugoslavia, said today Bulgarian daily "Duma" in a comment on latest developments in Kosovska Mitrovica.

The reporter pointed out that after alleged disarmament and transformation into some kind of "protection corps", so-called KLA showed again that it had heavy weaponry and that its rockets, grenades and automatic guns are pointed towards KFOR members.

The latest developments are more than obvious proof that the western representatives in Kosovo and Metohija didn't fulfill the job on disarmament of the terrorists, who turn their weapon now against them, stressed the comment.

The representatives of the international forces came to Kosovo and Metohija in order to stop "ethnic cleansing" of the Albanians, but they actually caused persecution of Serbs and other non-Albanians, with tragic consequences, says Bulgarian newspaper.

.ıe UN, OSCE and NATO, warns Duma reporter, allowed the Albanian leaders to deceive them. Now, they are collecting the fruits of their mistake and policy of protection of the Albanians.

It is obvious that any attempt of the international forces to show "some kind of objectivity" causes new violence of Albanian separatists and terrorists. The NATO representatives were competing to show their favor to KLA leaders and to accept them as "statesmen" in Kosovo and Metohija. These are however paying them back now by shooting their soldiers, stressed Duma reporter.

The West will, writes Bulgarian newspaper, find out who the Albanian separatist and terrorists are.

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Elmar Smelling: objective facts on aggression are clear

February 19, 2000

Uncovered lies of NATO countries <http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/nato002.jpg>
Uncovered lies of NATO countries

Belgrade, February 19th - The world public does not yet clearly see the reasons why Serbia was so brutally bombed and why there was a war against Yugoslavia at all, it was stressed in an interview given by a retired German Admiral and one of the leading geostrategist, Elmar Smelling, to the RTS (Serbian Broadcasting Co.) "For the better world" program, while answering the question of what did the US and NATO want to achieve in the Balkans.

"The Germans, and the same goes for the French, British and Americans, still believe, unfortunately, in the claims made by their governments, strongly backed by the media representatives, that this war was unavoidable in order to, allegedly, protect human rights", stressed the German military expert.

Smelling pointed out that in the mean time, however, all around the world, more frequently an opinion occurs that "NATO led the war with insignificant efficiency, but with a significant consequences to the civilian structures".

This kind of NATO is, obviously, not capable or not willing to secure peace in Kosmet, it occupied, said Smelling, adding that the world is ever more frequently wondering "How is it possible that so many people be exposed to violence after the arrival of the forces of the Western alliance to the southern Serbian province and how could have this happened if protecting people

[redacted] true cause of NATO?"

[redacted]y is not NATO doing something now? If it was capable of wasting 11 billion dollars for the war, [redacted]ow come that it is not capable now, or at all willing to pacify this part of Serbia and make way for the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups within the borders of the Yugoslav state community, in accordance to the 1244 UN Resolution.

Claims, better said, lies are being continually uncovered, which NATO governments spread in order to lead people into backing them in fighting this war. This kind of KFOR policy, which does not serve the protecting of human rights, even though NATO keeps saying the opposite, is opening the eyes of the people", said the German Admiral.

The interests of Germany in the Balkans are, above all, economic, because the countries in the East and South-East of Europe are traditionally recognized as an important market for this country, stressed Smelling.

The economic interests come before all other, and the claims that the Balkan countries are, allegedly, incapable of surviving on their own, only serve the purpose of achieving goals of "the great", explained Smelling.

Nationalism, which is still being attributed to the Balkan nations, is, actually, being used to create differences and conflicts, which are being artificially and systematically created and urged, Smelling pointed out.

"Our legitimate interest should be that people in this region should trade and travel both ways, but I fear that these natural and reasonable interests of Europeans, and the German policy, is being pushed away by the fire ignited by the Americans, because they are the ones who do not want the pacification", said the German Admiral.

Smelling points to the fact that for the US it is more suitable that in the Europe "conflicts go on because a conflict can always be used, employed against Europe".

He also stressed that there is economic rivalry between Europe and the US, between euros and dollars, and that "all that weakens euro, and Europeans, benefits the US".

Looking at the present times and the future of the Balkans, the German military expert, who spent his working days in the core of NATO as the head of the MAD intelligence service, stressed that the Alliance became a threat to all humanity because it was, as the most powerful world military machinery, transformed into the blind weapon of the American hegemony.

While answering the question of what were the obligations of the NATO member states towards the devastated Serbia, and who would pay the war damage, considering the fact that there was an aggression against Serbia, Smelling pointed out that the objective facts on aggression were clear, because both in the civil and the international law, a principle prevails that the party which inflicts damage onto another should recompense that damage.

There is an article according to which the damage inflicted through an act in violation of the law must be recompensed, and there is no doubt that the war against Yugoslavia stood in violation of the law, stressed Smelling.

The problem lies, according to him, in the fact that, at the present moment, there is no neutral instance which could or would wish to establish this fact.

Smelling stated that the UN could be this instance, but that they betrayed themselves by founding the Hague ad hoc tribunal for war crimes committed in Yugoslavia. This is a "biased tribunal

[illegible] in a bewildered and blind, aggressive and vengeful manner wishes to charge for the [illegible]ged, and not to exclude some real, crimes only Serbs, sometimes Croats or members of other [illegible]tions."

The International Court of Justice in Hague is very similar, even though this court will, perhaps, do something because FRY approached it with a request to condemn the war. If this happens, and it is the way it should happen, then Yugoslavia could, according to Smelling, ask for war reparations through this institution.

The thing I find could be possible and I strongly recommend is that individuals, societies and juristic persons from the region where the war took place, file legal charges for the compensation of the damages in the countries which led the war against Yugoslavia and which inflicted these damages.

Stressing that one should not falter before the difficulties in this path, ever more so because there are attempts to form a public tribunal in the US and Europe in which the crimes committed during the war by the people responsible within NATO and NATO member states, will be determined, made public and backed by strong evidence, Smelling stressed that the aim is to publicly state a position different to the NATO position it widely spread with the aid of the vast power and funding.

In a word, Yugoslavia, according to the German Admiral, "has the right to seek not only humanitarian aid, but also a legitimate right to request compensation for the damage inflicted in violation to the law".

This must be the basis of an appeal and the condemnation of the German government in Berlin, because Germans, as members of other nations, must recompense the damage, concluded one of the few Germans with such a thorough knowledge of the situation in the Balkans, who did not falter before the media manipulations and official Berlin convincing of the public that "Serbs are to blame for everything" and that they should, thus, be continually punished.

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Verzonden: zondag 20 februari 2000 1:48
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Aan: Ruza Despotovic; Globalreflexion; Dusanka Isakovic
Onderwerp: Albanian snipers opened fire on KFOR troops (http://www.serbia-info.com/news/2

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French media: Albanian snipers opened fire on KFOR troops

February 14, 2000

<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/2.jpg>

Paris, February 13th (Tanjug) - Today, the French electronic media frequently report on the situation in Kosovska Mitrovica, where the terrorists attacked French KFOR troops.

The latest radio and TV reports state that in the afternoon, after "clashes in which an Albanian sniper was killed and five other wounded", a "relative peace" was established. French state-run radio "France Info" conveyed that two French soldiers, as well as two Serbs, were wounded in the conflict.

All French electronic media state that the clashes broke out when the Albanian snipers opened fire on KFOR troops and they responded. KFOR spokesman, lieutenant colonel Patrick Chanliau said that it was the first time that the snipers acted in Kosovo-Metohija. He described the situation in the town as extremely tense.

Today, the AFP quoted lieutenant colonel Chanliau's statement that the snipers were "all Albanian terrorists tending to undermine everything that the international community has accomplished."

Reviewing the situation in Kosovska Mitrovica, concerning the numerous ongoing incidents and clashes since February 3rd, French media remind that ethnic Albanians criticized French KFOR for taking the Serb side in the divided town.

Kosovo-Metohija's sector north, with its center in Kosovska Mitrovica, is under French KFOR command. Some 8,000 troops from six countries - France, Belgium, Denmark, Russia, United Arab Emirates and Morocco - have been disposed in the sector.

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Van: Despotovic Ruza [despot@wishmail.net]
Verzonden: dinsdag 15 februari 2000 1:12
Aan: Ruza Despotovic
Onderwerp: Fw: The New Millennium - Do We Have the Courage of Optimism?

-----Oorspronkelijk bericht-----
Van: Transnational Foundation TFF <tff@transnational.org>
Aan: TFF PressInfo # 87 <tff@transnational.org>
Datum: maandag 14, februari 2000 18:24
Onderwerp: The New Millennium - Do We Have the Courage of Optimism?

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TFF PressInfo #87

THE NEW MILLENNIUM -

DO WE HAVE THE COURAGE OF OPTIMISM?

By Johan Galtung*
Dr hc mult, Professor of Peace Studies
Director, TRANSCEND: A Peace and Development Network
TFF adviser

We are leaving behind a century with a horrible reputation. There have been many manifestations of occidental fundamentalist faith in truths that justify killing, repressing, exploiting and alienating millions, even billions: the colonialism/imperialism spearheaded by this country; genocidal hitlerism and stalinism; the blind forces of world, particularly american capitalism now even presenting itself as "globalization"; the (also occidental) islamic, counter-fundamentalism; and some similar practices in Japan and China. There has been an increasing litany of war and violence, some of it today even presented as "humanitarianism".

There were shining lights. Two geniuses, Freud and Jung, penetrated the individual and collective human subconscious. A third genius, Gandhi, followed by King Jr and Mandela, explored the enormous potential of nonviolence. The first two, both Westerners, probed the roots of evil in the darkest recesses of the soul; the other three, none of them western whites, expanded the perimeters of the soulforce of ahimsa, nonviolence. Freud, Jung and Gandhi gave us the theory and practice to overcome the lament of St Paul: the evil I do not want to do I do--because I am driven by the subconscious!--and the good I want to do I leave undone--knowing nothing of nonviolence! Important insights for the International Year of Culture of Peace and Nonviolence!

Some centuries ago enlightened people came to a conclusion that ushered in a new era: the system of the past, feudalism, had to yield and eventually go. Feudalism blocked individual expression, the new economic forces that did not necessarily originate with Church and Nobility, and harbored an enormity of repression, exploitation and alienation. Slowly it yielded, but in our yin- yang world nothing is black or white: individualism begat egoism, enterprise begat jungle capitalism and democracy begat "one dollar one vote"

electionism.

The system suits the new upper classes by girth rather than birth, well protected by states ready to fight wars in their interest, and the corporate press with its new censorship of marketable minds. New problems demand new approaches, but no nostalgic return to feudalism.

Today we may come to a similar conclusion: there are two systems that have to yield and ultimately to go; statism as a dominant carrier of wars in the world system, and capitalism as a dominant producer of misery at the bottom of the world system. They are intimately linked to the preceding evil of feudalism. Some feudal lords, stripped of land and serfs, became the heads of armies, excellencies became the heads of foreign ministries, and the CEOs of major enterprises. They carried crazy ideas: what was good for them was also good for the people even when victims of the wars of conquest and exploitation; their peace was the best peace obtainable; world peace is the sum of negotiated deals among the lords; benefits will trickle down; that they were accountable both for and to the people. They usually turned out to be neither one nor the other.

They carried important, ugly baggage in their subconscious. They see each conflict as an opportunity for a new deal among the strong waging wars, running the UN and serving the dominant companies. In the concepts of "Great Power" and "Superpower"--at two, and particularly at one with no balance--feudalism and statism produced an offspring worthy of them both, with all the power and privilege of veto and monopoly of ultimate power. Or so they think. The only remaining superpower may now have gone too far: Seattle was emblematic. Why were 100,000 in the streets, with some of the world's best professionals backing them? Simply because the corporate press gives a wrong image, and "democratic" elections fail in voicing key problems.

Two systems to go, two alternative systems coming up: the two major forms of "neither State nor Capital" civil society.

First, an alternative territorial system: local authorities all over the world, maybe two million of them, cities, towns, villages - municipalities in general. They are diverse, in general accommodating all genders, generations, classes; sometimes also races and nations. They are mini-societies, do not have armies and are using economic and increasingly cultural power rather than military power.

They can easily confederate into circles of cooperation. They are the alternative to the 200 states that have capitulated to international capital and "globalization" = americanization. They could increasingly take on the most important task of them all, neglected by the corporate world: guaranteeing subsistence for every body on earth, based on alternative technologies, local credit and money, cooperative rather than competitive economies.

Second, an alternative non-territorial system: NGOs, non- governmental organizations; well above 10,000 in numbers. They are less diverse being instruments of values and interests. They showed their immense power giving the world such instruments as the anti-personnel land mine treaty (Ottawa), the international criminal court (Rome) and the debt forgiveness instruments (Cologne). Governments still signs, but where non-governments manage to lead non-governments tend to follow. They can easily organize massive boycotts, of corporations (Deutsche Shell spoiling the North Sea), of countries (France testing nuclear arms). They take over, with the women, where the power of the working class in providing dignity is now waning.

A little glance at the media: the territorial answer to corrupt corporate media is the local bulletin in the shopping center, well researched; the non-territorial answer is already on the Internet. For sure democratic governments will only be too happy that the free word can still find an expression.

A glance at world politics: LAs and NGOs are indispensable components in a global, transnational, democracy. Only they can be the carriers of alternative, cooperative security. Only they can articulate the ways and means of sustainable development.

Two systems waning--but not yet. Two systems vexing: the process is already there. The waning may learn from them. We can all be active in all these complex processes. The purpose: basic needs, basic human rights, future and hope for us all.

A very concrete goal that covers much of what has been said above would be globalization of human rights. With the state waning in many corners of the world, having neither the moral nor the economic basis to be the guarantor of human rights, we should search for ways in which the focus on the local level and on the NGOs advocated above could be hitched to a UN reform for global governance and a focus on basic human needs and rights. The task of implementing the rights coming from the world central authority- -in the future some kind of World Parliament--could be gradually shifted from abusive states to local authorities and NGOs worthy of this important task.

The emerging GLOBAL CITIZEN has a right to expect:

- that his/her opinion matters and has an impact;
- that there is protection against major violence;
- that efforts are made to provide livelihood for all; and
- that he/she can feel at home culturally, spiritually.

More concretely, the expectations could be translated into increasingly concrete entitlements and duties, relative to a UN- based world central authority for soft global governance:

- a global citizen is ENTITLED to free expression of how world society should be run, free assembly, and representation through free and secret ballot in something like a United Nations People's Assembly; and the DUTY to participate in elections;

- a global citizen is ENTITLED to protection against violence in the sense that all will be done to transform conflicts before they become violent, that violence is contained, that violence exercised by a world central authority will be minimal; and has the DUTY to serve in peace-keeping by peaceful means, military and/or civilian;

- a global citizen is ENTITLED to livelihood through access to gainful employment with income sufficient to provide for the basic material needs; and the DUTY to pay global taxes;

- a global citizen is ENTITLED to cultural identity based on old and new cultural material, with no right to impose his identity, but with a DUTY to show respect when engaging in dialogues with others about their identities.

This is all within the human rights tradition, but articulates human duties in addition. In the stato-cratic system they were taken for granted. The duty to VOTE for a world central authority assembly like a United Nations People's Assembly, to SERVE in peacekeeping forces, to PAY global taxes and to RELATE to other cultures in a spirit of respect and curiosity would assume their place alongside the rights.

This is still for the future, but a less distant future than people believe. Thus, TNCs may one day wake up and discover that strong NGOs capable of organizing consumer strikes, have entered the global marketplace, taking the place of weak states, and all increasingly backed by world central authorities.

The sky is the limit! - if we have the courage to hope.

* This is the written version of a lecture given at the TRANSCEND - SGI-UK Joint Meeting, Taplow Court, England, 18 December 1999

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Aan: Ruza Despotovic; Globalreflexion
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Belgrade forum - for a world of equality

February 19, 2000

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Belgrade forum - for a world of equality

Belgrade, February 19th - After a whole day's work, the international meeting on "International Relations in the New Century - for the World of Equality" ended in Belgrade Sava Center late Friday. The participants of the meeting, the representatives of 93 parties from 56 countries from all continents, who were the guests of the Fourth Congress of the Socialist Party of Serbia, concluded in a debate that the exchange of opinions, such as the one achieved in the Sava Center today, is needed in order to make efforts towards creating better and more righteous international relations.

In comprehensive and meaningful exchange of opinions, the participants at the meeting confirmed their joint commitment and conviction that a peaceful and stable future of the world at the outset of the 21st century may be built solely on the respect of the principles of peaceful coexistence, equality, non-interference in the internal affairs, sovereignty, territorial integrity and solidarity. They condemned the threat or use of force through the violation of international law, interference in the internal affairs and policy of interventionism, hegemonism and the tendencies of neocolonialism as a dangerous threat to international peace, security and conditions for development. They emphasized the importance of a resolute commitment of all progressive and peace-loving forces to the respect of the UN Charter, of the principles of the Movement of Non-Alignment and particularly the principles of the sovereign equality of states.

Participants in the meeting strongly condemned the NATO aggression on FR Yugoslavia and underlined the full support to the people and the leadership of the FRY and the Socialist Party of Serbia in the resistance they had put up and their commitment to the multi-polar world, in which no country could impose its will to the ones smaller in size and power.

The similarity in opinions and the awareness of the need to deepen knowledge and relations has led most of the participants to support organizing of similar assemblies, titled the "Belgrade forum", which would be held in different countries, each or every two years.

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Twin Cities Hearing of the International War Crimes Tribunal

March 4th Program to Explore the Recent U.S./NATO War in Yugoslavia Was it an avoidable war? What were the crimes? Who are the criminals?

"An Exploration of the War in Yugoslavia," a program open to the public and free, to be held on Saturday March 4, 2000 from 9:00 a.m to 1:00 p.m. at William Mitchell College of Law, 875 Summit Ave. in St. Paul, will explore the recent war in Yugoslavia.

This program is part of a series of public meetings, called tribunals, being held to explore the recent war in Yugoslavia. The tribuanls have been initiated by the International War Crimes Tribunal of the International Action Center, a grassroots movement started by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark.

The U.S. and NATO launched a nearly three-month-long bombing campaign against Yugoslavia in March 1999, and thousands of NATO troops now occupy Kosovo.

Speakers will testify about the role of the media, the Rambouillet Agreement, the breaking of national and international law, and will provide eyewitness reports--with a photo exhibit--on the damage to the people and property of Yugoslavia.

Among the questions to be discussed are: Was the U.S./NATO intervention in Yugoslavia humanitarian? Were the real goals ecomonic and military control of the region, as many have maintained? What is the role of the International Criminal Tribunal on Yugoslavia at The Hague?

The speakers will include:

Christopher Black, a Canadian lawyer who has researched the character of the International Criminal Tribunal at the Hague regarding the former Yugoslavia.

Tom Bottolene, a local activist from the Alliant Action vigils at Alliant Tech System, a local weapons manufacturer of depleted uranium bullets and cluster bombs.

Marie Braun, a local activist who has focused in part on the devastating effects of depleted uranium.

Peter Erlinder, a professor at the William Mitchell College of Law and expert in International Law.

Maria Filifer is an anthropologist specializing in the Balkans, Europe and the Mediterranean area. Her work focuses especially on the Balkan region.

Sara Flounders, co-coordinator of the International Action Center and a participant in a fact-finding delegation to Yugoslavia during the U.S./NATO bombing.

Sam Krstich, a member of the Twin City Serbian community and recent visitor to Yugoslavia.

gela McCaffrey, of the Hamline Legal Clinic, moderator.

Mary Shepard, Women Against Military Madness Member who has studied the role of the media in the preparation and conduct of the war in Yugoslavia.

Raju G.C. Thomas, a professor of Political Science at Marquette University who testified at the 1999 Paris War and Justice Conference on Yugoslavia.

Dule Vicovac, a graduate of Hamline Law School in May 1999 and a co-coordinator of Project Kosovo.

Sponsored by Women Against Military Madness Yugoslavia Committee. Phone: 612-827-5364; E-mail: WAMM@mtn.org; Web Site: www.worldwidewamm.org <http://www.worldwidewamm.org>

Co-sponsors include: Women's Political Alliance, Pax Christi, Friends for a Non-Violent World; Veterans for Peace, Minnesota Chapter #27; Anti-War Committee; May Day Bookstore; circlevision.org (location of Tribunal web page--coming soon), the World Federalists; the National Lawyers Guild, Minnesota Chapter; and others.

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18 FEBRUARY 2000

SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

CLARK: U.S. TROOPS NEEDED IN BALKANS UNTIL MILOSEVIC GONE
NATO's Supreme Commander in Europe General Wesley Clark told members of the House Armed Services Committee in Washington on 17 February that "the key to a peaceful resolution and a successful exit from the region for U.S. forces and the forces of NATO is democratization in Yugoslavia and Milosevic's appearance at the international criminal tribunal in The Hague. Until he is taken to trial, until democracy is taken into Serbia, we're not going to see a resolution of the problem," Reuters reported. PM

ROBERTSON: NATO WILL NOT TOLERATE KOSOVA VIOLENCE
NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson said in Skopje on 17 February that the Atlantic alliance "will not stand for violence against our own soldiers or against the citizens of [Kosova], whatever their ethnic background." In a warning to those who might doubt this commitment, he added: "Don't meddle with NATO!" He added that "we intend to finish the job. We came to [Kosova] to create a durable and sustainable peace." He also appealed to the citizens of Serbia to look to Macedonia as a model of "democratic and humane values," AP reported. PM

MESIC INAUGURATED AS CROATIA'S PRESIDENT
Stipe Mesic took the oath of office on Zagreb's historical St. Mark's Square on 18 February. He became Croatia's second president since the country gained independence in 1991. In his inaugural address, he stressed the need for Croatia to join Euro- Atlantic institutions and to promote democracy and the decentralization of political power at home. Mesic planned the inauguration to underscore his intention to break with many of the practices of his predecessor, the late Franjo Tudjman. Accordingly, the ceremony was much shorter and less formal than the public spectacles that Tudjman favored. Mesic addressed his listeners as "citizens," whereas Tudjman preferred to say "Croats." PM

'LARGEST GROUP OF FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES IN

CROATIAN HISTORY'
This is how "Jutarnji list" on 18 February described the 72 foreign visitors who arrived for President Mesic's inauguration. The dignitaries include 12 heads of state from Central and Southeastern Europe, as well as U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer. Albright is slated to have dinner with Mesic and Prime Minister Ivica Racan, while she and Fischer will meet with several Serbian opposition leaders, including Zoran Djindjic and Vladan Batic, to discuss the situation in Serbia. Albright has also scheduled a private meeting with Austrian President Thomas Klestil. Croatian and foreign media noted the contrast between the impressive foreign presence at Mesic's inauguration and the more modest one at Tudjman's funeral in December, where Turkey's Suleyman Demirel was the only foreign head of state present. Most countries sent only their ambassador. PM

WILL CROATIA, ALLIES MEET MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS?
"Jutarnji list" noted on 18 February that the "honeymoon" between Croatia's new government and its Western allies has been long and harmonious. The daily suggested that Racan will seek some quick successes in foreign policy because it might take him a very long time before he achieves successes at home. Reuters quoted unnamed Croatian officials as saying that foreign governments have praised the new administration but "there has been no reaction [from abroad] on the financial level." Foreign Minister Tonino Picula said recently that Croatia wants ethnic Serbian refugees to return but that it will require money to prepare housing and infrastructure for them. "Slobodna Dalmacija" on 18 February quoted Defense Minister Jozo Rados as telling foreign military attaches that he wants a smaller and more professional army. He added, however, that he must consider unspecified "economic and social aspects of a reduction in size of the armed forces." PM

MILOSEVIC RE-ELECTED PARTY LEADER
Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic was reelected head of his Socialist Party in Belgrade on 17 February (see "RFE/RL Newsline," 17 February 2000). He was the sole candidate and received 2,308 votes from the 2,314 delegates. Five delegates abstained and a sixth person cast an invalid ballot. In Washington, State Department spokesman James Rubin said that Milosevic's ouster is long overdue. He added, however, that the U.S. has only limited possibilities to help bring about change in Serbia, RFE/RL's South Slavic Service reported. PM

EUROPEAN MONEY FOR BOSNIA'S RAILROADS
The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has approved a $40 million credit to repair and develop Bosnia's railways, AP reported from Sarajevo on 17 February. PM

HERZEGOVINIAN TV STATION OFF THE AIR
SFOR troops and engineers from the international community's Independent Media Commission (IMC) closed down the broadcasting facilities of Erotel in Mostar on 17 February at the request of the

international community's Wolfgang Petritsch and the IMC, RFE/RL's South Slavic Service reported. The station had been broadcasting without a license. Petritsch's spokesman said in Sarajevo that the move frees up a frequency for the new public television station for the mainly Croatian and Muslim federation. Croatian state-run television will continue to broadcast to Bosnia, "Oslobodjenje" reported. Croatian Foreign Minister Tonino Picula recently discussed the future of Erotel and the Croatian state broadcasts with Petritsch. PM

DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION OF ROMANIA LEADERS REACH COMPROMISE

The National Peasant Party Christian Democratic (PNTCD) and the National Liberal Party agreed on 17 February to have a chairman from one party and a deputy chairman from the other coordinating both groups' election lists for the fall parliamentary elections. The party that has the largest backing, to be determined on the basis of several opinion surveys and the results of the local elections, will have the chairmanship of the alliance. In other news, PNTCD Senator Corneliu Turianu on 17 February announced he is leaving the party and joining the Christian Democratic National Alliance. MS

MOLDOVAN PARLIAMENT DISMISSES DEPUTY SPEAKER

In a move initiated by the Democratic Convention of Moldova (CDM) and backed by the Party of Moldovan Communists (PCM), the parliament on 17 February dismissed Christian Democratic Popular Party (FPCD) leader Iurie Rosca as parliamentary chairman, RFE/RL's Chisinau bureau reported. The vote was 69 to 11. Communist leader Vladimir Voronin said the move must not be interpreted as signifying the "emergence of a new alliance" and that his party's interests "simply coincided with the interests of other parliamentary groups." Last year, the FPCD left the CDM, on whose lists Rosca and his supporters were elected to the parliament. Voronin also said that this ended the "strange" situation in which the PCM, which has a 40-strong faction in legislature, has no parliamentary deputy chairman and the FPCD, which has only nine deputies, had one, namely Rosca. MS

EAST-CENTRAL EUROPE

EU COMMISSIONER TOURS HUNGARY, ROMANIA TO ASSESS DAMAGE

EU Environment Commissioner Margot Wallstrom on 17 February visited the Romanian town of Baia Mare and the Hungarian city of Szolnok to assess the damage caused by the cyanide spill in the Szamos and Tisza Rivers. Wallstrom was joined by the Hungarian and Romanian Environment Ministers, Pal Pepo and Romica Tomescu. At a news conference in Szolnok, she said the EU will not get involved in efforts by individual countries to receive compensation but added that "whoever is responsible for the pollution should pay. " She also criticized the Australian Esmeralda company, which co-owns the mine that caused the spill, saying the company could face stiff penalties. MSZ

...WHILE AUSTRALIAN FIRM DENIES RESPONSIBILITY

Esmeralda chairman Brett Montgomery said in a 17 February statement that "quite clearly there has been contamination of parts of the river system of the region, but there is no evidence to confirm that the contamination and the damage said to have been caused" are a result of incident. The World Wildlife Fund said that hundreds of tons of dead fish have already been taken from the Tisza and Danube rivers. Petre Marinescu, Deputy Director of the Romanian Water Authority said, however, that the death of flora and fauna in the two rivers was not caused by cyanide but by chemicals released into waters to neutralize the cyanide. Hungarian authorities denied that neutralizing agents were thrown in Hungarian rivers. Meanwhile, Romanian Ambassador to Hungary Petru Cordos said on 17 February that jars of fish were thrown at the embassy building, smashing several windows. He added that similar incidents took place last week. MSZ

RUSSIA

MOSCOW POINTS TO MERCENARIES ON CHECHEN SIDE
At a news conference, presidential spokesman Yastrzhembskii produced Ali Yaman, a Turkish citizen who Yastrzhembskii said had worked as a mercenary on the Chechen side, Interfax reported on 17 February. Meanwhile, ITAR-TASS reported that a Kuwaiti citizen had died fighting in Chechnya as well. PG

IVASHOV RAPIDLY FALLING FROM FAVOR?
Following NATO Secretary- General Lord Robertson's visit to Moscow earlier this week (see "RFE/RL Newsline," 17 February 2000), rumors are again rife that Colonel General Leonid Ivashov, head of the Defense Ministry's international relations department, is about to be dismissed. Ivashov's absence from the capital during Robertson's visit--he was in Geneva delivering lectures--is seen by Moscow media as signaling that the Kremlin wanted the outspoken NATO critic out of earshot of the Western visitors. "Izvestiya" reported on 18 February that Ivashov began receiving "tempting offers" as early as January, when he was persuaded to run for the post of coordinator for CIS military cooperation but received "no" votes from Azerbaijan and Georgia. And according to the same newspaper, candidates to replace Ivashov have already been found: defense minister aide Colonel General Vyacheslav Meleshko and Lieutenant-General Nikolai Zlenko, a deputy defense minister and former military attache in the U.S. "Izvestiya" is owned by Vladimir Potanin's Interros group and LUKoil. JC

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Humanitarian spies, Emperors Clothes, Feb 15

by Jared Israel

It appears there are two types of Humanitarian Aid organizations in the New World Order: Them That Steals and Them That Spies. For the thieves, see Soiled Rainbow at www.emperors-clothes.com/articles/martinez/soiled.htm . If you are interested in spies and the liars who cover up their work, stay here.

I have been doing research on the CARE spy scandal for several days. It is a Labor of Sisyphus. No sooner does one think one has dug up all there is to dig then one encounters (if you will pardon the mixed metaphor) more dirt rolling down the hill. CARE has been compromised by this mess, but not only CARE. Also the Australian government, the US government, the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and the Western mass media. Perhaps the Western mass media worst of all.

On Nov 2, SBS TV in Australia revealed that CARE Canada had been recruiting what amounted to spies for NATO in Yugoslavia.

I've posted the hyperlink to the SBS CARE story below. It's worth reading. But before you look at the transcript, I suggest you read the background material because in some ways it's more revealing than the TV show, more damning. As happens often, when Western journalists uncovered this cover-up, they didn't uncover it all.

Spies or Victimized Aid Workers?

On March 31, 1999, three employees of CARE Australia, Steve Pratt, an Australian who headed the Yugoslav operation, Peter Wallace, another Australian, and Branko Jelen, a Yugoslav, were arrested at the Serbian-Croatian border. Yugoslavia charged them with using CARE as a cover to spy for NATO.

CARE Australia officials ridiculed the charges, claiming CARE was completely neutral and that the confession of Steve Pratt, aired on Serbian TV, could only have resulted from coercion. Western mass media supported CARE, presenting the men as Good Samaritans whose only

crime was being in the wrong place at the wrong time and falling victim to Serbian paranoia and war propaganda. CARE had clean hands...

Or did it?

Now comes a TV show, broadcast Nov. 2 by SBS in Australia. It reveals that CARE recruited and paid OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) Verifiers in Kosovo from Oct. 1998 to March 1999. That much is uncontested.

As you will see when you read the transcript, some CARE people justify the OSCE recruiting program on the grounds that the Verifiers were legitimate peacemakers. Alas, this simply does not wash.

Goals of the Kosovo Verification Mission

'Negotiated' (that is, 'coerced') under threat of NATO bombing last October, the Verification agreement let the OSCE send unarmed mediators into Kosovo, supposedly to help defuse tensions. However everything about the Verification mission suggests military intelligence, not mediation.

It was run by William Walker. Walker had no background as a mediator. He wasn't even an expert in Balkans history or current politics. What he did know about was counter-insurgency and black ops. His role in Iran-Contra and his achievements in apologizing for the murderous El Salvador death squads all but prove he is a high-placed intelligence operative. (A factual account of Mr. Walker's work in Central America will be posted on Emperors-Clothes as soon as possible. In the absence of that account, which we have not had time yet to lay out, let me say these facts are uncontested. Period.) The U.S. verification team was composed of employees of Dyncorp, a Virginia company that has grown rich off Government work. At the 1992 Senate hearings on R. James Woolsey's appointment as head of the CIA, Woolsey commented: "I own less than one-quarter of one percent of the -- diluted shares of a company named Dyncorp here in the Washington, D.C. area. And the corporation

has, from time to time, had a handful of very small contracts with the Central Intelligence Agency." Ahh, sweet understatement. Dyncorp's "very small contracts" have included covert work in Columbia and Peru. (Facts on this will be posted shortly on Emperors-clothes. Again, it is all documented). In the case of Dyncorp's work in Columbia, the Clinton administration was accused of using Dyncorp to circumvent human rights restrictions on US aid to the death-squad-ridden Colombian military. So what do we have? We have the head of the Verification mission and his American team linked to covert operations and death squad activities in Latin America. Other than that, they have no qualifications for their work in Kosovo.

Given this command structure, doesn't it stand to reason that the Western (i.e., U.S.) goal was a) to gather military intelligence and b) to establish command-relations with the Kosovo Liberation Army, an outfit whose activities - killing ethnic Serbian civilians and ethnic Albanian "collaborators" as well as employees of the Serbian state such as policemen, power line repairmen, school officials, Yugoslav troops and even state-employed wood gatherers - whose activities are very much like those of Latin American death squads?

Indeed, isn't it reasonable to guess that the tactical similarity between the KLA and the Latin American death squads may result from their having had the same (US) advisors?

In any case this was the Verification Mission for which CARE Canada was recruiting. Not only recruiting, but also apparently paying the recruits' salaries.

Even the Western press has virtually admitted that Walker & Co. were spies. Consider the

lowing from the LA Times:

His [i.e., William Walker's] postings include a stint in Honduras from 1980 to 1982, when the Central American country was Washington's secret conduit for weapons and other support to right-wing Contras fighting to overthrow the Sandinistas in neighboring Nicaragua.

He also served as chief of the U.S. Embassy's political section in El Salvador, another Central American hot spot, from 1974 to 1977, and later as the country's U.S. ambassador from 1988 to 1992. As a diplomat in countries so high on Washington's national security agenda, Walker couldn't help knowing something about spying, said John Pike, a defense analyst at Washington's Federation of American Scientists. "Those are front-line postings where he would have unavoidably developed an acquaintance with the capabilities and limitations of intelligence sources and methods," Pike said from Washington. And it would be surprising if Walker's team of ex-military and other experts came to verify Kosovo's cease-fire without equipment to listen in on radio communications, Pike said. "Put it this way: They would be idiots if they weren't doing that," he added. "What are they going to do, read about it in the paper the next day?"(LA Times, Jan. 20, 1999, our emphasis) The Amazing Story of Mr. Pratt, Mr. Wallace and Mr. Jelen

So we had a neutral, Humanitarian Aid organization (CARE) recruiting Verifiers, that is spies, for a Kosovo Mission run by CIA types. Shortly after the Mission ended and NATO began bombing Yugoslavia, three of the Humanitarian CARE employees were arrested for spying.

That was on March 31. At first CARE officials claimed they were not sure of the three men's whereabouts. Then, on April 11, Steve Pratt appeared on Serbian Television, RTS. Here's the actual text of the RTS broadcast, as transcribed by the BBC:

[Announcer] Through coordinated action, the security bodies of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have smashed a network of agents headed by Major Steve Pratt. The named person had been gathering intelligence on the movement of our military and police forces under the cover of the Care International humanitarian organization before the aggression on our country, and, during the aggression, on the effects of the bombing.

[Pratt, recording in English with passage by passage Serbo-Croatian translation] My name is Steve Pratt. I was born in 1949. I was born in Australia and I am the citizen of Australia. Before I came to Yugoslavia, I worked in northern Iraq, Yemen, Zaire, Rwanda, and Kenya for the humanitarian organization Care of Australia.

When I came to Yugoslavia, I performed some intelligence tasks in this country by using the cover of Care Australia. My concentration was on Kosovo and some effects of the bombing. I misused my Yugoslavian citizen staff for the acquisition of information. I realize that damage was done this country by these actions, for which I am greatly sorry. I always did and still do condemn the bombing of this country.

[Television footage shows Pratt sitting in a chair and making the statement; TV also shows Pratt's passport; there are no visible signs of physical mistreatment of Pratt] (BBC, April 13, 1999) The Western media presented a negative view of the RTS broadcast. One AP report April 12th was headlined, "TV pictures of aid worker's spy confession fuzzy: Tapp". In the story Australian CARE chief Charles Tapp dismissed the RTS broadcast because Pratt was shown in profile, because it was impossible to see his eyes and because his confession was not very specific. (He said "confession" should be put in "immense inverted commas".) An Agence France Presse story on the 12th was headlined "Yugoslavs forced our man to confess to spying."

Amidst this reporting, which amounted to anti-Yugoslav propaganda, the real story was simply ignored by most of the media; where it was covered it was scornfully dismissed.

at story, which broke April 11th in the Australian Sunday Telegraph, quoted Steve Pratt's other, Mrs. Mavis Pratt, concerning Pratt's past activities. I have not been able to see a copy of he Sunday Telegraph story. Fortunately a few sentences are quoted in a few places. One is an AP dispatch issued hours after the Sunday Telegraph report. According to the AP, Mrs. Pratt told the Telegraph that her son had worked for CARE in Iraq:

"He was letting the U.N. know what Iraq was doing, he was observing, so Iraq put a price on his head and they had to get him out of there quickly." In other words, he had been a spy.

Dishonor Thy Mother

How might one expect CARE executives to have responded to Pratt's confession and Mrs. Pratt's statement?

CARE presents itself as a politically neutral, humanitarian organization. Doesn't that suggest CARE leaders should have adopted a cautious, neutral approach? Perhaps said they have nothing but respect for the arrested men and established a fund legal expenses? Wouldn't any other approach compromise their neutrality and raise questions about their motives?

And what about the mass media? Since governments do employ spies, since to be effective, spies have to have some kind of cover, wouldn't it make sense to present the story in a factual manner and not use journalistic techniques to sway public opinion?

CARE and the media lash out at Yugoslavia

Let's look at the April 11 AP story, starting with the headline. The headline may be the only thing one reads and even if one reads further, the headline colors one's view of the rest.

What sort of headline would logically go with this story? Maybe something like:

Mom Says Arrested CARE worker Spied Before

Instead, AP chose:

CARE says Serbian spying 'confession' obtained under duress

This is a very strong statement. By making it the headline, AP lent it credibility. Did it deserve such credibility?

The RTS broadcast with Pratt's confession had just been aired. What could Charles Tapp or anyone else at CARE actually have known about this case?

If Pratt had told them he was a spy, they would know. But if Pratt was a spy and told nobody, how could they have known?

Therefore Tapp's denial is either a) a lie (because he knew Pratt was a spy and therefore denied it) or b) pure speculation (because he had no way of knowing whether Pratt was innocent or guilty.)

So what's the point of the headline? By using the phrase "obtained under duress" the headline creates a picture in the reader's mind - of threats and torture. Though the body of the article offers no factual basis for this charge, the headline has a powerful impact.

Note that 'CARE' is not a person but an organization; how can CARE 'say' anything? By quoting 'CARE' instead of a CARE executive, the AP story capitalizes on Westerners' impression of

ARE, the organization: neutral, selfless, honorable. A CARE spokesman might lie - but 'CARE' self? Never.

Compounding the Question

Note that by jumping to the question of how the confession was obtained (supposedly 'under duress') the AP story gives the (false) impression that Pratt's innocence is an established fact.

The sleight of hand technique used here is similar to the compound question. A familiar example: "Do you still beat your wife?" The use of the very aggressive "do you still" obscures the fact that the main charge is unproven: we have not been shown that you ever beat your wife. Similarly here, by stressing the manner in which the (allegedly) false confession was obtained (that is, "under duress") the headline obscures the fact that we have been shown no evidence the confession was false.

Let's move onto the first paragraph in the article:

The aid agency CARE Australia on Monday said its field worker Steve Pratt's alleged spying confession broadcast by Serbian television was made under duress. This is just a repeat of the headline. Bad journalism, unless they want us to learn this statement by rote. Will there be a quiz?

Here's paragraph two:

CARE and the Australian government demanded immediate access to Pratt and his colleague, Peter Wallace, who were detained by Yugoslav authorities March 31 after they left Belgrade for Montenegro to help refugees. Still not quoting actual people, the AP adds a second institution, the Australian government, by way of additional confirmation. The Yugoslav offense is so great, all institutions are speaking out.

Moreover, by telling us these institutions have "demanded immediate access to Pratt" and Wallace, the article suggests Yugoslavia is denying such access. This in turn suggests the Yugoslavs must have something to hide - such as evidence that Pratt has been beaten. Note that there is no effort, here or elsewhere in the article, to discuss the normal procedure for allowing access to men accused of spying for a group of nations who are, in grave violation of international law, bombing your country.

The paragraph also includes the statement that the arrested man had been arrested after they:

left Belgrade for Montenegro to help refugees. (My emphasis) How could the AP possibly know why Pratt, Wallace and Jelen had left Belgrade? Couldn't they have left to spy elsewhere? Or to escape detection? By asserting their humanitarian motives without evidence, the article strengthens the reader's impression that the men are innocent.

A little further down, a CARE official is cited by name for the first time:

CARE Australia's emergency coordinator, Brian Doolan, said threats may have been made against local staff or against Wallace to extract the confession. (My emphasis) 'May have been made.' Two thoughts on this: a) Doesn't the use of 'may' completely contradict the headline and first paragraph, which have 'CARE' (speaking as if it were a person) saying the confession WAS obtained under duress and b) isn't it true that it is always possible that a confession 'may' have been extracted based on threats?

Since by this point we've been told several times that Pratt was forced to confess, I would bet many readers wouldn't notice the use of "may".

ne article continues as follows:

Doolan said the claims made against Pratt were "absolute lunacy." If Pratt "may" (which suggests 'may not') have confessed under duress, why is Doolan sure the charges are lunacy? The AP ignores this obvious contradiction. Nor does it try to bring some balance to the story by talking to someone from the Yugoslav side, for example a Yugoslav security official. Such a person might ask: "Since it's obvious that Mr. Pratt could be a spy without Mr. Doolan knowing, how can Mr. Doolan be so sure the charges are lunacy?"

And so the article continues for eight (8) more paragraphs, strengthening the impression that Pratt must be innocent until we get to the end, where Mrs. Pratt is quoted. But readers are not permitted to judge Mrs. Pratt's words for themselves; they are given a good deal of help by CARE Australia chief executive Charles Tapp who is quoted before and after Mrs. Pratt who attacks the charge that Pratt had previously spied against Iraq, attacks the newspaper that covered it, and even tries to discredit Mrs. Pratt (her sin is being old). Here's how it reads:

...[CARE chief executive Tapp] rejected the suggestion that they [i.e. the arrested CARE workers] were acting for any other organization in any capacity.

Speaking from the Yugoslavia-Croatia border, Tapp also slammed a newspaper report in which Pratt's mother, Mavis Pratt, was quoted as saying her son had supplied information about Iraqi forces to the United Nations during the Gulf War.

"He was letting the U.N. know what Iraq was doing, he was observing, so Iraq put a price on his head and they had to get him out of there quickly," she [Mrs. Pratt] was quoted as saying.

Tapp said Mrs. Pratt was elderly and added, "Frankly, I consider this to be extremely poor journalism." (AP Worldstream April 11, 1999; Sunday 22:06 Eastern Time) When you think of it, the quote from Mrs. Pratt is the only news in this entire news story. The rest is intended to give us a proper news orientation. The AP is evidently anxious to guarantee that readers approach the arrests with the preconception that Pratt and the others are innocent. Why?

As for CARE officials - their statements are suggestive. Consider: Pratt confessed on April 11th. The Sunday Telegraph printed Mrs. Pratt's statement the next day and within hours AP broadcast furious denials from CARE officials. How could these officials be so sure so fast? Why would they react without taking time to investigate and discuss the matter, including privately with Yugoslav officials? Doesn't such a hasty and violent response suggest that:

Pratt et al were indeed spies; Tapp and Doolan were fully aware that Pratt, Wallace and Jelen were spies because they were themselves involved in organizing such spying; CARE officials were therefore worried that Yugoslav officials or, worse yet, Pratt or Wallace, might go public with more revelations, might expose high-level CARE (and Australian government?) involvement, might talk about CARE spying in other countries, and so on. Thus it was crucial immediately (on Sunday!) to discredit the arrests and especially the public confession. By planting the thought that the confession was made 'under duress' and 'was lunacy' and that Mrs. Pratt's own statement was unbelievable - the hope was to prejudice Western readers against any further revelations from Belgrade or Steve and Mavis Pratt. Honor thy Satellite Phone

Four months later, Yugoslavia released Pratt and Wallace. In a dispatch at the time, the Australian news agency, AAP, explained that Yugoslav border guards had found:

...detailed maps, a satellite telephone and a laptop computer in their car when Pratt and Wallace tried to cross into Croatia. Shouldn't this information have been presented as top news in April? It was not. Instead the media engaged in more preventive damage control. Consider this from the

AP on April 15th:

CARE Australia worker Steve Pratt, who is being held as a spy in Yugoslavia, would have collected some military information, his former boss said today.

But it would only have been to help CARE's planning and would not have been given to any outside body, Tony McGee said... Mind boggling, isn't this? Why on earth would CARE routinely gather military information? The article goes on:

Mr. McGee, like Mr. Pratt a former Australian army officer, said he never took any interest in military installations or troop movements except to the extent that they might affect CARE's safety and operations. Are all these guys ex-Army officers? Doesn't CARE recruit any regular folks? And what about McGee's suggestion that by recruiting (supposedly) former Army officers CARE insures its employees will take no "interest in military installations or troop movements except to the extent that they might affect CARE's safety and operations."

In case people are not convinced that military men would never take an interest in military matters, Mr. McGee adds:

In any event, satellites could provide much better information than anything aid workers on the ground could gather. So Pratt was certainly no spy because former military officers just don't have the military curiosity needed for spying and even if he was a spy the information he would gather would be of minor use. Doesn't this sound more and more like a) Pratt was a spy and b) all these guys knew it?

What is the point of McGee's statement? The only explanation I can suggest is: CARE officials knew Pratt was carrying incriminating equipment and descriptions of troop movements when he was arrested; there was a danger the Yugoslavs would make this incriminating evidence public; McGee was trying to immunize the public beforehand. And once again, the media provided a willing PR forum.

Pratt, Critic of NATO (?)

Here's an AAP headline from April 12th:

Ex Army Major no spy say CARE colleagues

This article tells Pratt's life story, official version. We are told he spent years in the army where he worked in supply until at the request of former Australian Prime Minister and CARE Chairman Malcolm Fraser, he joined CARE.

He what?

How comes an ordinary Army major to be recruited by a Prime Minister? Isn't this in itself a bit suspicious?

The AAP asks no embarrassing questions.

The article goes on to claim that Pratt:

also criticized the NATO bombing, and publicly attacked the destruction of a CARE-run refugee camp which killed nine people. This is intended to prove Pratt's even-handedness. See? He criticizes NATO. (More evidence of his innocence.)

But consider Pratt's actual comments, recorded on March 29 in an AAP Internet Bulletin. He's

/king about the NATO bombing of refugees who were living in abandoned Army barracks:

/I suspect the centers had been located very close to military targets. The report that I am getting that they have probably been caught up in some sort of collateral thing," Mr. Pratt said. The refugees killed were believed to include women and children who were ethnic Serb refugees who fled Bosnia during the 1995 conflict.

"They were not directly hit, they don't seem to have been deliberately targeted."...He said the center where eight refugees were confirmed killed had been located 60km southwest of the city of Nis in an old army barracks consisting of barracks of wooden huts. But two of the nine buildings had been damaged, including one which was burned down, when NATO hit a warehouse about 100 meters away. "I believe (the damage) was accidental..."

Another refugee had been confirmed killed in Kosovo's capital of Pristina in a refugee center close to police headquarters. "Again this was a refugee center too close to a NATO target. I suppose this is the way things are in war but it is extremely sad," he said. Is Pratt "publicly attacking" NATO for the "destruction of a CARE-run refugee camp?" Or is he in fact excusing NATO of any criminal responsibility?

Why do you say 'Preposterous' Mr. Downer?

Two days after Pratt confessed on Yugoslav TV, The Guardian (London) reported that:

The Serbian government's claim that two Australian aid workers missing for 14 days were gathering intelligence has been dismissed as 'preposterous' by the Australian foreign minister, Alexander Downer. (The Guardian(London) April 13, 1999) Imagine you told your neighbor your wooden house was on fire and he replied: "Preposterous!"

Of course, you could be wrong - but preposterous?

How could Downer possibly be sure?

Australian Foreign Minister Downer's statement demonstrates his desire, in the absence of supporting evidence, to prove Pratt was innocent. This puts Downer in good company: Tapp, McGee, Doolan the AP, the AAP and the mass media in general were all trying to convince the public that Pratt was innocent. The Guardian could have contributed to news gathering by questioning Downer: "How can you be sure? Why is everyone so anxious to prove the Yugoslavs are lying? Could this be a pre-emptive strike aimed at preventing people from believing future Yugoslav revelations about CARE's involvement in spying?"

But the Guardian asked no such questions. Apparently they wanted to prove Pratt was innocent too.

Dishonor Thy Mother Some More

While most of the world had no idea Major Pratt's mother had nailed him in the Sunday Telegraph, the word got around in Australia. Hence the following bit of damage control published by the AAP on April 12th:

CARE Australia emergency coordinator Brian Doolan personally guaranteed Mr. Pratt was not spying when they worked together in Iraq from 1993 to 1995. Mr. Doolan criticized Sydney's Sunday Telegraph reporters for speaking to Mr. Pratt's mother, Mavis Pratt, who told the newspaper: "He was letting the UN know what Iraq was doing, he was observing, so Iraq put a price on his head and they had to get him out of there quickly."

e newspaper's story was groundless, Mr. Doolan said. The elderly Mrs. Pratt was confronted rough the fly-screen door by two young women saying they wanted to help her son, he said.

"They (the reporters) seemed to have spun a bit of line and she's given them bits of information, potted information, that she knows about Steve's experience overseas," he said. Huh? Has Downer actually proven anything here?

Forget Thy Mother and Ditto Thy Satellite Phone!

Apparently this was sufficient to eliminate mom because by April 26, in a story on the Pratt/Wallace affair (the news stories generally left out Mr. Jelen since he was only a Yugoslav) Time actually printed the following sentence:

How the two aid workers came to be accused of spying has mystified their families and friends. Isn't this amazing?

Yes, one might argue, but perhaps 'Time' didn't know about the Mrs. Pratt's statement...

I find that hard to believe. Since they were writing a story about Australians accused of spying, wouldn't the 'Time" reporters read what the Australian press (not the mention the AP) had published concerning the arrests? How could they not know about Mavis Pratt's statement?

But let us concede, for the sake of argument, that Time didn't know.

The AAP certainly did know. After Pratt and Wallace were released in September, the AAP published a story that tried to explain the supposedly irrational Yugoslav conviction that the men were spies. In it, the AAP admitted that:

Serb authorities had intercepted Pratt's reports on troop movements, but added that these reports:

were designed to help Aid agencies, not NATO's air strikes. How could anyone think otherwise? the Yugoslav authorities must be paranoid.

AAP adds:

There were other allegations that Pratt spied on Iraq for the United Nations while he was working there for CARE Australia. These "other allegations" were the ones raised by Mrs. Pratt. Does the AAP see fit to mention her name? It does not. Instead it goes on to answer the anonymous allegations:

...the Army said Pratt had never undertaken intelligence work during his military career... Do you find this convincing? If Pratt was a spy would you expect the Australian Army to admit it?

Arguments like this have no merit as arguments. If you isolate them from the larger text, they look ridiculous. But within the context of a barrage of propaganda, they do have an effect. Here's how it works:

The AAP and other Western media take meaningless statements that sound like arguments. They put this empty babble in the appropriate place for real arguments. They string several such arguments together and they do this over and over again and in this way, by heaping one pro-establishment pseudo-argument on top of another (though never offering real evidence) the reader is trained into a sort of glaze, thought dissipates, the proper impression is planted and lingers.

ling for ethical bankruptcy

The AAP story closes with an amazing statement. Referring to Peter Wallace, who had just been released along with Steve Pratt, the article states that:

His family, like Pratt's, were shocked when he was accused of being a spy. (Our emphasis. AAP General News, Sept. 2, 1999) Is it unreasonable to suggest that CARE, the mass media and the Australian government had fashioned a convenient cover story and Mrs. Pratt statement did not fit, so it was edited out?

Here is the hyperlink to the SBS TV show: http://www.sbs.com.au/dateline/transcript.html

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KFOR, Snipers and Lies, Nebojsa Malic, Feb 15

February 15, 2000

This weekend, NATO's Kosovo occupation force faced coordinated and serious Albanian attacks for the first time. The very concept that their wards, allies or protégés - whichever way the Albanians have been thought of since the late 1980s - might be shooting at them deliberately has apparently been too complex for NATO commanders to understand. Either that, or they have deliberately chosen to lie, deceive and deny everything that might bring into question the assumed righteousness of NATO, the Albanians victim status and the Serbs' position as the absolute villain. Whether NATO commanders and their political leaders are malicious or plain stupid does not matter much, for they act as if they were both, indeed.

Seeing that the Mitrovica Serbs will not give up their ancestral homes without a fight, and being that its legions of thugs fight heroically only when the Serbs cannot or will not defend themselves, KLA has decided to attempt another approach in Mitrovica. This weekend, it tried to frame the Serbs by attacking KFOR with sniper fire. Its units attempted to cross the Ibar again. Its propaganda machine kicked into high gear with claims of hundreds more Albanians "ethnically cleansed" by the evil Serbs across the river. KFOR foiled the first two plans by taking out the snipers and stopping the Ibar crossing with warning shots. The UN has discredited the "ethnic Albanian human rights center's" claims by saying that not one Albanian has registered as expelled in the past week. Of forty-six people arrested for violence in Mitrovica yesterday, *forty-five* were Albanians.

That ought to be enough to convince any observer as to who initiated, perpetuated and escalated the violence in Kosovo. Anyone with eyes, ears and a functioning brain, that is.

State Department's spokesman James Rubin, who recently announced his resignation in order to spend more time with his expectant wife, in a press statement Monday blamed "both ethnic Albanians and Serbs for incidents in the city." [AP, *U.S. Condemns Violence in Kosovo*, February 14]

Incidents? Albanian thugs shot and wounded two KFOR - NATO soldiers, shooting from the Serb side of town to provoke a KFOR response! In a mind-boggling display of arrogance and stupidity

all in one package, Rubin first admitted that all five snipers were Albanian, then stated that "It should be very clear that the confrontation is coming from both sides." *How? From what?*

In a move that would probably be called the "Milosevic twist" in verbal ballet, Rubin then calmly accused no other than Slobodan Milosevic (!) for this KLA onslaught.

> "We need to impress upon the parties their responsibility to deal with the hatreds and animosities that have been built up" and stoked by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade.
> "When things go bad, he feels like he had a good day," said Rubin.
> [*AP*, see above]

Rubin could be insinuating that he is a telepath and thus knows Milosevic's feelings at any given moment. Or he could be clairvoyant and somehow intuitively *know* that Milosevic is really responsible for all and any hatred and racism in Kosovo. Both these claims are so obviously ridiculous that they are not worth debating. More likely, he was trying to excuse the inexcusable by pinning it on Milosevic without any evidence or even justifiable suspicion, as both he and his wife have been prone to doing for years. Rubin's resignation came not a second too soon - though perhaps a moment too late.

Alas, Rubin was not the only one this side of the Atlantic either deliberately misleading or deprived of higher brain functions. In a shocking, stunning and lie-laden report from Kosovo in Tuesday's *New York Times*, Carlotta Gall - ordinarily a veteran spin-master with years of experience in making thugs into heroes and bandits into freedom fighters - added another brick to the Mendacity and Stupidity Monument.

>From headline to footer, her story [NYT, *Kosovo Peacekeepers Warn That Extremists 'Want Peace to Fail'*, February 15, 2000] ignores reality, perverts the facts and shamelessly hawks fabrications and raw propaganda.

First of all, she assigns blame to phantom and faceless "extremists." It is easy to deduce who this is aimed at, since only Serbs have been presented as capable of any wrongdoing so far.

Then comes the shocking statement by senior UN and KFOR officials, who fear that "ethnic relations will be poisoned permanently." How would one call all the ethnic cleansing, bombing and terrorism that had happened so far - a friendly debate? Besides, "ethnic relations" do not explain why KLA snipers shot at KFOR!

The following statement is real, and as stupid as it sounds:

> General de Saqui de Sannes, [French commanding officer] who has *blamed the violence on both sides, said individuals* were instigating attacks purposely to escalate the violence and to destroy the *last multiethnic town* in Kosovo where Serbs and Albanians are still living side by side, if uneasily.
> "There are extremists who want the peace to fail," he said in an interview at his headquarters. While the violence consists of "*isolated acts*," he said, the strategy is to escalate tensions and *intolerance*. "I am worried that we may be in the process of an escalation of intolerance," he said.
> *Some* Albanians have wanted to push the Serbs in northern Mitrovica and beyond out of Kosovo, and some Serbs have wanted to do the opposite-to push the Albanians remaining among them south of the Ibar river, which divides Mitrovica, *in order to create a pure Serbian area in northern Kosovo*, he said. "The people are hostages to this," he said.
> [See NYT reference above. My emphasis]

Mitrovica is the last multiethnic town simply because there are still Serbs there. Obviously, where

there are no Serbs, there is no ethnic violence. Does that mean Serbs provoke violence wherever they are, or that Albanians are so determined to get rid of all the Serbs they refuse to stop until this is accomplished? And which one of the thoughts above is overtly racist, by the way?

Secondly, while it is self-explanatory that Albanians should expel the Serbs, the *Serbs* are accused of wanting an "ethnically pure" area. This is vicious, racist slander, pure and simple. Moreover, the general's civilian colleague, UN high official Mr. Marcone, suggested yesterday was a "bad day for the Albanians," but that some Serbs will soon be arrested as well. *For what*? For being Serbs? They haven't done anything already - unless they are being arrested for what they may think of doing at some point in time. That would exemplify Western justice, indeed.

Now Gall lays out a blatantly false chronology of events. Allegedly, Albanians gathered around a French guard post *after* a grenade attack on Albanians in North Mitrovica. Then, they "engaged the French in heavy firefights" for "whatever reason." Two Frenchmen were wounded "in the resulting melee." The French then searched some houses [unclear where] and found weapons, including a Kalashnikov assault rifle under an old lady's skirt. Meanwhile, 30 Albanians tried to cross the Ibar, but were "deterred with warning shots."

The way these lies are presented is illuminating. But so are some of the lies themselves. There is one piece of real news that Gall does reveal - and I cannot figure out why - that explains everything, though not the way she intended, I suspect. The following passage spells out who was responsible for the attack, and how KFOR chooses to react to this information:

> ...Thousands flocked today to the burial of the one man killed by French troops during the fighting Sunday.
> Avni Haradinaj, 35, a former guerrilla fighter of the Kosovo Liberation Army and a *local hero*, was buried with full honors by his former comrades in arms. His coffin, draped in the red Albanian flag, was carried up the hill to the edge of a wood outside the city, through a crowd of some 3,000 mourners.
> The Albanian mayor of Mitrovica, Bajram Rexhepi, who said *he had been a good friend of the dead man*, said Mr. Haradinaj was unarmed when he was shot by French soldiers and was in Mitrovica visiting his sisters. "There were four people with him and they explained that he had no weapon at the moment he was killed," he said.
> General de Saqui de Sannes insisted that Mr. Haradinaj was armed and was shooting at the soldiers when he was shot.
> The general tried to reassure the Albanians of French neutrality. "*If we were shot at by Albanians, it is difficult to arrest Serbs*," he said.

Let me get this straight - the general actually *apologizes* for his troops shooting a KLA sniper in self-defense by saying they *couldn't just arrest Serbs*? What is he, an idiot?

The weekend events bore all marks of an organized operation. *Five* snipers shooting at KFOR, while their compatriots cross the river. Forty-five Albanians arrested, all men of fighting age? Now we find out that one of the snipers, Haradinaj, was a friend of the "mayor" [another KLA thug] and a KLA member. The evidence is overwhelming. The facts are impossible to deny. But they can be obfuscated, spun and ignored, as the French are doing splendidly.

To make matters even more tragic and comical at the same time, the French seized an Albanian ambulance today at a checkpoint in *South*, Albanian Mitrovica. Inside, they found "ten rocket propelled grenades, nearly two-hundred hand grenades and thousands of rifle and machine gun rounds," according to the BBC [*KFOR intercepts big arms load*, 15. February 2000]. AP confirms the figures, adding that the ambulance bore marks in Albanian. Gall mentions only the grenades, but predictably does not identify the ambulance. So, an Albanian *ambulance* smuggling weapons through an Albanian sector, towards the besieged Serb enclave - the case is clear, yes?

Well, no. American top military official, General Shelton, said Tuesday that getting weapons in Kosovo is easy. "You've got a fairly porous border. You've got everything from backpacks to mules that can bring in weapons, but you've got Lord knows how many thousands of weapons that may have been cached in the local area as (the Serbs) pulled out of there." [AP, *NATO Finds Weapons in Ambulance*, February 15, 2000]

What is General Shelton's major malfunction? The only "porous" borders are with Albania and Macedonia, controlled by the KLA. Albania is full of weapons looted from military warehouses two years ago - a fact Shelton does not mention. What he does mention is that somehow "the Serbs" left weapons behind. Left them to Albanians? How thoughtful - but he probably had something different in mind. In my humble opinion, General Shelton sought to somehow accuse the *Serbs* of possession and smuggling of weapons in Kosovo, despite all the facts, evidence and statements to the contrary.

Is that not always the case, though?

In addition to their relentless assaults on the Serbs, the Albanians have now launched a serious attack on KFOR. Instead of recognizing reality and reacting to it, KFOR officials and their NATO commanders call press conferences and blame the Serbs, Milosevic, anonymous "extremists" and various phantoms, apologize to the Albanians, and promise a crackdown on what little Serbs there are left in Kosovo. At the same time, articles about some phantom partition of Kosovo spring up in the Western press [the London *Times* on Monday, *New York Times* on Tuesday - more on those some other time], creating a feeling of some sinister plot from Belgrade at work.

This propaganda gambit may be working, as *no one* has yet expressed anger, consternation or shock with the fact that Albanians still have an abundance of weapons, or that they are determined to cleans the occupied Serbian province - even if that means attacking KFOR itself. Apparently, this is completely normal. And remember, Milosevic made them do it. Somehow. Mr. Rubin, the telepath, should know.

If someone tried to pitch *this* as a movie screenplay, Hollywood producers would laugh him out of town. How NATO, KLA, Jamie Rubin, Henry Shelton and the western press can get away with it is anyone's guess.

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Verzonden: vrijdag 18 februari 2000 0:49
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Onderwerp: 12 (http://news.suc.org/bydate/Feb_17/12.html)

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Is the CIA behind the murder of Yugoslav leader?, IAC, Feb 17

IAC Condemns Bulatovic Assassination

The International Action Center condemns the murder of Yugoslav Defense Minister Pavle Bulatovic. The minister was gunned down in a Belgrade restaurant Feb. 7. The assassination was "part of a chain of organized terrorism orchestrated from abroad," Yugoslav Information Minister Goran Matic charged at a Feb. 9 press conference. It coincided with a new wave of terror against Serbs who have refused to leave their homes in the NATO-occupied province of Kosovo.

Over the past three years at least a dozen Yugoslav officials have been assassinated. Most were members of the Yugoslav United Left or the Serbian Socialist Party. Is this a CIA "executive action" campaign to destabilize the government of Yugoslavia?

Last October, at a session of the information committee of the United Yugoslav Left, Goran Matic had "warned that subversive and terrorist actions are being planned abroad in order to destabilize the country's political and economic system," the Yugoslav press agency Tanjug reported. He charged that Washington's policy would "increasingly rely on destructive and illegal activities ... relying on an existing network of secret agents."

During the US-NATO bombing of Yugoslavia last spring, US missiles destroyed the bedroom of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, and the Pentagon openly declared Yugoslav political leaders to be military targets. This was in brazen violation of the Geneva Convention, which prohibits political assassination. To set the stage for the bombing, the CIA-backed "Kosovo Liberation Army" murdered dozens of Kosovar Albanians, Serbs, Roma and others who opposed secession from Yugoslavia.

As well as being Yugoslavia's defense minister, Bulatovic was a leader of the Montenegro Socialist People's Party, which wants Montenegro to stay part of Yugoslavia. The US and NATO have been encouraging a separatist movement in Yugoslavia, as they did previously in Slovenia, Croatia. Bosnia and, most recently, Kosovo. The Pentagon has gone so far as to warn the Yugoslav government not to "interfere" in Montenegro's affairs. Montenegro has been a part of Yugoslavia since that country was founded.

From the 1961 murder of Congo President Patrice Lumumba through the repeated attempts on the life of Cuban leader Fidel Castro, from Operation Phoenix in Vietnam to the murder of tens of thousands of Latin Americans by CIA-supervised death squads, the CIA and Pentagon have long used assassination as an instrument of war and policy. The CIA overthrow of Salvador Allende's pro-socialist government in Chile in 1973 was preceded by a wave of political assassinations. Nor can we forget the FBI-CIA domestic assassination program—the COINTELPRO murders of members of the Black Panther Party, the American Indian Movement and other activist organizations in the '60s and '70s. There is evidence that Dr. Martin Luther King was among COINTELPRO's victims.

The corporate-owned major US news media have not even raised the question of a US hand in the assassinations in Yugoslavia. Ignoring the Yugoslav government's statements, they have implied the victims were involved in criminal activity—a classic "make 'em look dirty" means of blunting outrage-or insinuated the Yugoslav government itself had carried out the murders. The media made similar allegation about the January murder of anti-NATO Serb nationalist leader Zeljko Raznjatovic, popularly known as Arkan.

This is the same corporate news media that uncritically repeated wild and now disproven Pentagon allegations of mass murder by the Yugoslav army in Kosovo, claims used to justify last spring's undeclared war. They have refused to report non-government efforts to investigate NATO war crimes in Yugoslavia, such as the Independent Commission of Inquiry founded by former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark. They have completely censored any news of the recent US-orchestrated presidential coup in Ukraine, which threatens to bring US troops to Russia's border. This level of media complicity with the State Department and Pentagon has not been seen since the height of the Cold War in the 1950s.

The Bulatovic assassination and the new attacks on Serbs in Kosovo coincide with other bellicose moves by the US toward East Europe and the former USSR. The past few weeks have also seen a pro- NATO coup against Ukraine's parliament, the US Navy seizure of a Russian ship in the Persian Gulf and the State Department's declaration of support for anti-government forces in the former Soviet republic of Belarus. The Pentagon has also revived its "Star Wars" program and is planning NATO military exercises in July in Ukraine, Bulgaria and Estonia. For decades the Washington warmakers have dreamed of the military conquest of East Europe and what was once the Soviet Union. Now they appear to believe they can make this dream a reality. They must be stopped.

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Would Clinton Try to Assassinate Slobodan Milosevic?, Original Sources,

Feb 14

Will Creating Anarchy in Other Nations Become American policy?

By Mary Mostert, Analyst, Original Sources (www.originalsources.com)

February 14, 2000

One of my readers, T.V. Weber, who is very knowledgeable on what has and is happening in Kosovo, e-mailed me a question:

In your February 8, 2000 article entitled "Is It Democracy or Anarchy that Clinton and Blair Demand in Europe? America Found About KLA the Hard Way in Kosovo" you end with the powerful paragraph: "Increasingly, it appears, if voters in other countries don't vote the way the White House wants them to vote, they are treated as enemies and either isolated, sanctioned or bombed. And where does that lead? Quite often to the kind of anarchy that now exists in Kosovo." My only question is: will this become domestic policy? I would write myself off as paranoid, however I have several friends in the mental health profession who insist that I am NOT suffering from that particular neurosis.

My sister Roberta has a little saying about paranoia. "If someone really IS out to get you, you are not being paranoid for thinking someone is out to get you." We have this huge organization called the Central Intelligence Agency which has a budget of nearly $27 billion. We don't know how many people are employed there, nor do we know much about what the people there do. It's a secret. Would the CIA do things that might lead to anarchy in other countries, like assassinating people elected leaders of other nations, for instance? Would any NATO country do such a thing, do you suppose?

Well, spying and spies may be changing since the fall of the Soviet Union, since the reason for the very existence of the CIA, which was created in 1947 with the signing of the National Security Act by President Truman, was to coordinate the nation's intelligence activities. It was primarily concerned with the threat of Communism and the Soviet Union. For the last decade, of course, it has had to find other goals to justify the expenditure of that $27 billion. The British intelligence

ency has had much the same problem.

What appears to have happened is an expansion of intelligence activity in all kinds of areas and some of those areas have really bothered some of the spies working in the agencies. Richard Tomlinson, is a former British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) agent who had tried to tell the people of Great Britain what some of their money was being used for. In 1998 he said, in part, in an affidavit which was posted on the Internet to the horror of the intelligence community: (http://www.anaserve.com/~wethepeople/tomlin3.htm)

In 1992, as the civil war in the former Yugoslavia became increasingly topical, I started to work primarily on operations in Serbia. During this time, I became acquainted with Dr Nicholas Bernard Frank FISHWICK, born 1958, the MI6 officer who at the time was in charge of planning Balkan operations. During one meeting with Dr Fishwick, he casually showed to me a three-page document that on closer inspection turned out to be an outline plan to assassinate the Serbian leader President Slobodan Milosevic. The plan was fully typed, and attached to a yellow "minute board", signifying that this was a formal and accountable document. It will therefore still be in existence. Tomlinson named names, dates and places and added: "This plan contained a political justification for the assassination of Milosevic, followed by three outline proposals on how to achieve this objective." Last week the latest in a series of assassinations or near assassinations took place in Belgrade when the federal minister of defense Pavle Bulatovic was gunned down by someone who was able to "shoot with precision with an automatic rifle." The Bulatovic assassination came only three weeks after the murder in similar style of Zeljko Raznatovic, a militia leader and Milosovic supporter known as Arkan in the lobby of Belgrade's plush Intercontinental Hotel. In early October, on a lonely road south of Belgrade, a truck loaded with sand plowed into a convoy carrying Serbian opposition leader Vuk Draskovic and four others to a Sunday picnic. Only Draskovic survived. Draskovic supported Milosevic throughout the bombing and was critical of other minority party leaders for taking NATO money offered to Milosevic opponents.

Of course, the spin put on all these assassinations and assassination attempts is that they are all Milosevic's fault. For some reason we are all supposed to believe that Milosevic would hire assassins to kill his supporters and cabinet officers in highly public mafia style executions.

Would our beloved CIA do such dastardly deeds? Well, apparently even the New York Times has its suspicions. In a front page story yesterday, entitled, "U.S. Victims of Chile's Coup: The Uncensored File" the Times reports that documents recently declassified by Clinton "make clear for the first time what the State Department concluded from almost the beginning that the Pinochet government had killed the men, Charles Horman, 31, and Frank Teruggi, 24." Horman and Teruggi were Americans who supported the socialist government of Salvador Allende. Those documents indicate that the CIA and the Pentagon collaborated with General Augusto Pinochet, who is now being accused of human rights violations, to get the two men killed.

The Times reported: "U.S. intelligence may have played an unfortunate part in Horman's death," said one newly declassified memo. "At best, it was limited to providing or confirming information that helped motivate his murder by the government of Chile. At worst, U.S. intelligence was aware the government of Chile saw Horman in a rather serious light and U.S. officials did nothing to discourage the logical outcome of government of Chile paranoia." In 1980 the Government was forced to release these documents through the Freedom of Information Act. However, they were heavily censored in black ink, and appeared to clear the American and Chilean governments of any responsibility. Now that Clinton has released the total document, it is increasingly apparent that the CIA was involved in helping the Pinochet regime find the Americans, who were summarily executed by Pinochet's uniformed troops.

On April 23, 1999 when three laser-guided bombs landed in Milosevic's bedroom, living room and dining room, the Serbs called it an "assassination attempt." Kenneth Bacon, Pentagon

[redacted]okesman, when asked if the bombing of Milosevic's home was an assassination attempt, said [redacted]at assassination of foreign leaders was not "US policy."

[redacted] wrote in an analysis of the event (http://www.originalsources.com/OS4-99MQC/4-23-1999.1.html), "Of course, the reporter didn't ask what US policy is. He asked if the purpose of bombing Milosevic's home was to kill him. Bacon didn't answer that question. However, it is doubtful that the decision was made to bomb Milosevic's bedroom and living room to improve his health."

So, to answer T.V.'s question, do I think Bill Clinton and Tony Blair are capable of adopting a policy which is DESIGNED to create anarchy in other countries? Yes. They are. I don't know if it is through sheer stupidity or by design, but it sure is obvious to me that Clinton's expressed determination to "get rid" of Slobodon Milosevic has simply moved from bombing his bedroom in April of 1999 to trying to create fear, distrust and internal wars among the Serbs who haven't figured it out yet.

To comment: mmostert@originalsources.com

[redacted]

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Van: Despotovic Ruza [despot@wishmail.net]
Verzonden: woensdag 16 februari 2000 0:12
Aan: Ruza Despotovic
Onderwerp: Borba English daily - 15.02.2000 (http://www.borba.co.yu/daily.html)

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www.gif (1949 bytes) <http://www.borba.co.yu/images/www.gif>

BORBA YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Borba is a political daily, whose founder is the government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The first issue of the daily appeared on February 19. 1922, but a newspaper under this title has occasionally been printed in Yugoslavia since January 1, 1881.

Borba was the only newspaper published in the occupied part of Europe during the World War II.

On the pages of Borba dominate information, analytical articles, comments, photographs and caricatures and we are the only newspaper in Yugoslavia with a daily supplement in English.

We would appreciate it if you would write us, sending suggestions and comments, because your opinion is highly valued.

We will be with you every day except Saturday and Sunday.

head.jpg (27780 bytes) <http://www.borba.co.yu/images/head.jpg>
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YUGOSLAV PRESIDENT MILOSEVIC MEETS WITH ARMY COMMANDERS

Yugoslav President and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces Slobodan Milosevic met on Tuesday with Chief of Staff Dragoljub Ojdanic and commanders of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force.

The meeting, attended also by Prime Minister Momir Bulatovic and President of the Yugoslav republic of Serbia Milan Milutinovic, reviewed the current military political situation and the combat capability of the army.

By presidential decree, General Ojdanic was appointed to the government and, by Bulatovic's decision of Tuesday, he was made defence minister.

Ojdanic was succeeded as Chief of Staff by General Nebojsa Pavkovic, so far commander of the Third Army.

Pavkovic, aged 54, has held numerous commands, and has been decorated many times for his performance.

As commander of the Third Army at the time of NATO's aggression on Yugoslavia from March 24 to June 10, 1999, he was decorated with the Medal of Liberty, the presidential military cabinet said.

MILOSEVIC RECEIVES DELEGATES OF EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY OF ORTHODOX COUNTRIES

Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic on Monday received a delegation of participants in the international conference of the European inter-parliamentary assembly of Orthodox countries, which is under way in the northern Serbian town of Novi Sad.

The delegation included representatives of parliaments of Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Moldavia, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, Estonia, and Yugoslavia.

Bidding the guests a hearty welcome, Milosevic said their presence and the occasion which had brought them to Yugoslavia were taken as support to Yugoslavia's struggle for freedom.

"Orthodox peoples have been cooperating over centuries, and it can be said that in these relations they always sent the message inherent in relations among Christian Orthodox churches, the message which pertains to the equality of nations and people," he said.

"Freedom cannot be imagined without equality, so that we consider this meeting of yours, its contents, and your presence, as symbolic striving not only for freedom, but also for equality, which is inseparable from it. I hope your messages will contribute to cooperation on an equal basis and friendship among nations and peoples, that they will be a contribution to peace and understanding among peoples and states," said Milosevic.

The visitors told Milosevic that the conference was taking place in Yugoslavia because that country spearheads resistance to the policy of force in the world, and its people strongly symbolize the aspirations of the vast majority of mankind for freedom, independence and national dignity.

They expressed deep admiration for the struggle of the Yugoslav people and the resolute opposition to the NATO aggression, which had been aimed at enslaving Yugoslavia.

Underscoring united moral support to the people and leadership of Yugoslavia, the visitors wished Milosevic and the Yugoslav people to persevere in their progressive striving for a world of equality and peace among people and nations, for their freedom, independence and dignity.

The reception was attended by Yugoslav parliament Chamber of Citizens President Milomir Minic, chamber Committee President Milutin Stojkovic, Chamber of Republics Foreign Policy and Foreign Trade Committee President Tomislav Nikolic and his deputy Zoran Zizic, as well as top representatives of the Russian and Belarussian embassies in Yugoslavia.

PRESIDENT MILOSEVIC RECEIVES MIKHALKOV AND BURLYAYEV

President Slobodan Milosevic received on Monday the famous Russian director Nikita Mikhalkov and the famous actor Nikolai Burlyayev, who have arrived for a visit to Yugoslavia.

Greeting one of the greatest world directors, Mikhalkov, and Burlyayev, as big friends of Yugoslavia, President Milosevic stressed the huge importance of artistic creation and the affirmation of the highest human values, in what the efforts of Mikhalkov have universal importance.

In a cordial and friendly conversation was expressed a high level of proximity of views about

evelopments in Yugoslavia and in Russia, Europe and the world, politics and culture.

The interest of the Yugoslav public and the reception reserved for films directed by Mikhalkov in Yugoslavia demonstrate the identity of cultural points of view that exist in the publics of the two countries.

The famous Russian artists expressed admiration for the struggle of the Yugoslav peoples for their freedom and independence and expressed sincere support for their goals.

The reception was attended also by Serbian Minister of Culture Zeljko Simic, and Jakov Gerasimov, Russian Embassy charge d'affaires in Yugoslavia.

GENERAL DRAGOLJUB OJDANIC APPOINTED NEW YUGOSLAV DEFENCE MINISTER

Yugoslav Prime Minister Momir Bulatovic on Tuesday appointed General Dragoljub Ojdanic as new defence minister, a government statement said.

Ojdanic, aged 58, Master of Military Science, has so far held various command posts, the most recent being Chief of Staff of the Yugoslav army, and has been decorated numerous times.

He was awarded the Medal of Liberty for his performance as Supreme Command Chief of Staff at the time of NATO's aggression on Yugoslavia last Spring, the statement said.

YUGOSLAV 3RD ARMY COMMANDER MEETS WITH NATIONAL DEFENSE HEROES

Yugoslav 3rd Army commander Gen. Nebojsa Pavkovic received in Nis on Monday the most prominent individuals, soldiers, officers, and civilians proclaimed heroes in the national defense from the NATO aggressor and ethnic Albanian secessionists and terrorists from Kosovo and Metohija province.

In the spring of 1999, NATO launched an aggression on Yugoslavia. Air strikes which lasted from March 24 until June 10 killed more than 2,000 civilians and damaged a large number of economic, residential, and infrastructure objects in traffic and the power industry.

"It was an honour for me to have command over people who have filled glorious pages in the history of our nation so that they can never be forgotten," Gen. Pavkovic said, thanking the heroes for their courage, dignity and resolve in defending the pride of the fatherland.

He said the heroes of the defense had awakened the conscience of sleeping Europe and the world and impressed them with their bravery.

E.U. SUSPENDS EMBARGO ON AIR LINKS WITH YUGOSLAVIA

The E.U. Council decided on Monday to suspend for six months the ban on air links with Yugoslavia including international flights by national carrier JAT, Portuguese Foreign Minister Jaim Gama said on Monday.

The E.U. foreign ministers also agreed to set up temporary military and political organs of the

uropean Rapid Reaction Force.

Last year in Helsinki it was concluded that the European Corps should consist of 50,000 - 60,000 troops.

The E.U. Council gave the mandate to an inter-government committee to negotiate with the representatives of six countries, new candidates for E.U. membership - Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria and Malta. It is still uncertain when these countries will join the European Union.

The E.U. foreign ministers are also scheduled to discuss the proposal, which was additionally included in the agenda, on sending 400 more police troops to Kosovo and Metohija due to the sudden deterioration of the situation in Kosovska Mitrovica where ethnic Albanian snipers attacked KFOR.

The first meeting of senior E.U. officials with new Austrian Foreign Minister Benita Ferrero-Waldner since the imposition of political sanctions on Vienna due to the inclusion in the government of the ultra-right Freedom Party, took place without major incidents.

Ferrero-Waldner, a member of the conservative National Party, explained the new government's position on key E.U. political issues underscoring that Vienna would not represent an obstacle to the reform of European institutions nor to the admittance of new members.

She set out that Freedom Party leader Joerg Haider cannot speak on behalf of the government.

The E.U. Council continues work in the afternoon.

YUGOSLAV FOREIGN MINISTRY ON SUSPENSION OF AIR TRAFFIC

Following the decision of the European Union (E.U.) foreign ministers to suspend the ban on air links with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the federal Foreign Ministry has issued the following statement:

"The details of the E.U. decision have still not been announced. We assume that the decision stands as published by the press and that it refers both to the suspension of the ban on European carriers and the national carrier JAT, which means that the E.U. is returning to the bilateral agreements with the FR of Yugoslavia which it had illegally violated.

The suspension of the ban on air links is the result of the pressure of the European public opinion expressed in the Parliament of Europe and other European bodies. The biggest pressure came from the airlines themselves since the sanctions caused them to suffer the biggest damages. The huge business interests of the European airline companies lie in the fact that their potential annual earnings on the Yugoslav market exceed 350 million dollars. European business circles are increasingly unable to suffer the E.U. political sanctions according to the dictate of the UN administration and to comprehend much better than the E.U. Commission where their business interest lie.

We expect this pressure to continue and that all sanctions are lifted since they are the most uncivilized and biggest form of the violation of human rights.

The explanation that the ban on air links was suspended out of concern towards the population of the FR of Yugoslavia, shows that the E.U. also admits that the people have been the biggest victim of the sanctions so that now it is cynically throwing the dust into everyone's eyes claiming

at this was done to help ordinary people.

The European public no longer wants to agree to the policy of sanctions by the U.S. administration and the policy of aggression because it is aware that they are harmful, illegal and inhuman. Sanctions have always been the instrument of the destabilization and are just as anti-European as was the NATO aggression on the FR of Yugoslavia launched under U.S. pressure."

YUGOSLAV AIRLINES JAT READY FOR EUROPEAN FLIGHTS

Today's decision by European Union (E.U.) ministers to suspend the ban on international air traffic with Yugoslavia is merely a realization of their political decision of July last year, Yugoslav Airlines JAT Director General Zika Petrovic said on Monday.

In a statement to Tanjug, Petrovic said JAT expected the official announcement of this decision in the E.U. official gazette, which will precisely define all the conditions of the suspension.

It is still not clear if the sanctions are lifted automatically for all European countries, or if the E.U. states will each do so individually, Petrovic said.

Petrovic said JAT was ready immediately to join European international flights.

BELGRADE AIRPORT COMPLETELY READY

Belgrade Airport is completely ready to take on major international traffic, as it has been modernized with a new automatic system for passenger registration, airport Director General Ljubomir Acimovic said on Monday.

Acimovic said Yugoslav Airlines JAT would most probably start flying to certain European destinations already in the second half of February, and that interested European Union airlines should start flying to Belgrade in about 10 days.

"We expect our national airline will soon fly to Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands, and Italy," he said.

The first foreign aircraft to arrive in Belgrade should be from Switzerland, Austria and the Czech Republic, and in March from Italy and some other European countries, he said.

Acimovic said certain other European airlines would be arriving in Belgrade as of March 26, when the international flights timetable will be ready.

Until March 21 last year, in addition to Aeroflot of Russia, 11 foreign airlines used Belgrade Airport, he said.

Acimovic said today's decision by European Union ministers to suspend the flights ban on Yugoslavia was an implementation of their decision of July 19 last year, which had been blocked by political reasons.

BAN ON USE OF WATER, FISH FROM DANUBE RIVER

Pollution which reached the Danube from the Tisza peaked at 8 p.m. on Feb 13, and cyanide was still above permitted levels along the Danube's left bank in Zemun and Pancevo on Feb 14, the Serbian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Resources said on Monday.

The ministry warned all those along the Danube east of Belgrade not to use its waters. The ministry banned fishing and sales of fish in the territory of Serbia, with the exception of products of fisheries, the statement said.

Fish died on a smaller scale in Pancevo and Smederevo. Measures have been taken to collect and remove the dead fish.

According to the latest results, cyanide content in the Tisza is below permitted levels, the ministry statement said.

RUSSIA, YUGOSLAVIA TO EXTEND LOAN ACCORD

The Yugoslav government on Tuesday submitted to parliament a bill on the extension of an accord reached with Russia on a loan to Yugoslavia for financing the deliveries of Russian equipment, goods and services by the year 2001, and on its expansion so as to include also raw materials and oil derivatives.

The accord on the 150 million-dollar loan was signed for the 1997-1999 period. However, some of the facilities covered by the loan were damaged or destroyed during NATO's aggression on Yugoslavia last spring, while the country's fuel demand has increased.

Moreover, the country's power supply system has to be revitalized because of the aggression, the government said explaining its move.

Officials of the two countries' governments signed an annex to the accord in late October 1999.

E.U. COUNCIL ADOPTS CONCLUSIONS ON KOSMET, DANUBE

The E.U. Council Monday most sharply condemned the latest attacks on members of the international peacekeeping forces in Serbia's southern province of Kosovo and Metohija and the renewed ethnic violence in the town of Kosovska Mitrovica.

Ethnic-Albanian sniper shooters have wounded two French KFOR troops in Kosovska Mitrovica.

The E.U. Council urged all political leaders in Kosovo and Metohija most severely to condemn all acts of violence and use their influence to end the violence.

The E.U. foreign ministers underscored that aid for Kosovo and Metohija would depend on the process of inter-ethnic reconciliation and a consistent implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 in all of its aspects.

The ministers were informed about the appeal of the E.U. High Representative for common foreign and defense policies Javier Solana for the sending of another contingent, of at least 400 policemen, to Serbia's southern province.

The E.U. Council urged the Kosovo and Metohija Serbs to join the so-called joint provisional administration, and the ethnic-Albanian leaders fully to cooperate with representatives of the UN civil mission (UNMIK).

The foreign ministers welcomed the decision of the European Commission to set aside 35 million euros for the consolidation of the UNMIK budget.

In its conclusions on the Danube, the E.U. Council stressed the need for free navigation urgently to be restored.

Since the spring of 1999, the navigation on the Danube has been obstructed as three bridges at Novi Sad, capital of Yugoslavia's northern province of Voivodina, were destroyed in NATO air strikes.

WITHOUT PARTICIPATION IN KOUCHNER'S COUNCILS

These days, fateful for survival in Kosovo and Metohija and for the defense of the sovereignty and integrity of Serbia and Yugoslavia, we call on all citizens to be united, because only in that way we can prevent the further exodus of Serbs, it was said at a session Monday of the municipal assembly of Leposavic from which, because of the general situation in Kosovo and Metohija, strong protests were made to KFOR and UNMIK.

Leposavic municipal assembly deputies demand from the international community to ensure the full safety and security of Serbs and Montenegrins in the entire province and to prevent the intrusion of ethnic Albanian terrorists into the northern part of Kosovska Mitrovica.

From the municipalities of Leposavic, Zvecan and Zubin Potok, KFOR troops should be withdrawn urgently and deployed in regions where terrorists are on the rampage, while the return of the Serbian army and police should be made possible, the deputies said.

Leposavic assembly deputies made the decision not to accept participation in councils and in other bodies and organs to be formed by UN mission chief Kouchner.

KFOR BECOMES TARGET OF ETHNIC-ALBANIAN TERRORIST ATTACKS

Assassinations, attacks in which hand-held rocket launchers are used and stepped-up activities of sniper shooters of the ethnic-Albanian terrorist KLA against member of the KFOR international security forces in Serbia's southern province of Kosovo and Metohija are a new element in the Kosovo an Metohija drama, as a result of which the powerful Western countries' plans "to preserve multi-ethnic Kosovo" are seriously threatened for the first time since the KFOR deployment on June 12 of last year.

The above conclusion is to be deduced from the statements made by French KFOR troops in the area of Kosovska Mitrovica, a town where a genuine war is being fought and the fate of Kosovo and Metohija decided, as many sources claim.

French KFOR troops and commanders say that the KFOR is reckoning with a "new terrorist strategy" of the ethnic Albanians, the ethnic-Albanian "guerrilla is organizing itself" and is a "prelude to an urban guerrilla."

ney at the same time categorically set out that ethnic Albanians are ready to shoot and kill at any time.

The statements show that the KFOR is not at all aware with whom it is dealing in Kosovo and Metohija. The theory about an allegedly "new strategy" of the ethnic Albanian terrorists is totally wrong. It is absolutely not a "new strategy" but the old practice of the terrorist KLA, whose chief goal is to completely ethnically cleanse the province.

It is naturally hard for the French and other Western protagonists to concede the fact, because they would also have to admit that the KLA has not been disarmed and the operation of the disarming of the terrorist organization under the "keen eye" of the KFOR was an absolute farce.

Furthermore, it is a fact that, as Russian General Leonid Ivashov has said, the KFOR has become a hostage of the ethnic-Albanian terrorists, who interpret the tolerant attitude of the international forces as the condoning and even instigating of their own terrorist operations.

KFOR REFUTES REPORT ON KILLING OF FRENCH SOLDIER

A French source in the UN peacekeeping force KFOR denied on Monday that a French soldier participating in the force had been killed in clashes in Kosovska Mitrovica, in the north of Kosovo and Metohija, on Sunday.

The source confirmed that two French KFOR troops had been wounded in the clashes, denying that any of French KFOR troops had been killed as claimed by some media.

The source also said that one ethnic Albanian was killed and seven wounded in Sunday's shooting.

TWO WOUNDED FRENCH KFOR TROOPS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO PARIS

Two French troops participating in the UN peacekeeping force KFOR who were wounded in clashes with ethnic Albanian terrorists in Kosovska Mitrovica on Sunday are to be transferred to Paris late on Monday.

Agence France-Presse (AFP) quoted a statement issued by France's 92nd infantry regiment stationed in Clermont-Ferrand, to which the two French troops belong, as saying that they had been operated after being wounded by snipers and that their condition was not critical.

The regiment has sent about 450 troops to Kosovska Mitrovica, located in the north of the Yugoslav republic of Serbia's Kosovo and Metohija province, since mid-January.

FRENCH MINISTER WARNS THOSE WHO CAUSE VIOLENCE AND CONFLICTS IN KOSOVO-METOHIJA

French Defence Minister Alain Richard warned on Monday that the international forces in Kosovo and Metohija (KFOR) would bring to heel all who want "to revive the conflicts and violence" in Serbia's southern province.

eople who want to "rekindle the conflict and violence between the two communities will be brought to reason with all means at the disposal of the international community," Richard told French private radio Europe 1.

Richard was speaking following fierce clashes between ethnic Albanian snipers and KFOR during which one sniper was killed and two French soldiers wounded.

Regarding the situation in Kosovska Mitrovica, seat of the French-controlled Sector North, Richard recalled that KFOR "had regained control" after the incidents which occurred in this city last August.

He added, "this occurred now as well" since KFOR has returned peace and order to Kosovska Mitrovica following Sunday's fierce clashes in this city.

The northern KFOR brigade, made up of some 8,000 soldiers from six countries and under the French command, is stationed in the Kosovska Mitrovice area.

This contingent contains 3,500 French troops, and forces from Denmark, Belgium, the United Arab Emirates, Russia and Morocco.

SOLANA ASKS FOR MORE POLICEMEN FOR KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

European Union (E.U.) High Representative for joint foreign policy and defense Javier Solana asked E.U. foreign ministers at a meeting in Brussels on Monday to approve an additional contingent of at least 400 policemen for Serbia's Kosovo and Metohija province.

Solana made the request after assessing that the situation the province had rapidly deteriorated.

Under a United Nations Security Council decision, a total of 4,700 policemen should be sent to Kosovo and Metohija, but only about 1,900 have arrived so far.

The European Union said organized crime and mafia activities had been stepped in Kosovo and Metohija, and that only well-trained professional policemen could fight them.

SPOKESMAN RUBIN TRIES TO COVER UP CRIMES OF ETHNIC-ALBANIAN TERRORISTS IN KOSMET

Official Washington has condemned the violence and killings in the town of Kosovska Mitrovica in Kosovo and Metohija and urged all involved sides to end the violence.

State Department spokesman James Rubin, who made the statement late Monday, said he wanted to be precise and stressed that the confrontation was allegedly coming from both sides.

It was one of many Rubin statements which shows that the U.S. takes a protective attitude towards the ethnic-Albanian terrorists and separatists in Serbia's southern province.

Rubin did not at all mention ethnic-Albanian terrorists and separatists as the perpetrators of the latest wave of violence and the shooting at members of the international mission. Press representatively negatively reacted to the fact.

Moreover, with a series of totally untenable assessments presented at the latest briefing in the State Department, Rubin tried in all ways possible to justify the ethnic-Albanian terrorists, once again falsely claiming that what was involved was nothing other than retaliation, for which he said there were justified reasons.

At a time when ethnic-Albanian terrorists are again on a rampage in Kosovo and Metohija, Washington sits with folded arms. It has urged that terrorist leader Hashim Thaqi be contacted, which a KFOR commander has done and used the occasion to ask Thaqi "to use his influence" to calm the situation.

Rubin, who is known for his "very close ties" with Thaqi, used the briefing to repeat the well known lies that the situation in Kosovo and Metohija is calming down.

Asked whether Kosovska Mitrovica was starting to resemble Somalia and could the international mission be withdrawn, Rubin hurriedly explained that the mission in Kosovo and Metohija was not the same as the one in Somalia.

He said that Kosovo and Metohija was different, and then started commending the KFOR troops, which he insisted had allegedly done an excellent job so far.

Rubin then indirectly but very clearly accused the U.S. press of not sharing the opinion about the success of the KFOR mission.

UN TEAM CONTINUES EVALUATION OF DAMAGE CAUSE BY NATO AGGRESSION

An group of UN experts are visiting Yugoslavia this week to investigate possibilities for eliminating the pollution caused by the NATO aggression in four towns of Serbia - Pancevo, Kragujevac, Novi Sad, and Bor.

This is the second stage of an action by the UN program for environmental protection UNEP, and the UN Habitat center, whose mission visited Yugoslavia last summer, led by former Finnish minister Pekko Haavisto, it was announced at the UNEP headquarters.

In a report published in November on the "Kosovo conflict" and its consequences on the environment and settlements, the UN mission identified these four Serbian towns as hotspots that require immediate action and the necessary humanitarian aid.

YUGOSLAV GNP DROPS DUE TO SANCTIONS, NATO AGGRESSION

The Yugoslav GDP for 1998 stood at USD 18.491 billion, according to the latest publication of the Federal Statistics Agency (SZS) System of National Accounts of the FRY, SZS Director Milovan Zivkovic has told Tanjug.

In 1998, Yugoslavia recorded a per capita GNP of USD 1,742, calculated on the basis of the UN system of national accounts.

In 1999, the per capita GNP dropped to USD 1,400 as a result of the NATO air strikes, in which Yugoslavia suffered about USD 100 billion in direct and indirect damages, according to the SZS figures.

e World Bank method was used for the 1998 GNP in USD and the dinar's average rate for hree years, one of 8.36 dinars per 1 U.S. dollar.

Director Zivkovic said the latest publication showed that the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had a per capita GNP of USD 3,050 in 1989, which made the SFRY a medium developed country.

"Regrettably, that country has disintegrated as a result of foreign will, wars broke out in the neighborhood of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and fatal sanctions were introduced against the FRY in 1992 and continue to the present day," Zivkovic set out.

MIKHALKOV, BURLYAYEV WITH BELGRADE AUDIENCE

Famous Russian film artists Nikita Mikhalkov and Nikolai Burlyayev made contact with an audience for almost a full hour at the Russian Cultural Center in Belgrade on Monday evening.

The packed audience welcomed the artists with standing ovations.

In his specific charming and humorous manner, Mikhalkov answered questions put to him by his numerous fans.

Burlyayev said he would take a vast amount of love with him from Belgrade, adding he was certain the love and cooperation between the Russian and Serbian people would be even greater in the future.

MIKHALKOV, BURLYAYEV VISIT BELGRADE FILM LIBRARY

Prominent Russian film workers Nikita Mikhalkov and Nikolai Burlyayev received high-ranking awards of the Yugoslav Film Archives and the Serbian Department of Culture and Education at the Film Library in Belgrade late Monday.

Department President Milisav Milenkovic presented Burlyayev with the Special Vuk Award, awarded to him last year by a jury headed by Serbian Culture Minister Zejko Simic "for everything he did for the Serbian people and Serbian culture in the difficult days of the NATO aggression."

"With the brave act of an artist, humanism and human dignity, by organizing a series of film events Burlyayev stopped the Slav spirit from becoming exhausted in those tragic days," Milenkovic said.

Archives Director Radoslav Zelenovic presented to Burlyayev a plaque of the Yugoslav Film Archives, and to Mikhalkov the Golden Seal of this institution, an award established on the occasion of 100 years of motion pictures, which only some 10 top artists in the world have received so far.

Expressing gratitude for the awards, Burlyayev said he treasured them more that any others he had ever received.

"God has given us these times. It has befallen Serbs to live under unjust bombs. I was in Belgrade for Easter of 1999, and I saw in the eyes of thousands of men, women and children that the fate of the planet was being shaped here, it was being decided whether Serbs will resist and

ians awaken, and then the order which wants to see us enslaved will withdraw," Burlyayev d.

He said these awards also belong to his brethren with whom he had launched the film festival of Slav peoples, The Golden Knight, Yugoslav film workers Jovan Markovic, Purisa Djordjevic, Nikola Majdak, Bozidar Zecevic.

"We will find salvation through love and unity," Burlyayev concluded.

Mikhalkov said he had spoken today with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic. "The atmosphere here is right, in spite of destroyed houses, because the important thing for us is not how to live, but why to live," Mikhalkov said.

"Braca Karic" Academy of Arts Director Dusan Djokovic presented to Mikhalkov a diploma naming him honorary professor of this institution.

Mikhalkov then gave a very interesting lecture on various acting methods.

MIHALKOV ATTENDS SCREENING OF BURNED BY THE SUN IN BELGRADE

Celebrated Russian film director Nikita Mihalkov attended the opening of a retrospective of his films in Belgrade Monday evening.

Before the screening of his Burned by the Sun, Mihalkov welcomed the audience. Serbian Minister of Culture Zeljko Simic and renown Russian film worker Nikolay Burlayev also attended.

The works of Mihalkov and Burlayev will not only remain in our lasting memory but go down in the film history and the history of civilization, Minister Simic set out.

Back <http://www.borba.co.yu/index.html>

Despotovic, Ruza

Van: Despotovic Ruza [despot@wishmail.net]
Verzonden: zaterdag 19 februari 2000 2:06
Aan: Ruza Despotovic; Globalreflexion
Onderwerp: Washington Post a "Useful Tool" for NATO? (http://www.fair.org/reports/post-wa

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MEDIA ADVISORY:

Washington Post a "Useful Tool" for NATO?

Paper's coverage distorts facts about Kosovo war crimes charges

January 28, 2000

When a group of prominent international legal scholars filed a war crimes complaint against NATO for its actions in Yugoslavia, the **Washington Post**'s coverage (1/20/00) was dismissive—demonstrating a poor grasp of international law and the war in Yugoslavia, and relying on an "expert" with a blatant and unmentioned conflict of interest.

The scholars, led by Professor Michael Mandel of York University in Toronto, sent a detailed legal brief to the U.N.-sponsored International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), arguing that NATO leaders committed serious violations of international law during the 78-day bombing campaign against Yugoslavia last year.

The **Post** article, by Paris correspondent Charles Trueheart, curtly dismissed the legal case against NATO: "Most legal scholars say the professors have a pretty weak case, noting that accidental civilian deaths caused by NATO bombs fail to meet the commonly accepted standard for war crimes. Even so, the legal campaign against the Western alliance has taken on a life of its own." The piece goes on to claim that "even the Tribunal's most ardent champions in the human rights community and elsewhere are worried that the case may have damaged its reputation through an exercise in dangerous relativism."

Yet only one such "legal scholar" or member of the "human rights community" is quoted by Trueheart: Professor Paul Williams of American University, who is identified simply as a "war crimes expert." Nowhere in the article is it disclosed that Williams, a former State Department lawyer, is currently a paid lobbyist for the "provisional government of Kosovo" in Washington.

There's no evidence in Trueheart's article that he made a genuine effort to determine whether, in fact, other jurists or human rights experts support Mandel's view that NATO violated international law during its Kosovo campaign. Trueheart could have examined Human Rights Watch's recent announcement that that it will send detailed reports to the Tribunal arguing that NATO's target selections were "disproportionate and should be found violations of international humanitarian law." (**London Guardian**, 1/7/00)

Trueheart might also have noted that no less a "champion" of the Tribunal than its former

resident and presiding judge, Antonio Cassese, has expressed the view (**European Journal of International Law**, #1/99) that NATO violated the United Nations Charter by attacking Yugoslavia without a mandate from the U.N. Security Council: "The breach of the United Nations Charter occurring in this instance cannot be termed minor. The action of NATO countries radically departs from the Charter system for collective security." (Cassese did add that in his view a moral case could be made for NATO's intervention.)

In fact, judging by Trueheart's assertions--"accidental civilian deaths caused by NATO bombs fail to meet the commonly accepted standard for war crimes"--he appears to be ignorant of either the nature of NATO's attacks on Yugoslavia or of the Geneva Convention statutes which make up the "commonly accepted standard for war crimes." This unfamiliarity is disturbing, since Trueheart regularly covers the ICTY for the Post.

The Geneva Conventions would *not* hold a bomber pilot criminally liable if a missile aimed at a military installation--say, an anti-aircraft gun or a munitions storage facility--drifted off-course and accidentally struck a village populated by civilians. Such accidents are not war crimes. In their complaint, Mandel and his colleagues do not cite such accidents as violations of the Geneva statutes. They point to other strikes that were deliberate attacks on civilian targets.

Ironically, some of the clearest evidence that some NATO strikes seriously breached the Geneva Conventions can be found in the **Washington Post**'s own reporting. For example, a front-page article last year by military reporter Dana Priest ("Bombing by Committee: France Balked at NATO Targets," 9/20/99) recounted the decision-making processes behind several NATO targeting decisions. According to Priest, at one point, British "Foreign Secretary Robin Cook questioned strikes on power lines affecting a large hospital in Belgrade. But the group brought him around."

In another episode, shortly before a planned missile strike on the headquarters of Milosevic's ruling Socialist Party--which was located in a residential neighborhood of Belgrade--an internal memo assessing the likely civilian destruction was distributed among NATO leaders:

> Next to a photograph of the party headquarters, the document said: "Collateral damage: Tier 3—high. Casualty Estimate: 50-100 Government/Party employees. Unintended Civ Casualty Est: 250—Apts in expected blast radius."
>
> In short, NATO anticipated that the attack could, in the worst case, kill up to 350 people, including 250 civilians living in nearby apartment buildings.
>
> Washington and London approved the target, but the French were reluctant, noting that the party headquarters also housed Yugoslav television and radio studios. "In some societies, the idea of killing journalists—well, we were very nervous about that," said a French diplomat."

Ultimately, Paris went along. But in going ahead with the attack, NATO appears to have directly breached Article 51 of the Geneva Convention (Protocol I), which prohibits any

> attack which may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects, or a combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated.

The Socialist Party building was itself a civilian facility located hundreds of miles from the site of any military conflict. Asked by a reporter at the next day's press briefing what military rationale lay behind the party headquarters strike, NATO spokesman Jamie Shea could not name *any* specific military function. Instead, he declared that NATO considered "any aspect of the power structure"

Yugoslavia to be a legitimate target, adding that the party headquarters building "contains the propaganda machinery...of the ruling Socialist Party."

The reluctance expressed by British and French diplomats over these strikes apparently stemmed from their concern that the raids in question might represent violations of the Geneva Conventions—or at least that they would be perceived as such. In fact, NATO leaders repeatedly *admitted* that their strategy in attacking civilian targets was to terrorize the population in the hope that the Serbian public would turn against its government and pressure Milosevic to capitulate. In a May 24 interview with the **Washington Post**, U.S. Air Force Lt.-Gen. Michael Short explained the strategy:

> "If you wake up in the morning and you have no power to your house and no gas to your stove and the bridge you take to work is down and will be lying in the Danube for the next 20 years, I think you begin to ask, 'Hey, Slobo, what's this all about? How much more of this do we have to withstand?' And at some point, you make the transition from applauding Serb machismo against the world to thinking what your country is going to look like if this continues."

Short's rather bowlderized list of examples of civilian destruction in Serbia does not fully explain the strategy: As the memorandum published by the **Post** showed, NATO expected its attack on Socialist Party headquarters to kill up to 250 neighboring residents as they slept.

In an another instance, NATO spokesman Jamie Shea declared : "If President Milosevic really wants all of his population to have water and electricity, all he has to do is accept NATO's five conditions and we will stop this campaign." Statements like these have led Human Rights Watch executive director Kenneth Roth to declare (Letters, **London Guardian**, 1/12/00) his group's concern that

> NATO bombed the civilian infrastructure not because it was making a significant contribution to the Yugoslav military effort but because its destruction would squeeze Serb civilians to put pressure on Milosevic to withdraw from Kosovo. Using military force in this fashion against civilians would violate the "principle of distinction"—a fundamental principle of international humanitarian law—which requires military force to be used only against military targets, not against civilians or civilian objects.

But if Trueheart and the **Post** appear uninterested in examining whether NATO violated international law during its Kosovo campaign, that does not mean they are uninterested in the subject of war crimes. In fact, the **Post** considers the Tribunal's activities to be major news when they are directed against NATO's enemies.

When the Tribunal handed down its indictment of Slobodan Milosevic last May, Trueheart's article ran on the front page. Since then, the **Post** has used the phrase "indicted war criminal" to describe Milosevic an average of about once a month. Yet the **Post** has made no serious attempt to evaluate whether our own government violated the laws of war in its air campaign last year.

When the Tribunal was first established, American policymakers hoped that just such a double standard would prevail in media coverage. As Michael Scharf, the State Department envoy who dealt with the Tribunal when it was created, wrote in the **Washington Post** (10/3/99) :

> America's chief Balkans negotiator at the time, Richard Holbrooke, has acknowledged that the tribunal was widely perceived within the government as little more than a public relations device and as a potentially useful policy tool.... Indictments also would serve to isolate offending leaders diplomatically, strengthen the hand of their domestic rivals and fortify the international political will to employ economic sanctions or use force.... Indeed

> [the Milosevic indictment] became a useful tool in their [U.S. and Britain's] efforts to demonize the Serbian leader and maintain public support for NATO's bombing campaign.

It's bad enough that the international war crimes tribunal—much of whose funding comes directly from the U.S., in violation of the tribunal's own statutes (**New York Press**, 1/26/00)—can be described as a "useful tool" of Washington's foreign policy. The **Washington Post** should not serve the same function.

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"Berliner Zeitung": Racak manipulations one years after

April 05, 2000

He made criminal manipulations about Racak <http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/voker0802pristina.jpg>

He made criminal manipulations about Racak

Berlin, 4 April (Mininf) - In the case of the " massacre of Racak " from January 1999 OSCE gave many manipulations regarding the identity of a larger number of the killed Albanians. Searches of the " citizens of Berlin newspaper " in Racak resulted in that the corpses of pleased UCK fighters were obviously removed from the Kosovo village, so that the picture was not clouded by the murder at civilians. These dead ones in the reports of the organization for security and co-operation in Europe (OSCE) were concealed at the same time. Later the UN war crimes Tribunal arranged a list of names, in which the UCK fighters do not emerge likewise into the Hague.

Both representatives of the OSCE and politicians of western states had explained again and again at that time, in Racak a mass execution of unarmed Albanian civilians had taken place by Serbian security forces. The " massacre " is considered as code event on the way into NATO war against Yugoslavia. Searches of the " citizens of Berlin newspaper " had already resulted in that since March 1999 Autopsy logs secretly held of a Finnish pathologist team does not contain referring to an execution scenario.

" It was a savage fight " Yugoslav security forces had attacked Racak on 15 January 1999. According to UCK boss Hashim Thaci so called UCK maintained a code unit in the region " in these days ". Thaci further: " it was a savage fight. We had to deplore many victims." But the boss of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Euro observers in Kosovo at that time, the American William Walker, still explained the occurring on 16 January as a massacre at Albanian civilians. Particularly indignant it appeared over the alleged execution of age different over 20 men in a dry brook bed few hundred meters above the village. Altogether the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Euro observers counted 45 dead ones, with whom allegedly no notes were found that it could concern UCK fighters.

The grave Kadri Sylas is on a remote cemetery some kilometers far away from Racak. Kadri Syla was of the UCK in particular led fighter of the background army. So far it is unsettled why he dropped out of the statistics of the Hague tribunal. Also a any execution under martial law of UCK fighter would be to be examined judicially. Just like the death of Shaqir Berisha, Mehmet Mustafa and Enver Rashiti. All three young men originate from Racak. All three were killed on 15 January. All three are proven UCK fighters. All three are missing on the list of the Hague tribunal. And all three do not have a grave in Racak. Also the Finnish Pathologic Helena Ranta, which examined the corpses of Racak with its team, never got these dead ones to face.

Il Manifesto: OSCE lied about Racak

April 09, 2000

Theater directed by KFOR <http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/110299voker1-r.jpg>
Theater directed by KFOR

Rome, April 8 (Politika) - "There was no massacre in Racak", says today the Italian daily Il Manifesto, citing the results of the inquiry recently launched by the German daily Berliner Zeitung.

"The evidence clearly show what really happened: there was no mass murder in Racak". "Those were probably the bodies of the KLA terrorists who had died on January 15th".

This had happened "only a day before William Walker, head of the verifiers of the OSCE screamed about the slaughter of the civilians, pointing his finger at the Yugoslav Army", reminds Ticiana Boari, Il Manifesto journalist.

The confirmation about the non-existence of the massacre in Racak comes from the report of the Finnish pathologists on autopsy. This report exists for more than a year, but was deliberately hidden from the public. However, it suddenly reached the editorial offices of the German daily, Il Manifesto explains.

"It is obvious that the victims were not killed at close range", confirmed professor Klaus Pueschel, director of the Medical institute of the Hamburg University, who has examined the protocols of the autopsies carried out by the Finnish doctors, upon the request of the Berliner daily paper.

Pueschel also confirmed that the Finnish doctors had not applied the method of the paraffin glove, which would have proven for sure the number of the victims who participated in the armed clash.

The inquiry of the German daily puts in argument the "OSCE reports and the statements given by the American president Bill Clinton", who spoke about "innocent men, women and children who were forced to kneel down in the mud in order to be shot dead". Nevertheless, in 39 out of 40 cases, the results of the autopsies refute the thesis of the mass murder, stresses Il Manifesto.

However, the mystery remains on the real number of the victims, especially on the bodies of the combatants of the terrorist KLA, whose bodies were mainly removed from Racak in the meantime in order not to discredit the thesis of the slaughter of unarmed civilians.

That is why there is no trace of the presence of KLA terrorists among the dead men neither in the OSCE report, nor in the "special report" for internal use, disclosed a couple of days after the bodies had been found.

Il Manifesto reveals another important data: at least 13 out of 45 buried bodies have disappeared from the "cemetery of the martyrs" in Racak.

22/10/99

Genocide blijkt valse grond voor NAVO-actie

WAAR ZIJN de lijken? Waar bevinden zich de massagraven? Waar blijft het forensische bewijs van alle misdaden die de Serviërs in Kosovo hebben begaan?

Macabere vragen, toegegeven, maar daarom niet minder belangrijk. De westerse leiders Blair en Clinton hebben hun ingrijpen in Kosovo gerechtvaardigd met een verwijzing naar de 'genocide' die in Kosovo is gepleegd. De Serviërs, zo beweerde NAVO-woordvoerder Jamie Shea in het voorjaar, hadden tienduizend doden op hun geweten. Onschuldige Kosovaren, mensen die niet waren betrokken bij de bevrijdingsbeweging van het UCK, vrouwen en kinderen waren in koelen bloede afgeslacht. Zei Shea. Het woord genocide nam hij nooit in de mond, omdat hij daarvoor geen bewijzen had.

Ruim vier maanden na het einde van de oorlog blijft het bewijs voor een genocide uit. Dat is vreemd, want met de intocht van het internationale vredesleger KFOR trokken onderzoeksteams uit dertig landen het strijdtoneel binnen. Hun taak was het bewijzen te zoeken voor de oorlogsmisdaden die de Serviërs zouden hebben begaan. Die bewijzen zouden worden voorgelegd aan het Joegoslavië-Tribunaal in Den Haag.

In plaats van tienduizend slachtoffers hebben deze onderzoeksteams enkele honderden lijken gevonden. De grootste vondst wordt op het conto van de FBI geschreven: 124 lijken in een graf, gevonden in de door de Britse troepen gedomineerde sector van Kosovo. In totaal vonden de Amerikanen 200 lijken. Het Spaanse onderzoeksteam vond er 187, niet bij elkaar, maar afzonderlijk begraven.

Natuurlijk is het mogelijk dat er nog meer bewijzen van gruweldaden opduiken, maar met de dag wordt dat minder waarschijnlijk. Het is niet zo eenvoudig om massagraven te verbergen, zeker niet omdat er verwoed naar wordt gezocht – niet alleen door de buitenlandse experts, ook door overlevenden, die willen weten wat er met hun familie is gebeurd. De onderzoeksteams die de *killing fields* van nazi-Duitsland, Rwanda en Cambodja bezochten, deden hun belangrijkste ontdekkingen spoedig na aankomst.

In Kosovo hebben we elfduizend doden gevonden, zei de speciale VN-gezant Bernard Kouchner in augustus. Hij zou zijn gegevens van het oorlogstribunaal hebben gekregen, maar dat ontkent te weten hoeveel lijken er zijn gevonden. Sindsdien heeft Kouchner zijn bewering niet herhaald.

Ongetwijfeld hebben de Serviërs zich op grote schaal schuldig gemaakt aan martelingen, verdwijningen en andere mensenrechtenschendingen. Hoe erg ook, dat gebeurt vaker en in misschien wel ernstiger vorm elders op de wereld.

'Wij moeten nu in actie komen om duizenden onschuldige mannen, vrouwen en kinderen te vrijwaren van de dood', zei premier Blair in maart, een dag voor het uitbreken van de oorlog, in het Lagerhuis. Blair en Clinton voerden genocide aan als rechtvaardiging voor de aanval op Servië. Sterker, juist door die massamoorden was de NAVO moreel verplicht in actie te komen.

De Joegoslavische regering heeft vanaf het begin de juistheid van de geallieerde beschuldigingen ontkend. Volgens de Serviërs lieten de westerse regeringen zich om de tuin leiden door de propagandamachine van het UCK. De Kosovaarse bevrijdingsbeweging had er immers alle belang bij om de internationale gemeenschap bij haar strijd te betrekken.

Tijdens de oorlog al bleek hoe afhankelijk de NAVO was van het UCK om op de hoogte te raken van wat zich in Kosovo op de grond afspeelde. Van het UCK kwam bijvoorbeeld het bericht dat een aantal prominente Albanese intellectuelen was omgebracht. Een paar dagen later doken die intellectuelen weer op en moest NAVO-woordvoerder Shea met het schaamrood op de kaken toegeven dat hij het bij het verkeerde eind had gehad.

De vraag rijst hoe gruwelijk mensenrechtenschendingen moeten zijn om een gewapende interventie te rechtvaardigen. Het is van belang te weten wanneer de grens wordt gepasseerd.

De Amerikaanse denktank Stratfor, die deze week als eerste in het Westen de vraag stelde waar de lijken zijn gebleven, vraagt zich het volgende af: 'Als een handvol – een paar dozijn, een paar honderd – mensen worden gedood tijdens perioden van sociale onrust, heeft de internationale gemeenschap dan het recht om gewapenderhand tussenbeide te komen?'

Als het antwoord nee is, moet de conclusie luiden dat de NAVO Servië schadevergoeding schuldig is. Als het antwoord ja is, zijn we toe aan een ingrijpende herziening van het begrip staatssoevereiniteit.

Geert-Jan Bogaerts

OP WEG NAAR DE VOLGENDE OORLOG

MARCEL VAN DAM

28-10-99

De NAVO-actie bleek bedroevend te zijn voorbereid. In plaats van een humanitaire ramp te voorkomen, wat volgens Clinton het doel was, bleek de actie die te bewerkstelligen. Bijna een miljoen Kosovaren sloegen op de vlucht en het duurde enkele weken voordat de NAVO de eerste humanitaire hulp kon bieden.

De enige NAVO-afdeling die perfect werkte, was de propagandamachine onder leiding van Jamie Shea. De humanitaire ramp die zich voltrok, werd in de propaganda professioneel gebruikt om de publieke opinie achter het NAVO-optreden te houden. De wandaden van de Serviërs werden niet alleen breed uitgemeten, maar ook nog flink aangedikt. Volgens de Britse regering werden er tijdens de oorlog in Kosovo meer dan tienduizend burgers vermoord. In de massagraven die in Kosovo zijn blootgelegd is dat aantal in de verste verte niet gevonden. Nog afgezien van het feit dat er ook veel slachtoffers moeten zijn gevallen in de gevechten tussen troepen van het UCK en de Joegoslaven en als gevolg van de NAVO-bombardementen.

Volgens de Amerikaanse regering werden er in Kosovo honderdduizend mannen vermist. Na de oorlog is van die beschuldiging nooit meer iets vernomen. Zou het geen aardig journalistiek project zijn om alles wat door beide partijen tijdens de oorlog is gezegd, te toetsen aan de werkelijkheid van daarna?

Nadat de vijandelijkheden waren gestaakt en Kosovo was bezet, voltrok zich de tweede humanitaire ramp: de vlucht van een paar honderdduizend Serviërs en zigeuners. Ditmaal onder het oog van en soms onder begeleiding van NAVO-troepen. Nu moesten we het doen zonder Jamie Shea. Ook de media hebben relatief weinig aandacht gehad voor deze treurige gebeurtenis. En aan hulp voor de slachtoffers werd al helemaal niet gedacht.

Heeft alle ellende nu geleid tot het uitzicht op een stabiel, gepacificeerd en multi-etnisch Kosovo. Integendeel. De vooruitzichten zijn onverminderd treurig. De NAVO, vooral Amerika, heeft het UCK tot de belangrijkste machtsfactor in Kosovo gemaakt. De gematigde Albanese leider Rugova is daarmee uitgeschakeld. Over het democratisch gehalte van het UCK en het respect voor minderheden maakt niemand zich enige illusie. Met dezelfde soort terreur als die van Milosevic worden alle minderheden uit Kosovo weggetreiterd.

Om de strijd te kunnen beëindigen en Russische deelname aan het bezettingsleger zeker te stellen, heeft de NAVO vastgelegd dat Joegoslavië de soevereiniteit over Kosovo behoudt. Joegoslavische soevereiniteit is niet te rijmen met de onafhankelijkheid die het UCK eist. De NAVO kan dus kiezen: of de overeenkomst met Joegoslavië (en Rusland) breken of het UCK desnoods met geweld van de onafhankelijkheid afhouden. De volgende oorlog is in voorbereiding.

Over enkele maanden publiceert Glastra van Loon met Jan Marijnissen de bundel *De laatste oorlog*, gesprekken over Kosovo en de nieuwe wereldorde. „We interviewen wereldwijd mensen die je kunt verdenken van een interessante visie op de zaak", zegt hij. „Van Lord Carrington, voormalig secretaris-generaal van de NAVO, tot de Russische dwarsdenker Arbatov; van generaals tot analisten van denktanks. Jan en ik zijn net terug uit Moskou. Ons verhaal zal de theoretische pijlers onder de militaire interventie van het Westerse bondgenootschap wegslaan."

2-1-2000

Wat hebben jullie toe te voegen aan de eerder geuite kritiek dat de bombardementen op Servië geschiedden zonder toestemming van de Veiligheidsraad, en in strijd waren met het VN-handvest?

„In tijden van oorlog sneuvelt altijd eerst de waarheid. Wij willen zichtbaar maken hoe – en op welke schaal – dat in dit geval is gebeurd. De NAVO rechtvaardigde het militaire optreden door te wijzen op tienduizenden à honderdduizend slachtoffers onder de Kosovaren. Leugens, blijkt nu. Het juiste aantal schijnt nu enkele duizenden te zijn. Tweeduizend doden is verschrikkelijk, zeker, maar het punt is dat de grootschalige acties van de NAVO dus niet in proportie waren. Dat geweld heeft tot een enorme escalatie geleid. De Serviërs traden steeds harder op in Kosovo, waardoor de vluchtelingenstroom een ongelofelijke omvang kreeg. Terwijl het voorkomen van een Kosovaren-exodus nou juist de officiële doelstelling van de NAVO was.

„Ik vind het bedenkelijk dat vrijwel alle journalisten zich nog steeds neerleggen bij de lezing van het bondgenootschap. Ons ministerie van Defensie schildert iedereen die daar vraagtekens bij zet af als een landverrader. Minister De Grave wilde de SP tijdens de oorlog niet consulteren, omdat de partij als enige in Nederland tegen de bombardementen was. Zo'n bewindsman hoort door de pers tot op de grond toe te worden afgebrand. Hij neemt een loopje met de democratie. Maar geen journalist in Den Haag durft te schrijven dat De Grave op zijn kloten moet krijgen."

Dit heeft de charme van de duidelijkheid, maar klinkt weinig parlementair.

„Ik wind me hier over op. Het gaat verdomme over niks minder dan een oorlog. Ik heb er een paar van redelijk dichtbij verslagen, onder andere in Koeweit en Armenië. Er is niks zo gruwelijk als het gebruik van vernietigingswapens. Het hele idee van een humanitaire interventie met het gebruik van clusterbommen op Joegoslavische burgerdoelen... dat mensen dat geloven. Grotesk. Ik schaam me niet voor mijn woede. Mijn politieke betrokkenheid heeft nauwelijks ideologische redenen, die vloeit voort uit verontwaardiging."

Volkskr. 17-02-2000

GOEDPRATEN OF EVALUEREN?

MARCEL VAN DAM

WIM KOK schijnt niet tevreden te zijn geweest over de evaluatie die de ministers van Defensie en Buitenlandse Zaken hadden gemaakt van de NAVO-oorlog tegen Joegoslavië. Had hij echt verwacht dat de ministers die de eerste verantwoordelijkheid droegen voor dat avontuur in staat of bereid zouden zijn tot een andere conclusie te komen dan dat de aanval op Joegoslavië een groot succes is geweest en dat Nederland zijn mannetje heeft gestaan?

De onvrede van Kok zal er waarschijnlijk toe leiden dat er wat meer kritische kanttekeningen zullen worden geplaatst bij een paar negatieve bijverschijnselen. De NAVO-propaganda zal wel een veeg uit de pan krijgen en de aanpak van het vluchtelingendrama krijgt niet de hoofdprijs. Maar de conclusie blijft natuurlijk onverlet: de NAVO-oorlog was goed en rechtvaardig en heeft aan alle doelstellingen beantwoord.

Ik ken de evaluatie niet maar ik weet nu al een aantal vragen waar Melkert, die het initiatief nam tot de evaluatie, geen afdoende antwoord op zal krijgen.

1. Wat was nu precies het vooraf geformuleerde doel van de operatie? Je mag toch aannemen dat in de vergadering van de bondgenoten waarin over de aanval werd beslist een scherp omschreven doel op tafel lag. Een beschaafd mens begint geen oorlog zonder te weten wat hij er mee wil bereiken. Kan dat vooraf omschreven doel aan de Tweede Kamer worden overgelegd?
2. We mogen aannemen dat in de vergaderingen die aan het besluit voorafgingen is gesproken over de legitimatie van de aanval. Op grond van welke internationale rechtsregels is besloten het Handvest van de VN aan de kant te schuiven? (Het verbod om soevereine landen te dreigen met geweld en het verbod om geweld te gebruiken.)
3. Hoe is het mogelijk dat een organisatie als de NAVO die in korte tijd een heel leger rond Joegoslavië op de been kan brengen er gedurende weken niet in slaagt om de meest elementaire hulp te bieden aan de Albanese vluchtelingen?
4. Toen Servië nog oppermachtig was in Kosovo bestond de bevolking naast een meerderheid van Albanezen uit verschillende minderheidsgroepen. Serviërs, zigeuners, servisch sprekende moslims, joden etc. Sinds de NAVO oppermachtig is zijn en worden deze minderheden in Kosovo verdreven. Hoe verklaart de regering

dat Milosevic beter in staat was de minderheden in Kosovo te beschermen dan de NAVO?
5. Hoeveel vluchtelingen uit Kosovo waren er in totaal voordat de NAVO-aanval begon en hoeveel zijn er nu (inclusief Albanezen)? Als er nu meer vluchtelingen zijn dan ervoor, hoe kan men dan volhouden dat de humanitaire situatie is verbeterd?
6. Wat is het totaal aantal slachtoffers van de bombardementen, hoeveel slachtoffers zijn er gevallen in de guerrilla tussen de Serviërs en het UCK en hoeveel Albanese Kosovaren zijn er vermoord door de Serviërs? Kan alsnog worden aangegeven waarop de mededelingen waren gebaseerd dat er meer dan tienduizend Albanezen waren vermoord (Engeland) en dat er honderdduizend Albanese mannen zoek waren (Amerika).
7. Hoe was het mogelijk dat het UCK een jaar voor de NAVO-aanval nauwelijks iets voorstelde en een jaar later meer dan tienduizend goed bewapende mannen op de been kon brengen?
8. Hoe groot is de totale schade die als gevolg van de NAVO-bombardementen is ontstaan in Kosovo, Joegoslavië en in de buurlanden. Hoeveel daarvan is hersteld? Welke bedragen zijn er door NAVO-landen toegezegd en hoeveel daarvan is tot nu toe daadwerkelijk uitbetaald? Welk deel van de daadwerkelijk betaalde steun is ten koste gegaan van de reguliere hulpverlening aan internationale organisaties en ontwikkelingslanden?
9. Wie besloten er ook burgerdoelen te gaan bombarderen in Joegoslavië, de politici of militairen?
10. Als u alles geweten had, zou u het dan weer doen?

Alle vragen zullen met dooddoeners worden beantwoord. De meeste antwoorden zullen gepaard gaan met uitwijding over de monsterachtige misdaden van M losevic en zijn benden en dat die in e beschaafd Europa niet kunnen word geduld. Ik geloof ook dat Milosevic mo sterachtige misdaden op zijn gewet heeft en ik vind ook dat die in Europa n kunnen worden geduld.

Maar bovenal vind ik dat monsterach ge misdaden niet kunnen worden best den met acties waarvan de gevolgen n monsterachtiger zijn. Het doel heiligt middelen niet. De mensen op de Balk in Europa en in de wereld zijn er politi moreel en humanitair door de NAV aanval op Joegoslavië niet op vooruit gaan. Dus was de Kosovo-oorlog niet rechtvaardigd. Zoals ook de sancties gen Joegoslavië hun doel voorbijschiet en dus ongeoorloofd zijn.

Trouwens: waar halen politici de mo vandaan om over humanitaire beginse te spreken zolang zij actief meewerk aan de genocide die in Irak wordt bed ven? De westerse sancties tegen dat la hebben volgens de VN nu al meer dan miljoen doden tot gevolg gehad, waarv meer dan 600 duizend kinderen. We Nederlandse politicus slaat er nu eindel eens alarm?

NAVO erkent: bij 'etnische zuivering' van Kosovo vielen minder doden

2000

BRUSSEL, 18 AUG. NAVO-functionarissen hebben gisteren toegegeven dat de aanvankelijke schattingen over het aantal doden bij de 'etnische zuivering' van Kosovo door de Serviërs te hoog zijn geweest.

De NAVO-woordvoerders reageerden op de voorlopige bevindingen van forensische experts van het Joegoslavië-tribunaal in Den Haag, die ruim een jaar na de luchtoorlog om Kosovo op het punt staan hun slotconclusies te formuleren. Tot die slotconclusies behoort de vaststelling, dat de 'etnische schoonmaak' van Kosovo rond drieduizend Kosovo-Albanezen het leven heeft gekost – en niet al die drieduizend slachtoffers kwamen door moord of executie om het leven.

Ten tijde van de luchtoorlog om Kosovo, tussen maart en juni 1999, werd door de NAVO gemeld dat zeker tienduizend Kosovo-Albanezen waren vermoord. Sommige schattingen wekten zelfs de suggestie dat er honderdduizend doden zouden zijn gevallen.

De forensische deskundigen van het VN-tribunaal in Den Haag hebben dit jaar in Kosovo op honderdvijftig plaatsen in totaal 680 lichamen opgegraven. In de tweede helft van vorig jaar waren dat er 2108, opgegraven op 195 plaatsen. Volgens een woordvoerder van het tribunaal zal het totale aantal slachtoffers van de massale verdrijving van de Kosovo-Albanezen blijken niet hoger dan drieduizend te zijn geweest. Zekerheid zal er nooit zijn, omdat de Serviërs in sommige gevallen de moeite hebben genomen de sporen uit te wissen. De Joegoslavische president Slobodan Milošević is door het Joegoslavië-tribunaal in staat van beschuldiging gesteld wegens oorlogsmisdaden in kosovo. In de aanklacht wordt hem onder andere de moord op 105 Kosovo-Albanese mannen en jongens in het dorp Mala Kruša verweten. De lichamen van de slachtoffers werden verbrand. Op de plaats van de massamoord werden slechts enkele menselijke botten gevonden.

☐ De Kosovaarse hoofdstad Priština is vanochtend opgeschrikt door een bomexplosie. Een ooggetuige meldde dat een gebouw waarin verscheidene politieke partijen – zoals die van de etnische Turken in Kosovo – en Servische autoriteiten zijn gehuisvest, zwaar is beschadigd. Er zou een lichtgewonde zijn gevallen. Welke partij of instantie het eigenlijke doelwit van de aanslag is geweest is vooralsnog onduidelijk. De aanslag heeft mogelijk van doen met de komende gemeenteraadsverkiezingen. (Reuters, AP, AFP)

NAVO zegt aantal doden in Kosovo te hebben overschat

19 Aug 2000

The Guardian

BRUSSEL

NAVO-functionarissen hebben donderdagavond toegegeven dat aanvankelijke schattingen over het aantal door Servische troepen gedode Kosovo-Albanezen te hoog waren.

De NAVO reageerde op de voorlopige bevindingen van de forensische experts van het Joegoslavië-Tribunaal in Den Haag, die ruim een jaar na de Kosovo-oorlog op het punt staan hun conclusies te formuleren. Zij hebben ongeveer drieduizend lichamen onderzocht, en niet al die slachtoffers kwamen door moord of executie om het leven.

De forensische experts hebben dit jaar in Kosovo 680 lijken opgegraven op 150 plaatsen. Opgeteld bij de 2108 die vorig jaar al waren gevonden op 195 plaatsen, komt het totaal ruim onder het aantal geschatte moorden tijdens de Kosovo-oorlog.

De eerste bombardementen van de NAVO op Joegoslavië ontlokten vrijwel direct een massaal offensief van de Serviërs tegen de Kosovo-Albanezen. Daarbij werden veel ongewapende dorpelingen gedood. Honderdduizenden Kosovaren ontvluchtten hun huizen en dorpen.

Ten tijde van de luchtaanvallen, tussen maart en juni 1999, maakte de NAVO melding van zeker tienduizend vermoorde Kosovo-Albanezen en honderdduizend vermisten. Soms werd zelfs de indruk gewekt dat er sprake zou zijn van honderdduizend doden. Paul Risley, woordvoerder van het Joegoslavië-Tribunaal, zei gisteren dat het totale aantal slachtoffers onder de Kosovo-Albanezen niet hoger zal blijken dan drieduizend.

'De NAVO heeft nooit gezegd dat alle vermisten dood waren', zei NAVO-woordvoerder Mark Laity in een reactie op de nieuwe cijfers. 'Het getal waar wij van uitgingen was tienduizend. Als dat niet correct is, dan ben ik bereid te leven met een vlekje op ons blazoen, als duizenden dood-gewaanden in leven blijken. De NAVO kan dit niet winnen. Als er honderdduizend doden zouden zijn, zouden we vanwege te laat ingrijpen worden bekritiseerd. Als er een paar duizend doden zijn, luidt de kritiek dat er helemaal geen sprake was van een crisis.'

CIJFERS / *Opgravingen Kosovo vrijwel afgerond*

19 Aug 2000

Of het de discussie over doel en rechtmatigheid van het Navo-optreden in Kosovo weer zal doen oplaaien, is de vraag. De loopgraven zijn al tijden betrokken. Toch roepen korte berichten hier en daar wel vragen op over de informatie die de Navo destijds over de situatie in Kosovo verspreidde. Eerder deze week kwamen er berichten dat maar een minimaal deel van de bommen die de Britten afwierpen, hun geplande doel hebben bereikt. Gisteren meldde *The Guardian* dat de Navo heeft toegegeven het dodental onder Albanezen in Kosovo te hebben overschat.

Destijds maakten Britse en Amerikaanse regeringslieden melding van 'tien tot honderdduizend vermisten, mogelijk doden'. Volgens een woordvoerder van het tribunaal zijn de afgelopen drie maanden 680 doden ontdekt op 150 plaatsen. Die komen bij de ruim 2100 mensen die vorig jaar zijn gevonden. Niet altijd is duidelijk of mensen het slachtoffer zijn geweest van moord of executie. Het Tribunaal is daarmee bijna klaar. Rond oktober denkt het de werkzaamheden te kunnen beëindigen.

Toen medewerkers van het Tribunaal vorig jaar in Kosovo arriveerden, werd vermoed dat er ruim 11 000 mensen in massagraven zouden liggen. Op veel plaatsen is echter niets gevonden, zoals in mijnen van Trepca.

Voor degenen die altijd al twijfels hadden over het beoogde 'humanitaire' doel van de Navo-acties zullen de nieuwe cijfers slechts een bevestiging betekenen van die argwaan. Voor de voorstanders daarentegen duidt het juist op het succes van de hele operatie. We zijn succesvol geweest in het voorkomen van meer doden, aldus een Navo-woordvoerder.

redactie buitenland

NAVO erkent: in Kosovo vielen minder doden

Van redactie buitenland
24 Aug 2000

NAVO-functionarissen hebben vorige week donderdag toegegeven dat de aanvankelijke schattingen over het aantal doden bij de zogenaamde 'etnische zuivering' van Kosovo door de Serviërs te hoog zijn geweest. Manifest wees er al vaker op dat de reden om de bommenoorlog te beginnen volstrekt uit de lucht gegrepen is. Maar horen we spijtbetuigingen? Wordt de belachelijke aanklacht tegen Milosevic ingetrokken? Natuurlijk niet, want aan NAVO-zijde heiligt het doel alle middelen en daar heeft men een patent op de leugen.

De NAVO-woordvoerders reageerden op de voorlopige bevindingen van forensische experts van het Joegoslavië-tribunaal in Den Haag die ruim een jaar na de luchtoorlog om Kosovo op het punt staan hun slotconclusies te formuleren. Zij komen tot de vaststelling, dat de ongeregeldheden in Kosovo minder dan drieduizend Kosovo-Albanezen het leven heeft gekost. Bovendien kwamen lang niet alle drieduizend slachtoffers door moord of executie om het leven.
Ten tijde van de luchtoorlog om Kosovo, tussen maart en juni 1999, werd door de NAVO gemeld dat zeker tienduizend Kosovo-Albanezen waren vermoord. Toen dat uit propagandisch oogpunt nodig was wekten de schattingen zelfs de suggestie dat er honderdduizend doden zouden zijn gevallen. De forensische deskundigen van het VN-tribunaal in Den Haag hebben in totaal in Kosovo op 345 plaatsen in totaal 2788 lichamen opgegraven. Volgens een woordvoerder van het tribunaal zal het totale aantal slachtoffers van de massale verdrijving van de Kosovo-Albanezen blijken niet hoger dan drieduizend te zijn geweest. Intussen gaan de aanvallen op niet-Albanezen in Kosovo, met steun van KFOR, gewoon door. Elders in de krant schreven we over de aanval op Mitrovica, vorige week werd Pristina, de hoofdstad van de provincie Kosovo, opgeschrikt door een bomexplosie. Een gebouw waarin verscheidene niet-Albanese politieke partijen, zoals die van de etnische Turken in Kosovo, en Servische autoriteiten zijn gehuisvest, werd zwaar beschadigd. De aanslag heeft waarschijnlijk van doen met de komende gemeenteraadsverkiezingen. Een dag later raakten negen Servische kinderen ernstig gewond. Onbekenden wierpen uit een auto twee handgranaten in de groep kinderen, die op een sportveld speelden. (Bron: NRC, 18-8-2000)

De zachte feiten van Kosovo

Soms weet ik niet of ik verheugd moet zijn over een bepaald bericht, of dat ik me er wat wanhopig door moet voelen. De VN-onderzoekers die in Kosovo speuren naar de stoffelijke overschotten van de slachtoffers van de etnische zuivering die de Serviërs vorig jaar hebben uitgevoerd en de aanleiding vormden voor de maandenlange Navo-bombardementen op Servië, rapporteerden onlangs over hun bevindingen. Op grond van hun vondsten tot nu toe concluderen zij dat zij uiteindelijk de stoffelijke resten van zo'n drieduizend slachtoffers verwachten te vinden. Dat betekent dat vele tienduizenden Kosovaarse Albanezen wier veronderstelde dood als gevolg van de etnische zuiveringen de rechtvaardiging voor de Navo-bombardementen vormde, nog leven. Dat is vanzelfsprekend een reden tot vreugde, maar ook tot wanhoop. Het betekent met zoveel woorden dat wij door onze politici grotelijks misleid zijn. Zij beweerden immers dat er door de Serviërs al tienduizenden Albanezen vermoord waren en dat ingrijpen noodzakelijk was om een nog grotere menselijke tragedie te voorkomen.

KOCH

Ik beschik niet over een onfeilbare humanitaire maatlat die het me mogelijk maakt ingrijpen al bij de dood van tien of honderd, dan wel pas bij de dood van duizend of tienduizend mensen gerechtvaardigd te vinden. Ik weet wel dat geen enkele politicus voor massale bombardementen had gepleit wanneer er slechts, vergeef me het woord, sprake was geweest van enige tientallen of een paar honderd doden.

Achteraf is dit feitelijk misschien wel het geval geweest. Bedenk dat de Servische furie pas echt op gang kwam nadat de bombardementen waren begonnen. Hoogstens een deel van de Albanese slachtoffers is dus voor het begin van de bombardementen vermoord. Bedenk ook dat het niet onwaarschijnlijk is dat de Albanese strijders van het UCK zelf de hand in een aantal moordpartijen zouden kunnen hebben gehad. Provocatie en terreur behoorden jarenlang tot het handelsmerk van deze organisatie. Natuurlijk is het mogelijk dat de Serviërs tienduizenden lijken zonder een enkel spoor achter te laten hebben laten verdwijnen. Met de VN-onderzoekers geloof ik daar niet erg in. Dit alles dwingt tot de vraag hoe hard het feitenmateriaal was op grond waarvan onze politici tot de bombardementen besloten. Hebben zij zich afgevraagd en gecontroleerd hoe betrouwbaar de gegevens over massale etnische zuivering waren die ze aangereikt kregen. Of hebben ze de juistheid ervan voetstoots aangenomen? Uit gemakzucht of naïviteit? Omdat de berichten over etnische zuivering pasten in het beeld dat ze, niet ten onrechte, van Milosevic hadden? Of omdat de veronderstelde etnische zuivering een humanitair alibi verschafte om te doen wat men allang wilde doen, door een kortstondige gewelddadige actie eens en voorgoed afrekenen met Milosevic.

Ik zou er veel voor geven wanneer deze laatste interpretatie volstrekt onjuist is. Wanneer het tegendeel mocht blijken, dan is het ingrijpen in Kosovo gebaseerd geweest op misleiding van de publieke opinie. Dat is meer dan te betreuren. Misleiding door de overheid stimuleert tot wantrouwen jegens diezelfde overheid. Dit wantrouwen kan ertoe leiden dat het publiek in de toekomst grote aarzelingen zal hebben om ingrijpen te steunen wanneer er echt van humanitaire rampen sprake is. Dit wantrouwen kan worden weggenomen wanneer we nauwkeurig geïnformeerd worden over de hardheid van de feiten waarop onze politici besloten tot bombarderen over te gaan, en over de wijze waarop zij die hardheid getoetst hebben. Blijft helderheid over deze vragen uit, woekert het wantrouwen voort, met alle desastreuze gevolgen voor toekomstige humanitaire interventies van dien.

Koen Koch

Bijna een jaar was diplomaat Robbert van Lanschot de ogen en oren van de Nederlandse regering in Kosovo. Hij zag de verwoestingen en de razendsnelle wederopbouw in sommige delen van de Servische provincie. Hij ervoer het geweld. En bleef een buitenstaander. 'Misschien weten de Albanezen oorlogstrauma's wel beter te verdringen dan andere volkeren.'

Ja, hij is een telg van de bekende bankiersfamilie. Die prangende vraag is meteen maar beantwoord. 'Ik behoor tot een wat verarmde tak.' Diplomaat Robbert van Lanschot (50) zit op een zonnig terras in het hartje van de hoofdstad Pristina, een stapel internationale kranten op het wit plastic tafeltje. Korte broek, bergschoenen, gebruind gezicht. 'Ik heb tot nu toe maar een keer een stropdas omgehad,' had hij een dag eerder al bekend.

Over het indrukwekkendste voorval tijdens zijn verblijf hoeft Van Lanschot niet lang na te denken. De diplomaat reed enkele maanden geleden terug uit Mitrovica, de tussen Albanezen en Serviërs verdeelde stad in het noorden van Kosovo. Hij stuitte op een grote groep Albanezen, zo'n vijfhonderd mensen, die net naar een herbegrafenis van een aantal vermoorde Albanezen waren geweest. De haat hing bijna tastbaar in de lucht. 'Ongelukkigerwijs' passeerde een klein Servisch konvooi, bewaakt door Russische leden van de multinationale vredesmacht Kfor. Woedende Albanezen waren bezig een van de Serviërs uit het konvooi te lynchen.

Op een papiertje tekent Van Lanschot nauwkeurig de situatie na. 'Hier waren de Albanezen, daar stond het Servische konvooi en wij kwamen van de andere kant.' Wij, dat waren Van Lanschot en Johannes Landman, de permanente vertegenwoordiger van Nederland bij de in Wenen gevestigde Organisatie voor Veiligheid en Samenwerking in Europa en diens naaste medewerker. Die waren op werkbezoek in Kosovo.

In een auto vóór de drie Nederlanders zaten ook Serviërs, onbewaakt. Een van hen raakte in paniek toen hij de lynchpartij zag. 'Hij rende weg, het veld in,' herinnert de Nederlander zich. 'Een groep Albanezen ging achter hem aan, wierp hem op de grond en begon te trappen.' En iemand doodtrappen, zo weet de diplomaat inmiddels, gaat heel snel. Van Lanschot had er nauwelijks erg in gehad, maar Landman had het portier geopend en was uit de auto gesprongen. 'Daar rende de kleine, tengere Johannes Landman, keurig in pak en stropdas achter de Serviër en de Albanezen aan. Ik meen me zelfs een zwierige pochet te herinneren.'

Landman sprong in de kluwen schoppende Albanezen. 'Ik dacht: dit is het einde van Johannes Landman. Maar die begon te roepen: "Ik ben de Nederlandse ambassadeur in Wenen. Dit accepteer ik niet!" Die mensen waren dermate verbouwereerd dat ze ophielden en afdropen. Die Serviër lag zwaar bloedend op de grond. Franse Kfor-soldaten hebben hij later kunnen meenemen.'

En Van Lanschot zelf? Haast schuldbewust zegt hij aanzienlijk langzamer te hebben gereageerd dan Landman. 'Ik ben wel die kant uit gerend, maar later dan hij. Ik zou die moed niet hebben opgebracht. Bij Buitenlandse Zaken geldt Landman als iemand die zich over veel zaken veel te druk maakt, maar hier heeft hij met gevaar voor eigen leven iemand van de dood gered. Voor mij kan die man niet meer stuk.

De andere Serviër is wel doodgetrapt. Die lag in een greppel vlak bij onze auto. Verschrikkelijk. Op een gegeven moment bewoog hij. Ik waarschuwde nog een Franse soldaat en zei: die man leeft nog, die heeft medische hulp nodig. Die Fransman reageerde heel koel. *Mais non*, dat zijn de normale postmortumstuiptrekkingen, *monsieur*. Ik heb dit verhaal eindeloos tegen iedereen in Pristina verteld. Om het van me af te krijgen.'

19 Aug 2000
VN

Dagelijkse betogingen tegen KFOR

Kosovo-Serviërs in Mitrovica woedend

2000

PRIŠTINA, 19 JULI. In Kosovska Mitrovica, de in een Servisch en een Albanees deel verdeelde stad in het noorden van Kosovo, hebben Kosovo-Serviërs gisteren aangekondigd elke dag te zullen demonstreren tegen de aanhouding van een Serviër door de vredesmacht KFOR. Vandaag vielen Serviërs een VN-politieauto met ijzeren staven aan.

Soldaten van KFOR probeerden gisteren voor de tweede opeenvolgende dag met traangas en wegblokkades een eind te maken aan de woedende protesten van de Serviërs tegen de arrestatie, maandag, van een van hun militanten. De man, Dalibor Vuković, werd opgepakt omdat hij als schildwacht op de brug tussen het Servische en het Albanese deel van de stad, een Albanees zou hebben gemolesteerd en auto's van Albanezen in brand zou hebben gestoken.

Volgens de Serviërs van Mitrovica was het vergrijp van de man te licht om een arrestatie te rechtvaardigen. Maandagavond, gisteren overdag en gisteravond betoogden de Serviërs tegen de aanhouding van de man. Maandag werden vier Serviërs en twee politiemannen van de VN gewond. Een politieman werd kort in gijzeling genomen door de Serviërs. KFOR greep gisteren met traansgas in en sloot de brug over de Ibar, en daarmee de verbinding tussen de Servische en de Albanese wijk, af. De Serviërs maakten gisteren melding van negen gewonden.

Volgens de leider van de Servische gemeenschap in de stad, Oliver Ivanović, toont de arrestatie van Vuković aan dat het VN-bestuur in Kosovo en KFOR vergrijpen van Serviërs veel harder aanpakken dan vergrijpen van Albanezen. „De afgelopen tien maanden zijn bij botsingen rond de brug meer dan honderd Serviërs gewond geraakt en er is niet één Albanees opgesloten. 53 Serviërs zijn vermoord of ontvoerd en niet één Albanees zit in de gevangenis", aldus Ivanović.

De secretaris-generaal van de NAVO, George Robertson, heeft gisteren in Priština de Kosovo-Albanezen gewaarschuwd dat het afgelopen moet zijn met de aanvallen op de Kosovo-Serviërs. „Onderschat onze vastbeslotenheid niet", zei Robertson. „We zullen de multi-etnische samenleving hier beschermen en we zullen niet toestaan dat de Servische gemeenschap uit Kosovo en in de armen van Milošević wordt gedreven." Hij zei dat die bescherming ook de Turkse, Bosnische en Roma-minderheid in Kosovo geldt. Alle etnische minderheden, de Serviërs en de Roma voorop, staan in Kosovo bloot aan vrijwel dagelijkse gewelddadige aanvallen. Bij overleg met de leiders van de Albanezen en de Serviërs heeft Robertson naar eigen zeggen in harde termen gewaarschuwd. De Albanese leiders had hij voorgehouden dat ze „hun gemeenschap moeten vertellen dat het uit moet zijn met deze beangstigende mate van intimidatie en geweld, die net zo schadelijk is voor hun toekomst als voor die van de minderheden". (Reuters, AP)

• DOSSIER KOSOVO: www.nrc.nl

NATO strategy - as little as possible Serbs

February 24, 2000

<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/2.jpg>

Politika, February 24th 2000
Zarko Rakic

"Almost a year after the NATO aggression, Yugoslavia and its leadership are once again in the crossfire of the international tyrants. Instead of condemning loud and clear the Albanian campaign against Mitrovica as another chauvinist attempt to expel the remaining minorities from Kosmet, above all the Serbs, and supporting the endangered, various usurpers target Belgrade once again."

Die Junge Welt begins its commentary quoting the reports on the latest events in Kosovo, clearly stressing the actual events in the southern Serbian province. The conclusion of the commentary is in the same style: "People, hear the signal, NATO is calling to the final battle in Kosovo".

The US and German troops terrorize Serbs

In contrast to the local media servants of the US and NATO, the Berlin weekly reports openly on the actual background of the conflict in Kosovska Mitrovica.

"While the organized members of the so-called KLA storm the last Serb stronghold in Kosovo, clash with KFOR troops, target the buses with Serb civilians inside and throw hand grenades at Serb cafes in Mitrovica, the US and German KFOR troops systematically terrorize the victims - the remaining Serbs in the province", reports Die Junge Welt. In contrast to other parts of Kosovo, where there aren't any other nationalities left, the situation in French sector north is different. Thus, the KLA is calling to "conquering of the north", which would complete the ethnic cleansing of this NATO protectorate.

Die Junge Welt reminds that the international troops in Kosovo (KFOR) openly play their trump: as little as possible Serbs - and the problems disappear. Representatives of the international forces and organizations always have an explanation for the expulsion of non-Albanian population from Kosovo at hand - they cannot stop those who want to leave. However, those who do not want to leave are the real problem.

"In cooperation with the US, British and German troops and by killing and expelling, the KLA managed to create an ethnically cleansed Kosovo", says Die Junge Welt. "The plan was not carried out only in Kosovska Mitrovica, first of all because of the fact that this town and northern sector of the province are under the control of French troops. In fact, French KFOR troops satisfied themselves with monitoring the bridges between the two parts of the town - northern mostly populated by the Serbs, and southern populated by the Albanians.

The terrorists and mafia interested in Trepca

According to the weekly, in the areas still populated by Serbs, they had to organize themselves because they could not count on KFOR.

"Protection of Serb civilians and religious monuments was never on the list of their priorities", said Die Junge Welt. Certain UN officials openly quoted KFOR supreme commander, British general Michael Jackson, who said that it would be best for Kosovo if there were as little as possible Serbs there.

New York Times: KFOR had never intended to protect Serbs

February 21, 2000

KFOR in service of Albanian terrorism <http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/kanadian_m.jpg>

KFOR in service of Albanian terrorism

NEW YORK, Feb 21 (Tanjug) - The protection of Serbs and Serb holy places in Kosovo and Metohija had never been a priority task and objective of the United Nations security mission there, and key figures of the international force KFOR had estimated that it would be all the easier to ensure security the fewer the Serbs remaining in this Serbian province, New York Times said on Sunday.

This sinister objective of the west is confirmed in the latest political trick played in Kosovska Mitrovica, where a KFOR action turned against Serbs instead of ethnic Albanian terrorists who have even opened fire at mission members, the daily said.

The New York daily revealed many important facts, including the reason why Kosovo Albanian terrorists want to banish Serbs from Kosovska Mitrovica - this is the Trepca mine, which the daily says is considered the nucleus of the future state.

The basic dilemma of western governments after setting up the peacekeeping force had been whether to turn Kosovo and Metohija into a safe haven for ethnic Albanians on their way to independence, or into a multi-ethnic autonomous province within Yugoslavia.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 unequivocally confirms Yugoslavia's sovereignty and territorial integrity and states that the province of Kosovo and Metohija is within Yugoslavia.

Judging from the New York Times report, which is at times surprisingly candid in its statements and conclusions, the west started having problems with Kosovo and Metohija already with their military intervention against Yugoslavia.

"The war with Serbia lasted longer than western officials had predicted, and then, paradoxically, it ended earlier than they hoped" says the daily, practically confirming what the western leaders had admitted in this or that way - that with the aggression and the bombardment of Yugoslavia they did not succeeded in their intention.

"Washington and NATO were not ready to wage the war", and when the international mission arrived, which was not the primary goal of NATO, a dilemma occurred - what now, says the paper.

This estimation of the daily confirms another big truth - that the aggressor's goal was not participation of western countries in some international mission, established by the UN Security Council's Resolution, but occupation of FRY, which was not achieved by war.

Since the mission started, western countries knew there were little chances to provide security for all Kosovo inhabitants, which would represent an autonomy province, not an independent state. Beside that, right from the start, KFOR forces were interested in one goal exclusively - "their own protection", says the paper.

KFOR members were afraid of "armed and angry Serbs", but were not prepared for so-called KLA actions under the motto of "revenge", or for the fact that the Albanians themselves would start attacking them.

"Protection of the Serb population and their holy places was not KFOR's priority" says the text, quoting the statement of an UN official saying that the first chief of the international security forces, General Michael Jackson estimated that "it would be easier to ensure security in Kosovo the fewer the Serbs remain there".

The KFOR has done nothing to stop the exodus of Serbs, the report said.

It must be said for truth's sake that the latest round of violence in Kosovska Mitrovica started with a recent attack on an UNHCR bus ferrying Serbs and escorted by KFOR troops, and a bomb attack on a Serb cafe in Kosovska Mitrovica, the daily said.

American papers are writing today about the arrival of "robust" American soldiers to the northern part of Kosovska Mitrovica, searching every Serb house.

"Politika": Terror is getting more serious, killings of Serbs more frequent

January 24, 2000

Funerals - Serbian everyday events <http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/sahrana2.jpg>
Funerals - Serbian everyday events

Milan Laketic

Pristina, January 23rd 2000. (Politika) - Though representatives of KFOR and UNMIK claim in their informative and official statements that the situation is stabilizing - there are more and more killings in Kosovo-Metohija. This is directly confirmed every day at press conferences by the representatives of peacekeeping forces. By daily releasing incomplete information about perfidious murders in Kosovo-Metohija during the last week, KFOR spokesman, lieutenant colonel Hainrih Anida has counted more than 20 killings. In the first two days of the last week only, KFOR has noted around 10 killings of Serbs and Albanians.

KFOR and international civil police members were silent observers of these crimes, though they were committed in front of their patrols or points. Their investigation teams were always coming to crime scene and the surrounding terrain, only a couple of hours after crime had been committed. Their officials were most often stating that they "came across criminals' trails". They often had a couple of suspects who were released after a day or two "due to lack of evidence".

But, during the last eight months of KFOR and UNMIK spokesmen's presence in Kosovo-Metohija, they never stated that the criminals were known, or that they were arrested, that is, that this seemingly glamorous investigation gave results. Murders were coming one after another, thus the old crimes were covered and "forgotten" by the new ones, which was used by the international forces to conceal their incompetence.

Meanwhile, it is obvious that Albanian terrorists and mafia gangs who have two goals are rushing to commit bloody crimes. The terrorists and mafia members are killing the Serbs in towns in order to ethnically cleanse them and completely encircle "the job" which they had started with the help of KFOR in the middle of June last year. The crimes in the Serb enclaves with murders throughout the towns are creating uneasiness which intensifies the pressure and rushes emigration. The mafia are killing the Albanians due to plunder, in order to revenge, because of dominance, old debts, abducting of the girls for "white slavery" and prostitution, and very often by habit, in order to create general chaos which is now the only regime in Kosovo.

Lately, along with the Albanians, KFOR soldiers have also become criminals. An American soldier first raped, and then killed a twelve-year-old girl. UNMIK leadership has apologized to the girl's parents for this loathsome crime. Following the until now apologizes, the Americans have no trouble with this. They have recently apologized to Hashim Taci, because they had found 1 million DEM in his brother's possession, arrested him and took the money away. They apologized to everyone - but to Serbs and Gypsies who had become daily victims of Albanian terrorists. According to the number of the murdered, there is no "closed hunting season" for them in Kosovo-Metohija.

Het Humanitarian Law Fund, een mensenrechtenorganisatie in Belgrado, heeft onderzoek gedaan naar misdaden in Kosovo. De wraakacties tegen Serviërs zijn niet goed te praten. Het VN-bestuur had een verkeerde boodschap afgegeven.

3-2-2000

De lessen van Orahovac

Abe de Vries

Het is wellicht de grootste fout van de internationale gemeenschap in Kosovo, zegt Natasa Kandic. Ze doelt op het half en half goedpraten van het Albanese etnisch geweld tegen de Serviërs na de intocht van de Kfor-troepen in juni vorig jaar.

„Iedere moord, iedere aanval op niet-Albanezen ontmoette begrip. De Albanezen werd gevraagd vooral geen wraak te nemen en de Serviërs te vergeven. Bernard Kouchner, de chef van het VN-bestuur, zei zelfs in het openbaar dat hij zich het geweld tegen de Serviërs kon voorstellen. Dat was de verkeerde boodschap. Een grote fout. Kouchner had moeten wijzen op de plicht van iedereen om zich aan de wet te houden."

Washington Post: World admits fiasco in Kosovo

February 13, 2000

<http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/2.jpg>

New York, February 12th (Tanjug) - The international community has admitted the failure of its mission in Kosovo and Metohija, Washington Post said on Saturday, pointing out that this was perfectly clear from reports and statements by two senior officials of the UN mission in that Serbian province.

Quoting parts of reports and statements by UN official in charge of humanitarian affairs Dennis MacNamara and OSCE Pristina office head Dan Everts, the daily said the international community had confirmed its own fiasco by failing in more than eight months to ensure the necessary security for ethnic minorities, as Serbs and other non-Albanians are incorrectly described here.

Despite of the fact that the Serbs are labeled as "minority" here, the Washington Post clearly states that the non-Albanian population suffers the terror of Kosmet Albanians. This was unmistakably stated by MacNamara, according to the daily, when he, while describing the situation in Kosmet as "difficult", stated that the "Serbs, Romanies, ethnic-Turks, Muslim-Slavs - are the targets of attacks and intimidation".

Furthermore, a part of the statement by a UN representative was also quoted as saying that Albanians are also amongst victims, but it was not specified whether these are the ones which do not wish to join and cooperate with the ethnic-Albanian terrorists and extremists.

Most of the victims of ethnically motivated hatred are Serbs, and the attackers are mostly ethnic Albanians, Washington Post said. Kosovo is a Serbian province within Yugoslavia, the Washington daily pointed out, and the United Nations mission has the role of administrator just temporarily, the daily said.

That mission, however, is not functioning at all, Washington Post concluded, quoting the OSCE representative, Everts, who points the finger of accusation at "foreign forces".

The international community, according to him, did not fulfill its promise, and these statements and the writings of the American press can no longer be taken as mere criticism of the shortage of staff and civilian police, but they uncover the wider range of reasons for which the UN mission, as their representatives now admit, reached a fiasco.

KOSOVO

Onthutsende puinhoop

Het Westen lijkt eindelijk door te krijgen dat ook Albanezen *bad guys* zijn en er in Kosovo een probleem is

In meanderende diplomatentaal onthulde de voormalige woordvoerder van het Amerikaanse ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, James Rubin, vorige week bij zijn bezoek aan Pristina een waarheid als een koe. 'Het besluit moet worden genomen dat we erkennen dat er een probleem is in Kosovo.' Het échte probleem is natuurlijk het gebrek aan oplossingen voor de chaos in Kosovo.

Niet zozeer Milosevic en de Serviërs, maar de Albanezen en hun georganiseerde misdaad zijn de boel aan het versjteren. Aan de exodus van de Serviërs uit Kosovo komt maar geen eind. De uittocht is het gevolg van alweer een planmatige 'etnische zuivering' waarbij de NAVO ditmaal machteloos toekijkt. KFOR-troepen zijn regelmatig doelwit van aanslagen door radicale Albanezen. In een sporadisch optreden tegen Albanezen hebben Amerikaanse KFOR-soldaten vorige week in het zuidoosten een aantal dorpen omsingeld en doorzocht, een actie die grote hoeveelheden illegale wapens opleverde. De laatste tijd is een van de hoofdtaken van de G.I.'s in die sector het voorkomen dat Albanese terroristen een oorlog langs de administratieve grens met Servië uitlokken.

Amerika's woordvoerder Rubin waarschuwde de Albanezen

Het lijkt erop dat de NAVO zich in een doodlopende straat heeft gemanoeuvreerd. Opeens daagt het dat de bondgenoten van het voormalige Kosovo Bevrijdingsleger UCK óók *bad guys* zijn. Niets nieuws, maar bij de bezetting van Kosovo was dat gemakshalve vergeten.

Voor het falen van KFOR en het VN-bestuur zijn vele verklaringen. Nog altijd is het een open vraag hoe de staatkundige toekomst van Kosovo eruit moet zien. De Albanezen koersen op onafhankelijkheid, dwars tegen resolutie 1244 van de Veiligheidsraad in. Van de VN krijgt Kosovo slechts 'substantiële autonomie' binnen Joegoslavië. Daarnaast gaat KFOR, niet op sterkte, in de regel confrontaties met Albanezen uit de weg om slachtoffers in de eigen gelederen te vermijden. Ook de internationale politie is onderbemand, slecht gemotiveerd en durft vaak niet op te treden.

Binnenkort komen, voor het eerst sinds januari 1999, mogelijk de landen van de Contactgroep voor het voormalig Joegoslavië bijeen om de situatie te bespreken. Wellicht wijst dat op een groeiende bereidheid om knopen door te hakken. De Verenigde Staten, Groot-Brittannië, Frankrijk, Duitsland en Rusland moeten kiezen: handhaving van de status-quo in het huidige, virtuele Kosovo, een ontmoedigende puinhoop waar de internationale gemeenschap slechts denkbeeldige successen boekt en alleen de persvoorlichting er de moed nog in houdt. Of een samenhangend beleid ontwikkelen, met gedurfde politionele en politieke initiatieven.

Hoopgevend is de recente Amerikaanse inzet voor een eerste project om Servische vluchtelingen naar dorpen rond de stad Pec te laten terugkeren. Het Amerikaanse ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken werkt daarbij samen met vertegenwoordigers van de Servisch-orthodoxe kerk. Voor de repatriëring van driehonderdduizend na de oorlog gevluchte niet-Albanezen is tot nu toe zo goed als niets gedaan. Servische leiders als de geestelijke Sava Janjic zien vooruitgang op dit gebied als een voorwaarde voor coöperatie met het VN-bestuur van Bernard Kouchner. KFOR kan zich voorbereiden op zware tegenstand van het nog steeds bewapende UCK.

Op staatkundig vlak ligt volgens waarnemers opdeling van Kosovo voor de hand. In dit scenario wordt het noorden, inclusief de helft van Kosovska Mitrovica, bij Servië gevoegd. De rest kan dan op korte termijn bijna volledig zelfbestuur krijgen, uitgezonderd de zorg voor openbare orde en veiligheid waarvoor nog jaren internationale presentie nodig is. De hamvraag is of de Contactgroep de Albanezen durft te dicteren dat een dergelijk Kosovo, samen met Servië en Montenegro, onderdeel uitmaakt van een toekomstige Joegoslavische confederatie – zodra Milosevic plaatsmaakt voor de Servische democratische oppositie. *Abe de Vries in Belgrado*

6 mei 2000

Vrijmarkt Kosovo

De economie van de Servische provincie bloeit. Maar smokkel en heroïnehandel zorgen voor de inkomsten, niet industrie en mijnbouw

ABE DE VRIES in Pristina

Stoffige trucks rijden af en aan met bakstenen, balken en dakpannen. De stad is een chaos van aftandse en gloednieuwe auto's, KFOR-wapentuig en witte VN-jeeps. Voor de winkels staan dozen met stereotorens en koelkasten hoog opgetast. Een *boom town* wordt Pristina al genoemd, maar wel eentje met Afrikaanse trekken. In Kosovo ontwikkelt zich in hoog tempo een op zwarte markten drijvende consumenteneconomie, waarin nauwelijks iets wordt geproduceerd en waarin de illegaliteit de industrie heeft vervangen. Solide investeerders uit het buitenland laten het afweten omdat onzeker is of Kosovo onafhankelijk wordt, of toch onderdeel blijft van Servië of Joegoslavië.

De potentieel grootste werkgever, de industrie, heeft financiële problemen die samenhangen met de vraag wie zich de rechtmatige eigenaar mag noemen van een aantal Joegoslavische staatsfabrieken. Van de Europese Unie mag niemand geld steken in zulke bedrijven. Daarbij komt dat de Missie van de Verenigde Naties in Kosovo (UNMIK), die onder leiding van Bernard Kouchner fabrieken tijdelijk bestuurt, niet veel meer doet dan op de winkel passen. En UNMIK wordt maar mondjesmaat gevoed door de VN: Kouchner is chronisch platzak.

De eigendomskwestie is de reden dat de Trepca-mijnen in het noorden, bij Kosovska Mitrovica, nog steeds niets produceren. In betere tijden exploiteerde de Joegoslavische maatschappij Trepca een van de rijkste vindplaatsen van lood en zink in de wereld, met een geschatte waarde van 10 miljard gulden. Het verouderde mijnen- en fabriekencomplex, nu in ruste, is door *The New York Times* de 'glimmende prijs' van de Kosovo-oorlog genoemd, de schat die straks de economie moet vlottrekken. UNMIK-woordvoerster Susan Manuel over de vertraging: 'Er liggen verschillende claims op Trepca. We zijn niet in de positie om die te kunnen beoordelen, dat moet een gerechtshof doen.' Bij de meeste half geprivatiseerde fabrieken en economische installaties die voor een deel ook nog Joegoslavisch staatseigendom zijn, doet UNMIK wat onderhoud en treft het maatregelen om de veiligheid van werknemers te vergroten. Het VN-bestuur moet een deel van de salarissen betalen, en dat terwijl de meeste bedrijven stilliggen vanwege achterstallig onderhoud en een tijdens de oorlog geplunderde inventaris. 'Onder deze omstandigheden kunnen we voor de privatisering alleen maar voorbereidingen treffen,' zegt Manuel.

Officiële cijfers over de economie in Kosovo van de laatste jaren zijn niet er niet. De Wereldbank stelt dat het Bruto Nationaal Product in de periode 1990-'95 met de helft terugliep, tot minder dan vierhonderd dollar per hoofd van de bevolking. Mijnbouw en metaal- en energieproductie brachten in de jaren zeventig en tachtig het meeste geld in het laatje, gevolgd door de landbouw. De zware industrie werd gefinancierd met leningen; eind jaren tachtig zat de provincie al in de schulden. Deels konden die worden afgelost met de opbrengst van een speciale 'Kosovo-belasting' die in het oude Joegoslavië werd geheven.

De handel is levendig in *boom town* Pristina

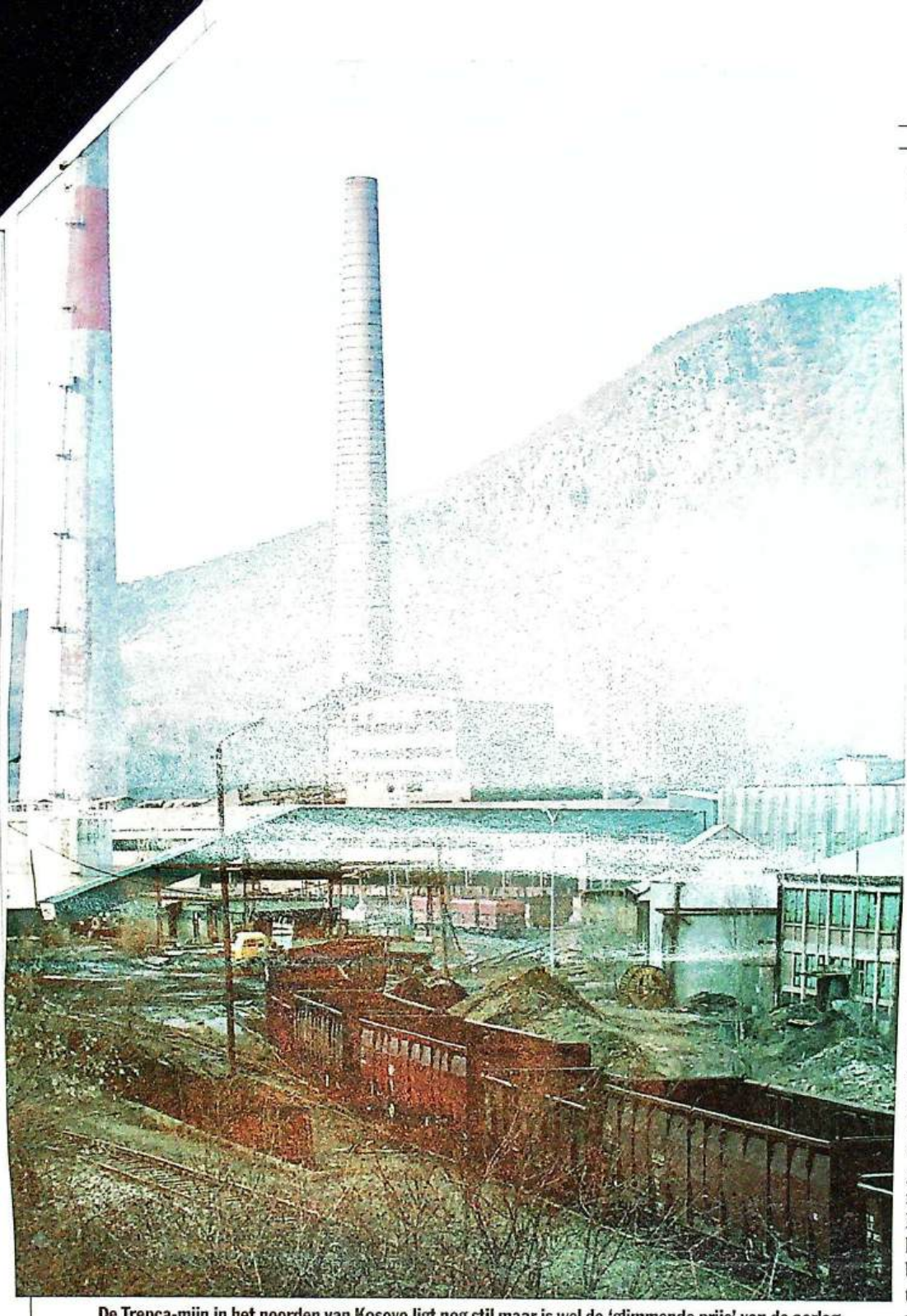
De huidige economische crisis is niet alleen het gevolg van de oorlog. Andere factoren zijn de Albanese boycot van Joegoslavische staatsbedrijven nadat Milosevic in 1989 de autonomie van de provincie inperkte, het daaruit voortvloeiende tekort aan hoogopgeleid Albanees personeel, en het verdwijnen van de interne Joegoslavische markt door de oorlogen in Kroatië en Bosnië.

De grootste mijn van Trepca is de Stari Trg, ten noordwesten van de half-Albanese, half-Servische stad Kosovska Mitrovica. Bijna drieduizend mijnwerkers werden begin jaren negentig door de Servische directie ontslagen, en de meesten zitten sindsdien zonder broodwinning. De Servische lezing, dat de werkers hun baan verloren omdat ze aan sabotage deden en om politieke redenen weigerden te werken, wijst Xhafer Nuli, de Albanese huismeester van de mijn, van de hand.

Begin maart maakte UNMIK bekend 1,5 miljoen mark van een sponsor te hebben gekregen voor vervanging van enkele technische installaties. Dit en volgend jaar is vijf miljoen mark nodig om volgens plan 860 ton mineralen te produceren. Uit een rapport van de Internationale Crisis Groep, een denktank voor de Balkan, van vorig jaar blijkt hoezeer de internationale gemeenschap met Trepca in haar maag zit. De druk is groot om de mijnen Kosovaars te maken en concessies te verkopen. Zonder acht te slaan op juridische complicaties adviseerde de ICG aan UNMIK het complex van Joegoslavië over te nemen, het liefst vóór in Servië verkiezingen worden gehouden. De ratio is dat de oppositie dan de schuld voor het verlies van Trepca op Milosevic kan schuiven. Maar de situatie in Kosovska Mitrovica doet vermoeden dat een regeling nog wel even op zich laat wachten. De botsingen tussen Serviërs, Albanezen en KFOR in de gedeelde stad kunnen uit de hand lopen als het VN-bestuur een oplossing zou forceren.

De 'vrijmarkt Kosovo' krijgt een vrijemarkteconomie, zo is voorzien tijdens de vredesbesprekingen in Rambouillet vorig jaar. De dinar heeft plaatsgemaakt voor de Duitse mark en tientallen staatsbedrijven zijn in de etalage gezet. Wat voor de Serviërs neerkomt op diefstal en plundering, is in Albanese ogen het herstellen van tien jaar onrecht. Maar het invoeren van een markteconomie blijkt lastig. Na de oorlog hebben zo'n driehonderd buitenlandse bedrijven interesse getoond om te investeren in tweehonderd publieke en private ondernemingen in Kosovo. Tot nu toe heeft alleen het Franse telecombedrijf Alcatel een contract gesloten.

De kansen van de kleinere bedrijven in Kosovo die al privé-eigendom zijn, lijken op de korte termijn beter. Onder auspiciën van de Europese Unie en de Wereldbank is vorig jaar door 47 donorlanden en 34 internationale organisaties bijna een miljard dollar bijeengebracht voor een herstelprogramma, waarvan vooral de kleinschalige bedrijvigheid in Kosovo moet profiteren. De Wereldbank verstrekt leningen aan bedrijven en geeft 'beleidsadviezen in economisch management', om de overgang te begeleiden naar een 'gezonde,



De Trepca-mijn in het noorden van Kosovo ligt nog stil maar is wel de 'glimmende prijs' van de oorlog

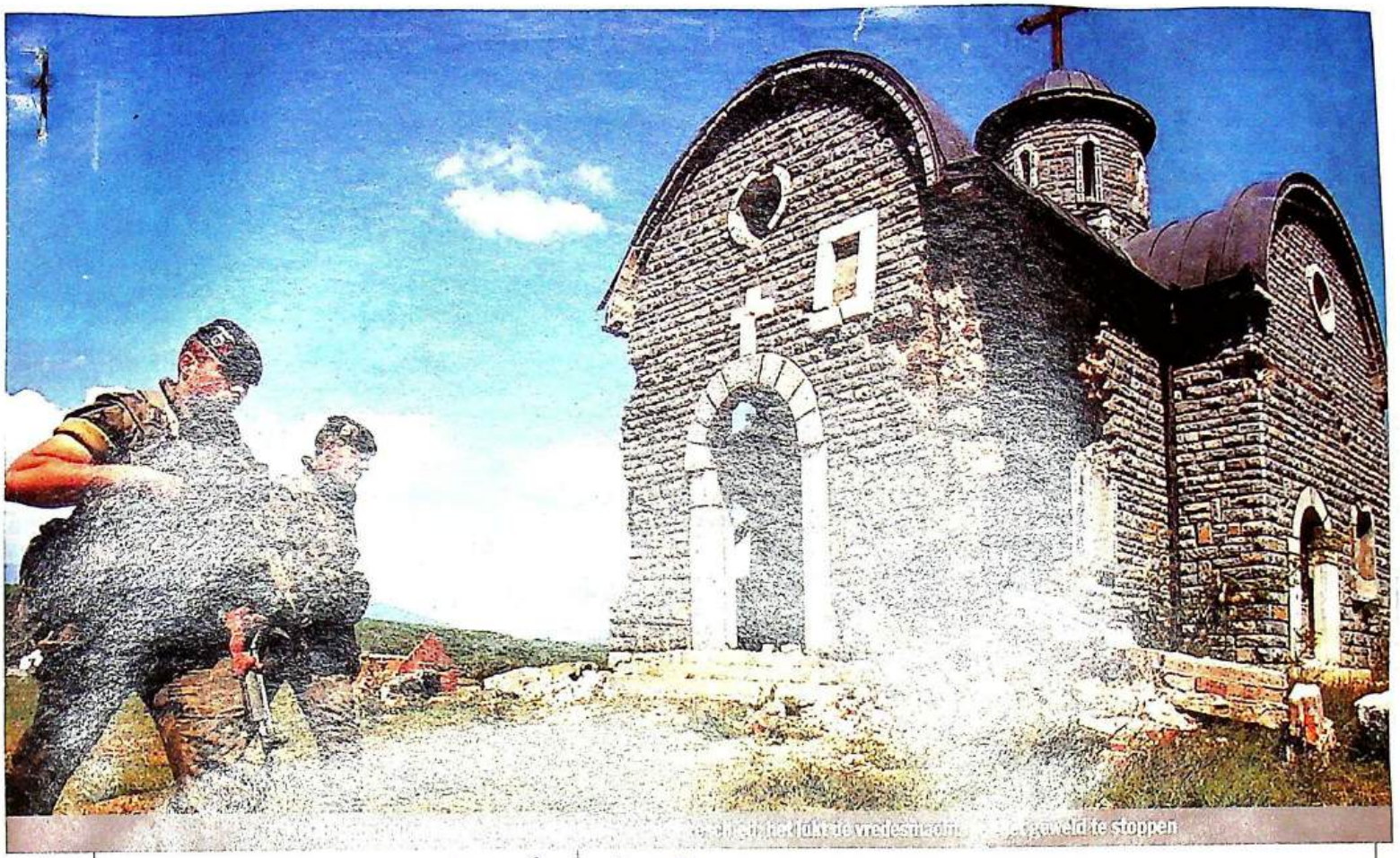
open en transparante markteconomie'.

Een hoofdrol in de transitie is weggelegd voor de eind januari in Pristina geopende Micro Enterprise Bank (MEB), de eerste commerciële bank van Kosovo. De MEB, gestart met geld van internationale instellingen en de Nederlandse en Duitse regeringen, biedt financiële diensten aan individuen en bedrijven. Maar verreweg de meeste bedrijfjes – alleen al in Pristina zijn er naar schatting veertigduizend – zijn gestart met geleend geld van rijke vrienden. Na vijftig jaar communisme zijn veel Albanezen huiverig een bank binnen te stappen om geld te vragen. Hashim Krasniqi, een 43-jarige eigenaar van een im- en exportbedrijf, zegt prima zonder de MEB te kunnen. Hij koopt cement in de Macedonische hoofdstad Skopje en verkoopt in Kosovo, Albanië en Montenegro. De oorlog en de verwoesting van 250 duizend huizen in Kosovo heeft hem geen windeieren gelegd, hoe wrang hij dat zelf ook vindt. Trots laat hij zijn nieuwe kantoor in het centrum van Pristina zien. Hij heeft een nieuwe Mercedes gekocht. 'De wereld denkt dat wij alleen maar goed kunnen schieten,' zegt hij. 'Maar we kunnen ook hard werken.'

De Albanezen kunnen ook smokkelen als de beste. Het juridische en staatkundige vacuüm waarin Kosovo zich bevindt, blokkeert sommige activiteiten maar bevordert andere, schimmiger handel. De hoge werkloosheid en het gebrek aan orde en gezag hebben van Kosovo het afgelopen jaar een smokkelparadijs gemaakt waar alles z'n prijs heeft en iedereen te koop is. Belangrijkste inkomstenbron is de georganiseerde criminaliteit, op allerlei gebied: afpersing, handel in gestolen huizen, appartementen, auto's, brandstof, wapens en vooral in harddrugs. Een coalitie van Hashim Thaci's Kosovo Bevrijdingsleger (UCK) en maffiabenden uit Albanië heeft zich na de oorlog meester gemaakt van zowel de legale als de illegale economie.

Europol en drugsbestrijdingsorganisaties zijn het er over eens dat 80 procent van de heroïne die in Europa op de markt komt via Kosovo wordt aangevoerd. Iedere maand 'verwerkt' de provincie vier tot vijf ton heroïne uit Turkije, een verdubbeling vergeleken met de periode voor de oorlog. Onderzoeker Michel Koutouzis van de Franse Global Drugs Monitor zei onlangs in het Amerikaanse blad *Mother Jones* meer bewijzen in Pristina te zien van de profijtelijke handel in heroïne dan effecten van de humanitaire hulp uit het Westen. 'De nieuwe gebouwen, de betere wegen, de geavanceerde wapens – veel is gekocht en betaald met drugs.'

Een volgend probleem is de brandstofsmokkel. Tientallen miljoenen liters benzine en diesel vloeien Kosovo binnen terwijl de belastinginspecteurs nauwelijks heffingen weten te innen. Volgens een bericht van de BBC heeft buurland Montenegro tot nu toe belasting geheven op 130 miljoen liter diesel en benzine bestemd voor Kosovo, terwijl UNMIK meestal achter het net viste. UNMIK probeerde onlangs wel 61 staatspompstations over te nemen. Het merendeel was al gekaapt door andere bedrijven, lees: connecties van Thaci. Om onduidelijke redenen werd het besluit teruggedraaid. 'De verwarring over de benzinehandel,' volgens de BBC, 'roept de vraag op of de VN wel zo vastbesloten is om bedrijven te besturen die de zelfbenoemde regering van Thaci vorige zomer in bezit nam.' Zolang Kouchner niet beschikt over één speciale politiebrigade voor zware criminaliteit, komt er van een gereguleerde vrijemarkteconomie niet veel terecht. Het papier van de UNMIK-bureaucratie mag gewillig zijn, voorlopig ordent Kosovo zichzelf. Het recht van de sterkste geldt in een goldrush zonder sheriff. ■



29 juli 2000

Kosovo: missie mislukt

Zelfs in eigen gelederen klinkt harde kritiek op het VN-bewind. Humanitair ingrijpen is eenvoudiger dan een multi-etnische regio besturen

ABE DE VRIES

Vanuit een auto gooien onbekende aanvallers handgranaten naar een huis. Snel schieten ze nog een paar magazijnen leeg, dan gaan ze er met piepende banden vandoor. Dagelijkse kost in Kosovo. Minderheden zijn steeds het doelwit: Serviërs, maar ook zigeuners, Bosnjaken en Gorani (Slavisch-sprekende moslims). Onderzoeken van de VN-politie en de vredesmacht KFOR leveren bijna nooit iets op. Orde en recht worden niet gehandhaafd. Het internationale gezag wordt genegeerd en uitgelachen. Vorige week werd de 86ste orthodoxe kerk opgeblazen sinds de komst van KFOR.

Afgemeten aan de eigen maatstaven is de vredesmissie mislukt. De doelstelling waarmee de NAVO in maart 1999 het luchtruim koos – de terugkeer van alle vluchtelingen en de vestiging van een voor iedereen veilige, multi-etnische samenleving – is niet langer haalbaar. Een jaar geleden zag Kosovo de terugkeer van honderdduizenden gevluchte en door Serviërs verdreven Albanezen, na het kordate humanitaire ingrijpen van de NAVO. Maar nu is de provincie overgeleverd aan de etnische terreur van een kleine groep Albanese criminelen, die zien dat de VN en KFOR te bang zijn om op te treden.

Een van de topfunctionarissen van het VN-bestuur, Dennis MacNamara, bracht de harde boodschap onlangs bij zijn afscheid. In een interview in *The International Herald Tribune* stelde hij dat de internationale gemeenschap 'niet werkelijk geïnteresseerd is, en niet heeft geïnvesteerd in enige serieuze poging het geweld te voorkomen of te stoppen.' Als gevolg daarvan is Kosovo onveilig en kunnen gevluchte minderheden niet terugkeren.

Rapporten waarin alarm wordt geslagen zijn er te over. Van de Hoge Commissaris van de VN voor de Vluchtelingen Jerzy Dienstbier, van de Organisatie voor Veiligheid en Samenwerking in Europa (OVSE), van Amnesty International en van Human Rights Watch, om de belangrijkste en best gedocumenteerde te noemen. Steeds zijn de adviezen gelijkluidend: breid snel de VN-politiemacht uit, maak haast met de ontwikkeling van een multi-etnisch juridisch apparaat. Toch zijn beide pijlers van recht en orde nog even wrak en rot als vorig jaar. De politie is onderbemand en durft vaak niet op te treden. Agenten die hun taak serieus nemen, houden het snel voor gezien. Bij de opbouw van het lokale rechtsapparaat gaat veel aandacht uit naar de berechting van Servische oorlogsmisdadigers; voor de bestraffing van intimidatie en terreur van alledag is minder geld beschikbaar.

Als ze anoniem mogen blijven, willen VN-functionarissen in Kosovo wel zeggen waar het aan schort. Landen die troepen leveren aan KFOR zijn niet bereid harde confrontaties met Albanese misdadigers aan te gaan omdat het slachtoffers in de eigen gelederen zou opleveren. Geen doden aan eigen kant: dat was al het devies van operatie *Allied Force*. Dat lukte ook, maar tegelijk vielen wel honderden Servische en Albanese burgerdoden door 'missers' bij de bombardementen.

Sinds juni vorig jaar zijn circa 160 duizend Serviërs gevlucht. Waar de verjaagde Albanezen na 77 dagen terug konden, wacht deze groep nog steeds op voorspoed, en dat geldt ook voor zeventigduizend zigeuners en duizenden andere niet-Albanezen. Wie toen bleef, leidt nu een leven in angst. De minderheden die leden onder het fascistische regime in Kosovo tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog,

n opnieuw op grote schaal mikpunt van emisch geweld. Destijds werden duizenden zigeuners door de Duitsers en hun Albanese handlangers omgebracht (de beruchte Albanese SS-divisie *Handschar*). De huidige Albanese haatcampagne tegen zigeuners wordt soms gezien als een logisch uitvloeisel van de kwalijke rol die sommige zigeuners tijdens de NAVO-bombardementen hebben gespeeld, als handlangers van Servische paramilitairen. **Maar het lijkt** erop dat ook afkeer van 'anderen' in het Albanese geweld meespeelt. Zigeuners zijn op de Balkan al snel de zondebok als er iets fout gaat. 'De ene etnische zuivering is in de plaats gekomen van de andere,' zei de Tsjech Dienstbier onlangs. Volgens hem heeft het VN-bestuur in Kosovo bij lange na niet de doelen gehaald die vorig jaar werden geformuleerd. De ontboezeming kwam hem op een felle reactie te staan van Bernard Kouchner, het hoofd van de VN in de provincie. 'Dienstbier moet zijn mond houden (*shut up*),' viel de Fransman uit. De Tsjech reageerde laconiek: 'Ook Kouchner weet wat ik weet. Hij is niet voor niets zenuwachtig.'

NAVO, VN en KFOR kunnen zich laten voorstaan op onbetwistbare successen. Zoals de snelle terugkeer van achthonderdduizend Albanezen, de reparatie van tienduizenden verwoeste huizen, en het opbloeien van handel en middenstand. Maar als een paar honderdduizend andere vluchtelingen een jaar later in miserabele omstandigheden nog op repatriëring wachten, en als terroristen en criminelen dan nog steeds koning van de straat zijn, kan van een succesvolle interventie niet meer worden gesproken.

Humanitair ingrijpen blijkt eenvoudiger dan een veelgeplaagde multi-etnische provincie fatsoenlijk besturen. De praktische problemen zijn veel groter dan verwacht. Té groot, blijkt in de praktijk. De slinkende Servische minderheid in Kosovo – schattingen van het aantal achtergebleven Serviërs lopen uiteen van veertig- tot negentigduizend – wantrouwt Kouchner en is politiek verdeeld. Het noorden, met de gedeelde stad Kosovska Mitrovica, raakt steeds vaster in handen van Milosevic-getrouwen. Albanese leiders als de voormalige UCK-hoofdman Hashim Thaci zien hierin de voorbode van een definitieve opsplitsing van Kosovo in Albanese en Servische kantons, een regeling die zij categorisch afwijzen.

BEVOLKING VAN KOSOVO

Niet-Albanezen hebben massaal de benen genomen

(Schattingen, gebaseerd op omstreden volkstelling in 1991, conflicterende claims, demografische ontwikkelingen en publicaties van UNHCR en OVSE)

ELSEVIER

GEVLUCHT EN VERDREVEN

Resultaat van 'omgekeerde' etnische zuiveringen door Albanezen

BRON: WWW.DECANI.COM

'Kouchner is niet voor niets zenuwachtig over VN-missie'

Enkele recente maatregelen van Kouchner, zoals het toestaan van ongewapende burgerwachten in gebieden met een Servische meerderheid, hebben Thaci's woede gewekt. De afgelopen weken boycotte zijn belangrijke Democratische Partij van Kosovo (PDK) de adviesraad van het VN-bestuur. Waarnemers signaleren dat Thaci's populariteit daalt omdat hij te veel zou hebben toegegeven aan Kouchner. Met gemeenteraadsverkiezingen in oktober in het vooruitzicht, hoopt hij met een harde opstelling de gunst van groepen voormalige UCK-strijders terug te winnen.

Voor Kouchner is het welslagen van de verkiezingen van groot belang: hij kan dan aantonen dat de VN vooruitgang boeken en dat Kosovo ondanks alles normaliseert. Zijn schrikbeeld is dat de achterban van een aantal Albanese politieke partijen bij de komende stembusronde wegblijft. Tegenwerking van de kleine groep resterende Serviërs kan de VN-gouverneur nog te boven komen, maar de Albanese nationalisten te zeer tegen de haren instrijken is ongewenst. Mede daarom is in Kosovo geen ingrijpende beleidswijziging doorgevoerd sinds in de herfst van vorig jaar duidelijk werd dat het optreden van de internationale gemeenschap ter bescherming van minderheden onvoldoende resultaat had.

Vaststaat dat de verkiezingen zullen uitlopen op een grote overwinning van Albanees-nationalistische partijen die aansturen op onafhankelijkheid van Kosovo. Optimisten hopen dat in oktober een eerste schrede wordt gezet op het doornige pad van de democratie; in werkelijkheid zal de politieke macht op een gelegitimeerde manier in handen komen van clan-, bende- en maffialeiders die de betekenis van het woord 'democratie' moeten opzoeken.

De overgrote meerderheid van de Serviërs boycot de verkiezingen. Slechts enkele honderden van de veertig- tot negentigduizend achtergebleven Serviërs hebben zich als kiezer laten registreren. Veel Servische vluchtelingen en zigeuners buiten Kosovo nemen de moeite niet omdat ze toch geen kans op terugkeer zien. Maar de stembusstrijd uitstellen en beter voorbereiden is volgens de OVSE, die de verkiezingen begeleidt, niet gewenst. 'Als we meer tijd hadden, zouden we naar andere opties kunnen kijken,' zei OVSE-ambassadeur Daan Everts onlangs. 'Maar oktober is de verkiezingsmaand. Er is veel pressie, zowel vanuit Kosovo als van de internationale gemeenschap, om dan te gaan stemmen.'

Een kleine bevolkingsgroep – de joden – heeft de provincie inmiddels geheel verlaten. In de hoofdstad Pristina leefden vóór *Allied Force* enkele tientallen leden van een paar joodse families. Cedomir Prlincevic, de leider van de joodse gemeenschap in Pristina, is gevlucht. Hij woont nu in Belgrado.

'Mensen uit Albanië kwamen ons land binnen,' zei hij in een interview met een Amerikaanse journalist. 'Hun hoofddoel was om alle niet-Albanese inwoners te verwijderen.' Prlincevic woonde in de wijk Milana, waar extremisten uit Albanië binnentrokken op de dag dat ook de Britse KFOR-troepen hun intocht maakten. Dit zei hij over de 'etnische schoonmaak' van zijn flat: 'KFOR was daar, zag alles. En liet ze hun gang gaan'. ■

"Politika" Belgrad, 20.05.2000

Propagandalügen während der NATO-Aggression

"Hufeisen-Plan" wurde in Bonn, nicht in Belgrad gemacht

Zur Entlarvung des Propagandakrieges, der während der NATO-Aggression gegen unser Land geführt wurde, leistete das politische Magazin "Panorama" des ersten Programms des deutschen Staatsfernsehens ARD am gestrigen Abend einen bedeutsamen Beitrag.

Das älteste und angesehnste politische Magazin, es wird seit 1961 ausgestrahlt, bewies argumentiert, dass die westliche Propagandamaschinerie Lügen über Massengräber in Kosovo fabrizierte, die wahren Gründe der humanitären Katastrophe verheimlichte und angebliche Pläne über ethnische Säuberung freierfand. "Panorama" zeigte Millionen Zuschauern authentische Dokumente aus deutschen Bundesministerien, die umfangreiche Ausmaße propagandistischer Betrügereien ankündigen, die während der Aggression realisiert wurden.

Eines der Schlüsselargumente westlicher "Falken" bei der Rechtfertigung der Aggression bestand in der These von der angeblichen humanitären Katastrophe im Kosmet. Aus diesem Anlass zeigte "Panorama" zwei Dokumente, jeweils eines aus dem Auswärtigen Amt und dem Verteidigungsministerium, die nur einige Tage vor dem Aggressionsbeginn ein ganz anderes Bild über die Lage in Kosovo-Metochien vermittelten.

"Die Serben sind noch nicht fähig, eine militärische Großaktion in Kosovo vorzunehmen", heisst es im Bericht des Verteidigungsministeriums vom 23. März 1999, nur einen Tag vor dem Aggressionsbeginn. "Es werden nur zeitweilige lokal begrenzte Einsätze gegen die UCK unternommen."

"Panorama" zeigt auch das Dokument des Auswärtigen Amtes vom 19. März 1999, in dem es heißt: "Die Serben warnen die albanische Zivilbevölkerung vor ihren militärischen Einsätzen. Nach dem Abzug der serbischen Sicherheitskräfte kehrt die geflüchtete albanische Bevölkerung in ihre Häuser zurück. Es gibt keine Massenflucht in die Wälder, es gibt keine Versorgungskatastrophe".

Prof. Dieter Lutz vom Institut für Erforschung des Friedens und der Sicherheit erklärte nach der Lektüre dieser Dokumente: "Bei der Lektüre dieser Berichte muß man besorgt sein, vor allem bezüglich jener Teile, in denen es heißt, daß UCK-Befehlshaber ihr Volk in diejenigen Ortschaften

schickten, die zur Zielscheibe der NATO geworden sind."

Auf Grund neuer Erkenntnisse stellt "Panorama" fest: "Humanitäre Katastrophe, die Deutschland als Rechtfertigung diente, sich dem NATO-Angriff gegen Jugoslawien anzuschließen, gab es also nicht; davon gibt es keinerei Spuren in den Dokumenten deutscher Staatsorgane. Das Bombardement wurde trotzdem entfesselt."

Bei der Weiterentwicklung der Story über die brutale Militärintervention der NATO auf dem Balkan warnt "Panorama" davor, dass "die humanitäre Katastrophe gleich mit der Aggression ins Gebiet einzog".

"Die Offentlichkeit stellte sich die Frage, ob die Verhandlungen doch eine bessere Lösung wären", stellt das politische ARD-Magazin fest. In einer besonders schweren Lage fand sich Verteidigungsminister Rudolf Scharping. "Panorama" zitiert Auszüge aus dem Kriegstagebuch des deutschen Militärministers:

"Mich elektrisiert ein Hinweis, dass offenbar Beweise dafür vorliegen, dass das jugoslawische Vorgehen im Kosovo einen seit langem feststehenden Operationsplan folgt...", heißt es in seiner Notiz vom 31. März 1999.

Das war nur eine Ankündigung, aber etwa zwei Wochen später, teilte Scharping triumphierend seine Story über den "Hufeisen-Plan" mit, der die Vertreibung der ganzen albanischen Bevölkerung von Kosovo-Metochien beinhalten soll. Für den Verteidigungsminister war das das Schlüsselargument: Deutsche Teilnahme an der Aggression ist also begründet.

"Endlich haben wir einen Beweis dafür, dass schon im Dezember 1998 eine systematische Säuberung und Vertreibungen der Kosovo-Albaner geplant worden waren", schrieb Scharping am 7. April 1999 in seinem Tagebuch nieder.

Darauf hat "Panorama" nur eine Frage: War "Operation Hufeisen" wirklich wahr? Diese Frage beantwortet der pensionierte deutsche General Heinz Loquai, Militärberater der OSZE. "Im deutschen Verteidigungsministerium wurde mir dieser Plan nicht gezeigt. Was mir gezeigt wurde, waren Operationspläne der jugoslawischen Armee und der Sicherheitskräfte. Wie mir gesagt wurde, wurden die Grafiken zum Plan im deutschen Verteidigungsministerium erarbeitet", erklärte General Loquai.

"Panorama" fügt ein weiteres Dokument des Verteidigungsministeriums hinzu, in dem es heisst: "Die Details der 'Operation Hufeisen' sind nicht bekannt.

General Loquai schlußfolgert: "Ich machte eine Detailstudie der 'Operation Hufeisen', worin ich die Berichte der deutschen Botschaft aus Belgrad eingliedern wollte. Das wurde mit der Begründung abgelehnt, dass diese Dokumente 'sehr empfindlich' seien. Auf Grund meiner Untersuchungen kann ich sagen, dass der deutsche Minister in seinen Ausführungen über 'Operation Hufeisen' keine Wahrheit mitgeteilt hat."

...l allen Darlegungen kam "Pa-...na" zur folgenden Schlussfol-...gerung: "Wir wurden mit dem schlimmsten Zweifel konfrontiert, dass "Operation Hufeisen" eben nicht in Belgrad, sondern in Bonn erarbeitet wurde".

Dem Beitrag des ARD-Magazins folgte noch eine Fortsetzung. Die Moderatorin informierte die Zuschauer, dass aus dem Verteidigungsministerium eine Mitteilung gekommen ist, in welcher der Inhalt des Magazins im Voraus dementiert wird. Sie kommentierte es mit folgenden Worten: "Warum hat Verteidigungsminister Scharping unsere Einladung nicht angenommen, an der 'Panorama' teilzunehmen und Fragen im Zusammenhang mit dem 'Hufeisen-Plan' zu beantworten?"

Zarko Rakic

"Nedeljni telegraf" Beograd, 18.03.2000

Beunruhigung in Italien nach dem Leukämie-Tod zweier SFOR-Soldaten

Zwei italienische SFOR-Soldaten aus der internationalen Bosnien-Mission aus dem Zeitraum November 1998 - April 1999, Salvatore Vacca (23) und Giuseppe Pintus (28), sind im September bzw. Oktober 1999 an Leukämie gestorben. Wie die italienische Tageszeitung "Il manifesto" schreibt, wurden ihre lebenlosen Körper durch die italienische Armee und die NATO gleich mit einer Schweigemauer umringt. Erst jetzt werden dramatische Fragen nach Ursachen ihres Todes sowie nach dem Vorhandensein des Uran in den Gebieten, in denen diese junge Menschen dienten, gestellt.

"Wahrscheinlich wissen alle es nicht, dass die Amerikaner in Kosovo und zuvor in Bosnien uranhaltige Projektile eingesetzt haben, wie das übrigens im Golfkrieg der Fall war. Das ist das Metall, welches in Berührung mit der Luft explodiert und superfeines Urandioxydpulver befreit. Allein das Aufatmen seiner Teilchen reicht dazu, schreckliche Schäden im Organismus auszulösen, die bis zur Zerstörung der Desoxyribonukleinsäure in den durch den Uran befallenen Zellen reicht. Die Familien der Verstorbenen zweifelten seit immer daran, dass ihre Kinder in den nördlichen Teilen von Sarajevo mit radioaktiven Substanzen oder sonstigen leukämieerzeugenden Mitteln in Berührung gekommen sind und dass

solche Stoffe von der NATO und dem italienischen Heer in Bosnien eingesetzt wurden," erklärte Antonello Repeto.

"Der Tod der beiden Soldaten, so Repeto, könnte den Beginn einer langdauernden Serie darstellen, da Kosovo, Serbien und Bosnien schon radioaktiv übersättigt wurden. Die italienische Armee hat schon Sorgen um radioaktive Verseuchung Kosovos mit Uranbomben. Die von der NATO erhaltenen Landkarten zeigen genau die Stellen, die mit uranhaltigen Bomben beschossen worden sind. Das trifft insbesondere auf die Autostrasse Pec-Djakovica-Prizren, eben auf die Region zu, die von den italienischen Soldaten kontrolliert wird. Deshalb wurden mit einer Verspätung von sechs Monaten vorbeugende Maßnahmen getroffen. Den Soldaten wurden aus elf Punkten bestehende Anweisungen verteilt, die Informationen über das abgereicherte Uran und den erforderlichen Umgang damit vermitteln (nicht explodierte Sprengkörper nicht berühren, Nase und Mund im riskanten Gebiet schützen, um das Einatmen des uranhaltigen Staubs zu verhindern, sich selbst und Uniformen oft waschen). Das Problem liegt aber darin, dass Freiwillige aus humanitären Organisationen und Kosovo-Zivilisten, (vor allem Kinder, die mit vernichteten Kampffahrzeugen spielen und Bombenteile sammeln) dieselbe Maßnahmen nicht treffen."

"Zu den besonders stark mit uranhaltigen Bomben beschossenen Gebieten zählen einige Zonen um Pristina, Gnjilane und Kosovska Mitrovica. Was aber fehlt, ist die Detailkarte des Bombardements Serbiens, wo die Lage noch schlimmer sein könnte, vor allem infolge chemischer Verpestungen, die durch die Zerstörung chemischer Fabriken ausgelöst wurden, ohne dabei die Agonie der Donau zu erwähnen", stellt "Il manifesto" abschließend fest.

M.P.

Oorlog stelt nog hogere eisen aan democratie

'AFKAPPEN die discussie' gebaarde premier Kok naar de Kamervoorzitter toen er een serieuze discussie in de Tweede Kamer over de inzet van grondtroepen in Kososvo dreigde (*de Volkskrant*, 8 april). Of dit een staatsrechtelijk juist gebaar was, wie maakt zich daar in oorlogstijd druk over?

Discussie over de doelstellingen van een land in oorlog, dat zou de voortgang van de NAVO-operatie maar schaden. Bovendien: Nederland is volgens eigen zeggen niet in oorlog, de staat voert in NAVO-verband een humanitaire missie uit. Dit eufemistische taalgebruik versluiert de werkelijkheid. Het NAVO-verdrag heeft een defensief karakter en het verdrag kent geen vredesoperaties in naam van de internationale rechtsorde.

De enige instantie die daartoe gerechtigd is, is de V-raad en die is verdeeld. Die verdeeldheid is een politiek feit en vindt zijn weerslag in de moeilijke verhoudingen tussen Rusland en het Westen.

Strikt genomen heeft de Nederlandse regering dus een besluit tot een oorlog genomen.

'Navo liet Milosevic geen andere keuze dan strijd'

22-7-2000

Van onze redactie buitenland

AMSTERDAM – De Navo heeft Slobodan Milosevic gedwongen tot een oorlog door de Joegoslavische leider onmogelijke eisen te stellen. Dat stelt Lord Gilbert, Brits staatssecretaris van defensie tijdens de Navo-acties tegen Joegoslavië, vorig jaar.

„Ik denk dat sommige mensen in de Navo in die tijd stonden te trappelen om te vechten. Ik denk dat de voorwaarden die Milosevic in Rambouillet werden opgelegd absoluut onaanvaardbaar waren. Hoe zou hij ze hebben kunnen accepteren? Het is met opzet gedaan", schrijft hij in een verklaring voor de defensiecommissie van het Britse parlement waar de Britse krant *The Guardian* beslag op wist te leggen.

In Rambouillet waren, onder leiding van westerse bemiddelaars, begin 1999 vertegenwoordigers van de Kosovaarse Albanezen en de Serviërs bijeen om te pogen een oplossing te vinden voor het toenemend geweld in Kosovo. Uiteindelijk gingen alleen de Albanezen akkoord met het plan dat door de EU en de VS was voorgelegd. De Serviërs weigerden, waarna eind maart de bombardementen begonnen.

De Navo heeft deze oorlog gewild, aldus Gilbert, maar vervolgens heeft ze hem ontzettend stom gevoerd. In plaats van meteen hard toe te slaan, zodat er snel een eind aan het Servisch verzet kon worden gemaakt, begon de Navo met lichte aanvallen op beperkte doelen.

Gilbert, ten tijde van de Navo-acties verantwoordelijk voor de inlichtingendiensten, zegt dat de Franse president Chirac plannen om bruggen in Belgrado te bombarderen heeft tegengehouden waardoor de acties en het lijden van de Kosovaren langer hebben geduurd.

advertentie

BRITSE MINISTER DOET MOND OPEN

NAVO-oorlog was opzettelijk

22-7-2000

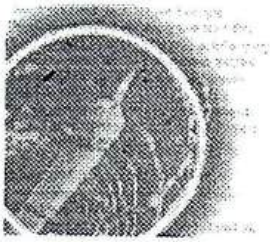
VAN DE REDACTIE

LONDEN - In een opmerkelijke verklaring heeft de Britse onderminister voor Defensie ten tijde van de Kosovo-oorlog, Lord Gilbert, erkend dat de NAVO willens en wetens op een oorlog met Joegoslavië heeft aangestuurd. Voor de 'defence select committee' van het Britse parlement verklaarde hij: "Ik denk dat sommige mensen op dat moment op een conflict uit waren. De eisen aan Milosevic in Rambouillet waren absoluut onaanvaardbaar. Hoe kon hij deze accepteren? Het werd duidelijk met opzet gedaan." Gilbert, die als minister verantwoordelijk was voor de inlichtingendiensten, zei dat de NAVO Joegoslavië tot oorlog gedwongen heeft. Gilbert gaf ook forse kritiek op het verloop van de oorlog. Hij beschuldigde zijn eigen chefs van de inlichtingendiensten van een paternalistische houding en van het weigeren om hem informatie te geven. Vooral haalde hij uit naar de Franse president Chirac. Hij noemde Chirac's erkenning dat hij een veto had uitgesproken tegen het bombarderen van de bruggen in Belgrado "de meest ongewone uitspraak, ooit door een westers staatsman gedaan". Sarcastisch prees hij Chirac voor "de moed om de verantwoordelijkheid op zich te nemen van het onnodig rekken van de oorlog, waardoor de bevolking van Kosovo onnodig langer geleden heeft en zijn eigen piloten langer dan noodzakelijk aan risico's zijn blootgesteld". Hij noemde de NAVO-strategie van het stapsgewijs opvoeren van aanvalsdoelen een "militaire onzin vanaf het begin af aan, gebaseerd op politieke terughoudendheid".

De suggestie die het hoofd van de defensiestaf, Sir Charles Guthrie, had gewekt dat de NAVO in september 1999 een grondleger had kunnen opbouwen om het Joegoslavische leger te verdrijven, noemde Gilbert volstrekt belachelijk. "We hadden een invasie in september kunnen ondernemen, maar dan in september van dit jaar, niet het afgelopen jaar."

Hij had ook weinig goede woorden voor het werk van de inlichtingendiensten. Hij vond dat de inlichtingendienst van het ministerie van defensie "stevig in de nekharen moest worden gepakt en door elkaar geschud moest worden". "Het is noodzakelijk om eens goed de kwaliteit van de Britse en Amerikaanse inlichtingendienst te onderzoeken", aldus Gilbert. "We kregen zeer uiteenlopende informatie over de moraal van de Serviërs en wat er zou kunnen gebeuren in een post-Milosevic tijdperk. Ik moet zeggen dat het buitengewoon moeilijk was om te geloven wat er werd doorgegeven".

Wat Gilbert vooral opmerkelijk vond was dat DERA, het defensie evaluatie en onderzocksbureau, niet minder dan honderd psychologen in dienst had. "Ik was zeer verbaasd toen ik dit ontdekte." Ten aanzien van zijn eigen rol verklaarde Gilbert: "Je weet hoe het gaat, je stelt en vraag drie keer en als je dan geen antwoord krijgt dan geef je het maar op. Je bent tenslotte alleen maar een nederige minister".



Amnesty International - News Release - EUR 70/03/00
13 January 2000

YUGOSLAVIA

Kosovo: KFOR must act now to curb violence against ethnic minorities

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News Service 008/00
AI INDEX: EUR 70/03/00
13 January 2000

Kosovo: KFOR must act now to curb violence against ethnic minorities

The murder of a Slavic Muslim family in Prizren town yesterday highlights the continuing failure of the international community to protect the human rights of all minorities in Kosovo, Amnesty International said today.

The slain victims -- a father, mother, daughter and elderly grandmother -- were shot dead in their home by an unknown perpetrator in the southern Kosovo town of Prizren where ethnic Turks, Serbs, Roma, Slavic Muslims and the Gorani live alongside ethnic Albanians.

Murders, violent attacks, intimidation against minorities and house burnings in the Prizren area have continued at an alarming rate since the departure of the Yugoslav forces and deployment of the international security presence (KFOR) in June 1999.

Almost all Serbs in the villages surrounding Prizren have been compelled to leave their homes. Members of the Serb community and other minorities frequently seek refuge in the Serbian Orthodox Church where they await an escort out of Kosovo.

"Although the majority of victims over the past six months have been elderly Serbs and Roma, violence and intimidation against other minorities, particularly Slavic Muslims and the Gorani, has steadily continued in the past three months," Amnesty International said.

"After repeated appeals from the remaining minority communities for enhanced security in the Prizren area, KFOR increased measures in December to provide protection to them. Despite this, violence against minorities and destruction of their property has increased sharply in recent weeks culminating in this horrific incident."

"There are currently 42,500 KFOR troops in Kosovo with the mandate to create a secure environment for all communities. It is time for the international presence to fulfil its obligation to protect human rights and take urgent action to prevent further human rights abuses," Amnesty International urged.

Background
In June 1999 the international security and civilian presences, KFOR and UNMIK, were deployed to Kosovo by the United Nations to order to create a secure environment and to protect and promote the human rights of all. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were given the specific mandate to protect minorities in Kosovo. However, more than six months after the deployment of KFOR and UNMIK, human rights abuses against Serbs, Roma and increasingly Kosovo's smaller minority communities, continue to be perpetrated on a daily basis.

Source: ***Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, WC1X 8DJ, London, United Kingdom***

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Britse onderminister vernietigend over rol NAVO in Kosovo-oorlog

21-7-2000

The Guardian

LONDEN

De Engelse onderminister van Defensie die tijdens de Kosovo-oorlog verantwoordelijk was voor de inlichtingendiensten, heeft een vernietigende aanval gedaan op de manier waarop de oorlog is gevoerd, op de inadequaatheid van de Britse geheime dienst en op de Franse president Jacques Chirac, die de veiligheid van zijn eigen piloten in gevaar heeft gebracht.

Gilbert was onderminister voor militair materieel en formeel verantwoordelijk voor de geheime dienst. In een verklaring voor een defensiecommissie van het Britse parlement die gisteren is gepubliceerd, zegt hij dat de geallieerden president Slobodan Milosevic tot oorlog hebben gedwongen.

'Ik denk dat sommige mensen in de NAVO in die tijd stonden te trappelen om te vechten. Ik denk dat de voorwaarden die Milosovic in Rambouillet werden voorgelegd absoluut onaanvaardbaar waren. Hoe zou hij ze hebben kunnen accepteren? Het is met opzet gedaan.'

Hij beschuldigde er zijn eigen leidinggevenden in de geheime dienst ervan een neerbuigende houding te hebben en hem informatie te hebben onthouden. In een zeldzame aanval op een NAVO-partner leverde Lord Gilbert speciaal kritiek op Chirac, vooral op diens bekentenis dat hij een veto had uitgesproken over de vernietiging van bruggen over rivieren bij Belgrado. Hij beschreef dit als 'een van de opmerkelijkste opmerkingen die een westerse staatsman ooit heeft gedaan'.

Hij prees Chirac op een sarcastische wijze ervoor 'de moed te hebben om verantwoordlijkheid te nemen voor het feit dat de vijandelijkheden veel langer doorgingen dan nodig en dat de stakkers in Kosovo als gevolg daarvan veel meer hebben geleden dan nodig was en dat zijn eigen piloten veel meer aan gevaar zijn blootgesteld dan noodzakelijk'.

Hij zei dat het beleid van de NAVO om met gefaseerde intensiteit doelen te kiezen 'direct vanaf het begin militair gesproken nonsens was en gebaseerd op politieke angst'. Lord Gilbert maakte de suggestie van de chef van de defensiestaf Sir Charles Cuthrie belachelijk dat de NAVO in staat was geweest om afgelopen september een tegeninvasie in Kosovo te organiseren om het Servische leger te verdrijven.

'Ik denk dat een invasie te land van Kosovo mogelijk zou zijn geweest in september. Maar dan niet september vorig jaar maar september dit jaar', zei hij. 'De geheime dienst van het Britse ministerie van Defensie moet bij haar nekvel worden gepakt en heen en weer geschud. Men moet eens serieus kijken naar de kwaliteit van de Britse en Amerikaanse geheime diensten.'

Tijdens Kosovo-oorlog

NAVO-video luchtaanval gaf fout beeld

Door onze correspondent

WASHINGTON, 8 JAN. Het Amerikaanse ministerie van defensie heeft tijdens de Kosovo-oorlog een verkeerde indruk gegeven van een NAVO-bombardement op een spoorbrug, waarbij zeker tien mensen om het leven kwamen.

De videobeelden van het incident, die het Pentagon destijds vrijgaf om te laten zien dat de NAVO-piloot op het laatste moment zag dat er een trein op de brug reed, blijkt drie keer te snel te zijn afgedraaid.

De Amerikanen ontkennen dat ze de beelden opzettelijk versneld hebben. De Amerikaanse generaal Wesley Clark, opperbevelhebber van de NAVO, vertoonde de video op 13 april, een dag na het bombardement, tijdens een persconferentie in Brussel. De snelheid van de gebeurtenissen stond centraal in de verklaring die hij gaf voor de ongewilde voltreffer op de trein.

Volgens Clark lieten de beelden zien dat de piloot van het gevechtsvliegtuig (een F15-E) zijn vizier op een lege brug had gericht. De trein verscheen zo snel in beeld, aldus Clark, dat de aanval niet meer ongedaan gemaakt kon worden. De man die de raket vanuit het vliegtuig naar zijn doel leidde „zag opeens, op het allerlaatste moment, met nog een seconde te gaan, een flits op zijn scherm: de trein die aan kwam rijden. Helaas kon hij de bom op dat moment niet laten afzwaaien, hij was al ingesteld en vloog op zijn doel af."

Het feit dat Clark abusievelijk versnelde beelden gebruikte „verandert niets aan de harde feiten dat de bemanning niets meer kon doen om de koers van de raket te wijzigen", zei een woordvoerder van het Pentagon donderdag. Ook als de band op de juiste snelheid was afgedraaid, zou gebleken zijn dat de man die de sturing van de raket bediende slechts twee of drie seconden had om op de aanstormende trein te reageren. Maar *The Washington Post* tekende daarbij gisteren aan dat het toestel even later nog een tweede raket afvuurde.

Het Pentagon verklaart de fout met de videoband uit de haast van de NAVO om het publiek in de eigen lidstaten een verklaring te geven voor de aanval op de trein. Het bondgenootschap was er op gebrand om zo snel mogelijk beschuldigingen tegen te spreken als zouden de bombardementen behalve op militaire en strategische doelen, ook op burgers zijn gericht. De beelden van de verwoeste trein op de brug kregen in de Westerse media veel aandacht.

Bij Amerikaanse luchtaanvallen worden routinematig video-opnamen gemaakt, om later te kunnen vaststellen of de doelen zijn verwoest. Volgens het Pentagon worden die beelden door technici omgezet in computer-data, waarbij ze worden versneld en gecomprimeerd. Daardoor kunnen ze beter worden opgeslagen in computers.

Verschillende cijfers over Kosovo zijn in omloop

Treffers NAVO onzeker

De onduidelijkheid over het aantal voltreffers van de NAVO in Kosovo zal nooit verdwijnen.

2000

Door een onzer redacteuren

ROTTERDAM, 10 MEI. De NAVO zal nooit weten hoeveel doelen zij geraakt heeft tijdens de 78 dagen durende luchtcampagne om Kosovo vorig jaar. Verschillende cijfers over het exacte aantal geraakte mobiele doelen zoals Servische tanks en pantservoertuigen blijven circuleren. Ook in reactie op een publicatie in het Amerikaanse weekblad *Newsweek* kon het Pentagon deze week geen precieze aantallen of volledige duidelijkheid geven over het aantal voltreffers van de NAVO.

Volgens Newsweek zou uit een met opzet achtergehouden rapport van de Amerikaanse luchtmacht blijken dat - aantoonbaar - slechts veertien Servische tanks en achttien pantservoertuigen zijn getroffen door de NAVO-bombardementen. NAVO-commandant generaal Wesley Clark rapporteerde vorig jaar september dat de luchtmacht had vastgesteld dat er 93 tanks en 153 pantservoertuigen van de Serviërs waren geraakt. Clarks cijfers waren bescheidener dan die van de Amerikaanse stafchef generaal Shelton, die in juni gewag maakte van 120 tanks en circa 220 pantservoertuigen, die waren geraakt. Shelton had ook beweerd dat 450 stukken artillerie waren geraakt, terwijl dat aantal volgens het vermeende luchtmachtrapport maar 20 was.

Het Pentagon en brigadier-generaal John Corley van de Amerikaanse luchtmacht hebben in reactie op de publicatie ontkend dat het Amerikaanse leger en de NAVO de schade aan Servische mobiele doelen zwaar hebben overdreven, in een vermeende poging de overwinning op de Joegoslavische leider Milošević rooskleuriger af te schilderen. „Het is niet waar", zei de woordvoerder van het Pentagon eerder deze week. „In de eerste plaats hebben we duidelijk genoeg tanks en andere doelen geraakt om te winnen. Ten tweede hebben wij altijd de beste informatie gegeven die wij op dat moment hadden. Ten derde is de les uit de antwoorden van de generaal op uw vragen dat de raming van de schade van bommen een ingewikkeld proces is."

Corley, hoofd van een team van Clark dat de schade moest vaststellen, gaf tegenover verslaggevers toe dat zijn onderzoekers maar 26 vernietigde en uitgebrande Servische tanks hadden gevonden. Maar er waren in totaal toch 93 tanks geteld als zijnde vernietigd, op basis van een combinatie en analyse van verschillende bronnen zoals zoekacties, satellietfoto's en cockpitbeelden. Hij ontkende dat er sprake was van een achtergehouden rapport en opperde dat Newsweek zich mogelijk baseerde op een 'interim-rapport'.

Volgens Corley ging de NAVO bij de vaststelling van de schade grondig te werk en „is integriteit nooit een kwestie geweest". Volgens hem luidde het parool: als ergens door een bom een krater in de grond, een vernietigde tank of alleen twee grazende koeien werden gevonden, 'registreer dat getrouw'. Dat er op papier een kloof bestond tussen 26 gevonden vernietigde tanks en volgens de NAVO in werkelijkheid geraakte 93 tanks, was verklaarbaar, zei Corley.

De NAVO registreerde treffers niet alleen op basis van werkelijk gevonden karkassen, maar ook op basis van cockpitbeelden die samen met satellietbeelden werden geanalyseerd, vóór en na een aanslag. Volgens Corley hebben de Serviërs ook getroffen materieel op trucks Kosovo uitgereden naar Servië. „Als wij niet [een treffer] konden bevestigen met meer dan één bron, dan hebben wij het niet als een succesvolle aanval beschouwd", aldus de luchtmachtgeneraal. Corley zei dat waarschijnlijk „veel meer dan 93" tanks zijn geraakt, maar dat ze niet door meer bronnen konden worden bevestigd en dus niet zijn meegeteld.

KWESTIES / *VN waarschuwen inwoners Kosovo niet voor uranium*

17-1-99

Het Hoge Commissariaat voor de Vluchtelingen (UNHCR) heeft de eigen medewerkers in Kosovo gewaarschuwd voor de mogelijke gevaren van verarmd uranium. De vluchtelingen die terugkeren naar het gebied, worden daarentegen niet op de aanwezigheid van het radioactieve materiaal gewezen.

Een woordvoerder van de VN-organisatie bevestigde gisteren in Genève dat ze op 20 oktober een waarschuwing naar haar medewerkers in Kosovo heeft gestuurd. Daarin stelt de organisatie onder meer dat verarmd uranium (beter bekend als *depleted uranium* oftewel DU) op lange termijn een gevaar kan zijn voor de gezondheid van met name zwangere vrouwen en vrouwen in de vruchtbare leeftijd.

De UNHCR vraagt zich onder meer af of zwangere medewerksters weg moeten uit Kosovo. Van alle medewerkers zal in een medisch dossier worden aangetekend dat zij in Kosovo zijn geweest. Elke medewerker kan zich op kosten van de UNHCR laten onderzoeken op besmetting met uranium. En iedereen die in principe naar de regio wil worden uitgezonden, mag die aanstelling heroverwegen.

Kogels met DU bleken eerder in de Golfoorlog heel effectief bij het vernietigen van Iraakse tanks. Ze zijn in Kosovo gebruikt tegen Servische doelen. Bij de inslag verbrandt het uranium voor een deel, en de radioactieve stofdeeltjes die dan ontstaan, kunnen vooral bij inademing gevaar opleveren.

In verband daarmee heeft het Nederlandse ministerie van defensie op aandringen van onder meer de soldatenvakbond Acom in augustus richtlijnen opgesteld hoe militairen moeten handelen als zij vermoeden dat vernietigde voertuigen of gebouwen met DU zijn besmet. Zij moeten onder andere maskers dragen en de voorwerpen nooit aanraken, zo waarschuwt het ministerie.

Gezien al die maatregelen lijkt het logisch dat ook de plaatselijke bevolking op de mogelijke gevaren van DU wordt gewezen, maar dat gebeurt niet. De UNHCR zegt geen paniek te willen veroorzaken omdat niet duidelijk zou zijn hoe groot het gevaar werkelijk is. De VN-gezondheidsorganisatie WHO zou dat onderzoeken, maar begint er pas volgende maand mee.

Saskia Jansens
Vincent Dekker

Bond bezorgd over uranium

1030

Door onze diplomatiek redacteur

DEN HAAG, 21 MAART. Nederlandse KFOR-militairen werken nabij hun bases Prizren en Orahovac in Kosovo in een gebied waar vele duizenden verschoten granaten en kogels liggen die met verarmd uranium verhard zijn. Dit heeft de militaire vakbond Acom opgemaakt uit een brief die de NAVO op 7 februari heeft gestuurd aan Kofi Annan, secretaris-generaal van de VN. Deze minutie, 31.000 stuks, is in de Kosovo-acties van de NAVO vorig jaar gebruikt tegen Servische tanks door vliegtuigen van de Amerikaanse luchtmacht. De bond verwijt Defensie niets te hebben gemeld over de aanwezigheid van zulke verschoten munitie in Kosovo en de risico's daarvan voor KFOR-militairen. De Tweede-Kamerfracties van GroenLinks en de SP hebben er gisteren schriftelijke vragen over gesteld en willen weten of er een medisch onderzoek komt. Volgens Defensie is uit onderzoek geen besmettingsgevaar gebleken.

Despotovic, Ruza

Van: Despotovic Ruza [despot@wishmail.net]
Verzonden: maandag 10 januari 2000 0:08
Aan: Ruza Despotovic; Herman TI; Erwin Steijnen; Globalreflexion; Annamiek Vermeulen; Dolf Loth
Onderwerp: 6 (http://news.suc.org/bydate/Jan_09/6.html)

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Kosovo: Much Savagery but Not Genocide, Wall Street Journal, Dec 31

War in Kosovo Was Cruel, Bitter, Savage; Genocide It Wasn't

By DANIEL PEARL
And ROBERT BLOCK

TREPCA, Yugoslavia - When the blan-ket-covered trucks rolled toward the min-ing complex near this northern Kosovo town in April, Bexhet Kurti didn't give them much thought. The Yugoslav army had a military base there, after all.

It was in July, after the fighting ended and Mr. Kurti returned to battle-scarred Trepca, that the young house painter started hearing the whispers. "Did you hear there are 700 bodies in the mine?" asked one acquaintance in the hilltop cafe above the mine-shaft tower. "No, not in the mine, but in the furnace" on the other side of the mountain, said another.

By late summer, stories about a Nazi-like body-disposal facility were so wide-spread that investigators sent a three-man French Gendarmerie team spelunking half a mile down the mine to search for bodies. They found none. Another team analyzed ashes in the furnace. They found no teeth or other signs of burnt bodies.

In Kosovo last spring, Yugoslav forces did heinous things. They expelled hun-dreds of thousands of ethnic Albanians, burning houses and committing summary executions. It may well be enough to justify the North Atlantic Treaty Organiza-tion bombing campaign and the war-crimes indictment of Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic.

But other allegations - indiscriminate mass murder, rape camps, crematoriums, mutilation of the dead - haven't been borne out in the six months since NATO troops entered Kosovo. Ethnic-Albanian militants, humanitarian organizations, NATO and the news media fed off each other to give genocide rumors credibility. Now, a different picture is emerging. Selective Terror

"Rwanda was a true genocide. Kosovo was ethnic cleansing light," says Emiho Perez Pujol, a Spanish pathologist who exhumed bodies after both conflicts. In his sector of western Kosovo, he says, the United Nations told him to expect as many as 2,000 victims. His team found 187

corpses, none of which showed evidence to confirm local accounts of mutilations.

Some human-rights researchers now say that most killings and burning oc-curred in areas where the separatist Ko-sovo Liberation Army had been active, or in urban streets that backed into rural areas where KLA fighters could infiltrate. They say the Serbs were trying to clear out areas of KLA support, using selective terror, robberies and sporadic killings.

"We believed NATO was using the KIA as its invasion force," says retired Gen. Radovan Radinovic, a former chief strate-gist for the Yugoslav Army who advised military planners during the war with NATO. Gen. Radinovic says individuals may have committed abuses, while killing "thousands" of KLA guerrillas. (A succes-sor organization to the KLA says it lost 2,400 dead over two years.)

Official Estimates

British and American officials still maintain that 10,000 or more ethnic-Alban-ian civilians died at Serb hands during the fighting in Kosovo. The U.N.'s Interna-tional Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia has accused Serbs of covering up war crimes by moving bodies. It has begun its own military analysis of the Serb offensive.

But the number of bodies discovered so far is much lower 2,108 as of November, and not all of them necessarily war-crimes victims. While more than 300 reported grave sites remain to be investigated, the tribunal has checked the largest reported sites first, and found most to contain no more than five bodies, suggesting intimate acts of barbarity rather than mass mur-der.

The KLA helped form the West's war-time image of Kosovo. International hu-man-rights groups say officials of the guerrilla force served on the Kosovo-based Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms, whose activists were often the first to interview refugees arriving in Macedonia. Journalists later cited the council's missing-persons list to support theories about how many people died in Kosovo, and the State Department this month echoed the council' recent estimate of 10,000 missing. But the number has to be taken on faith: Western investigators say the council won't share its list of missing persons.

Reports From the Field

Even more closely connected to the KLA was Radio Free Kosova, set up in January as outsiders were cut off from Kosovo hot spots. A former correspondent for the radio, Qemail Aliu, says he and five other journalists holed up with the KLA in central Kosovo mountains, using satellite phones to take reports from KLA regional commanders. The radio broadcasts were just strong enough to reach the provincial capital, Pristina, where a correspondent translated the reports into English for the KLA's Kosova Press Internet site.

When the guerrilla encampment had electricity, Mr. Aliu watched NATO brief-ings on TV. "Many times we saw Jamie Shea talking about the number of people killed, and many times they were the num-bers from Kosova Press," he says.

NATO says Mr. Shea, its spokesman, didn't get information directly from Kosova Press. But officials acknowledge that NATO's member governments had lit-tle independent information about what was happening on the ground. "We were all hamstrung," a NATO official says. As the war dragged on, he says, NATO saw a fatigued press corps drifting toward the contrarian story: civilians killed by NATO's bombs. NATO stepped up its claims about Serb "killing fields."

Human-rights groups fed the informa-tion chain directly. As human-rights re-searchers assembled in neighboring Mace-donia and Albania to interview refugees, State Department officials handed them proposed survey forms, trying to get every-body to ask standard questions

about vio-lence to aid war crimes cases. Among the groups cooperating was Physicians for Human Rights, which had long been calling for a ground force to protect ethnic Albani-ans.

Kosovo was a "genocide to come," warned Holly Burkhalter, Washington di-rector of Physicians for Human Rights, in a National Public Radio commentary in April. "I was wrong," she says now. "But if you wait until it's proved to you six ways to Sunday, you haven't prevented it, have you?"

Human-rights groups at least used some scientific rigor, asking refugees what they personally saw. The news media's standards were more mixed. Many jour-nalists had experience in Bosnia, where the' mass slaughter of an estimated 7,000 men from the "safe area" at Srebrenica in 1995 was a warning not to be too skeptical about reports of Serb atrocities. Bosnia yielded three Pulitzer Prizes for reporters who proved atrocities. When Kosovo was finally opened to the foreign press in June, "fixers" cruising through the lobby of Pristina's Grand Hotel offered to take cor-respondents to burial sites.

Incident at Ljubenic

An example of the mass-grave obses-sion is Ljubenic, a poor western-Kosovo village of 200-odd homes below the Cursed Mountains, which MA fighters had used as a supply route. On the morning of April 1, Serb forces surrounded the town, vil-lagers say, and three heavily armed militiamen walked up the village's main dirt road. They say the Serbs corralled village men at a crossroads, questioning them about weapons and the MA. Two vil-lagers who spoke up were shot. One of the Serbs then said, "The KLA killed my brother," and the Serbs started mowing down the men with machine guns, sur-vivors say.

Eleven wounded men later staggered away in two groups, says survivor Sadik Jahmuratai, who adds that his group found a MA hospital in the hills a day later. When a KLA commander asked how many were killed, "the others were in a panic and said '150 to 200.' I said, 'No, that can't be. One hundred at the most.'

Over the next weeks, Mr. Jahmuratai and others told their stories to investiga-tors 'from several human-rights groups. And after the war, returning villagers, who found 12 bodies scattered around Ljubenic, told Italian peacekeeping troops that 350 people were still missing from Ljubenic and the surrounding hamlets. One villager told of seeing worms coming from the ground in a field where the grass was un-usually short.

On July 9, after getting an "operations report" from the Italians, Dutch Army Maj. Jan Joosten mentioned during a regu-lar press briefing in Pristina that a sus-pected grave had been found, and there could be as many as 350 bodies. He says journalists started packing their bags for Ljubenic before he even finished. "Biggest grave site holds 350 victims," London's In-dependent newspaper proclaimed the next day. Concern Worldwide, a charity work-ing in Ljubenic, claimed that three-fourths of families lost their main wage earner.

In fact, investigators found no bodies in the field. It now appears that the number killed in Ljubenic was about 65. That is how many names are listed in KLA-printed memorial posters.

Plea for Remembrance

Mr. Jahmuratai, sitting on the lawn beside the Concern Worldwide tent, says villagers who weren't there distorted the story. When a U.N. van pulls up, Mr. Jah-muratai trots over to greet Alistair Gra-ham, a war-crimes-tribunal official who had interviewed him in an Albanian refugee camp. Mr. Graham is just drop-ping off candy for children, but Mr. Jah-muratai pleads with him to continue the investigation.

'If other people exaggerated, that's bad," Mr. Jahmuratai says. "But every-thing I told you was

exactly true." Mr. Graham says the tribunal will return in the spring.

Kosovo would be easier to investigate if it had the huge killing fields some investi-gators were led to expect. Instead, the pat-tern is of scattered killings. Many cases defy simple explanation: two blanket-cov-ered bodies pulled out of a farmer's yard in a village where nobody was missing; a body that a child discovered by chance along a river; a semiclad torture victim.

Human-rights groups didn't give so much attention to the small killings. >From Macedonia, a researcher for Human Rights Watch, Benjamin Ward, wrote a re-port about the slaying of two youths during a Serb-ordered exodus from the southeast-Kosovo village of Malisevo. Townspeople say Serb gunmen forced 20 or so young men to lie face-down in a field, fired a ma-chine gun inches from their heads de-manding information about MA fighters, and killed two teenagers who trotted up the road from a nearby village. But Mr. Ward's report never left his computer; he says "it wasn't compelling" when reports of bigger massacres arrived.

Serbs' Own Inquiries

Meanwhile, the Yugoslav government in Belgrade is pursuing its own investiga-tions and war-crimes trials, which skeptics regard as either an effort to deflect blame from President Milosevic or a warning to disaffected Serbian reservists to stay in line lest they be accused.

In one trial, Serbian police reservist Boban Petkovic is accused of murdering four ethnic Albanians in the western--Kosovo village of Rija on May 9, and po-liceman Djordje Simic is charged as an ac-complice. The prosecution's documents charge that Mr. Petkovic, during a battle with the KLA, saw an ethnic Albanian run-ning toward the forest and being grabbed by a Yugoslav soldier.

"Petkovic, believing the man to be a captured terrorist, approached the pris-oner, took a sidearm from Mr. Simic, and shot the man in the head," the documents charge. They say Mr. Petkovic later heard voices from a house, and, "believing they were terrorists, Petkovic took his machine gun and killed all three people inside." The prosecution says the victims were "obvi-ously civilians."

Mr. Petkovic's defense is that he was in battle, and that the chronic stress from be-ing under attack by KLA terrorists affected his judgment. Mr. Simic says his gun was used without his permission.

The Mine-Shaft Story

Though brutal, these incidents don't have the impact of accounts of Serbs rounding up Albanian men and dumping their corpses down a mine-shaft. The world may owe that image to Halit Berani, head of a branch of the Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms in the city of Mitrovica. Mr. Berani is a former actor with a Karl Marx beard who summarizes Serb war crimes by showing a photo of a baby with a smashed skull.

Mr. Berani spent the war moving from village to village with his manual type-writer, calling in reports to foreign radio services and diplomats with his daily allot-ment of three minutes on a KLA satellite phone. He says he heard from villagers near Trepca that trucks were rolling in full and rolling out empty, and that a strange smell was coming from the mine complex. He phoned in a report in early April sug-gesting that the mines had become a body-disposal site, and Deutsche Welle, a Ger-man-based radio service, carried the re-port in Albanian.

The story spread. In June, Kosova Press's Internet site quoted a U.S. em-bassy official in Athens as saying there are "witnesses and still photos" of trucks car-rying bodies. Western journalists phoned the embassy, but a spokeswoman said she couldn't find the supposed source.

London's Observer ran a similar story, citing a KLA commander, a girl who got a call from an elderly resident, and a Koso-var who heard the story from refugees. A Pentagon spokesman, quizzed about Trepca at the time, said, "There have been several reports throughout the last 10 weeks of bodies being burned in former in-dustrial sites in Kosovo." Some commenta-tors stated the theory as fact.

When French troops took over the mines, they reported to the tribunal that they had found well-scrubbed vats and piles of clothing. Tribunal investigators weren't impressed: Clothes are found everywhere in trash-strewn Kosovo, and why would the Serbs clean vats but not burn clothes? After the fruitless search, "we don't see any need to do further inves-tigation at this point," a tribunal official says.

Mr. Berani doesn't completely stand by his story. "I told everybody it was supposi-tion, it was not confirmed information," he says. But he adds, "For the Serbs, every-thing is possible."

[redacted]

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Van: Despotovic Ruza [despot@wishmail.net]
Verzonden: zondag 9 januari 2000 23:54
Aan: Ruza Despotovic; Globalreflexion; Dolf Loth
Onderwerp: Wesley Clark responsible for killing civilians in Yugoslavia (http://www.serbi

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Wesley Clark responsible for killing civilians in Yugoslavia

January 09, 2000

Wesley Clark waged a private war against Yugoslavia <http://www.serbia-info.com/g3/images/vesliklark_wo_flag.jpg>
Wesley Clark waged a private war against Yugoslavia

Politika, January 9th - NATO Supreme Commander General Wesley Clark will step down from his post on May 3rd, three months before the expiry of his mandate, following a series of contradictory statements which led to the discovery that he had been engaged in spreading lies and because he clashed with a number of NATO commanders.

Clark is being charged of waging, under the auspices of the US President Bill Clinton, a personal war against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and making decisions on his own on the bombing of civilian targets.

NATO headquarters in Mons, Belgium, confirmed yesterday that Clark will definitely step down from his post on May 3rd, and that the US general Joseph Ralston will take his place.

Former KFOR commander Michael Jackson refused Clark's order in June last year to enter Pristina with tanks in order to prevent the disposition of Russian "peacekeeping" troops in Slatina Airport. Jackson said that he did not want to trigger a third world war because of him (Clark), which confirms what the NATO commander was capable of.

Later on, Clark tried to defend himself explaining that the order came from a "higher level" indicating that it was "at least one of the governments - members of the Alliance".

Clark was one of the main participants of the latest affair concerning the broadcasting at three times the normal speed of video footage of a passenger train in the Grdelica Gorge, Serbia, when

O bombes killed 14 civilians.

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Author: smiley <mailto:kblj@earthlink.net?subject=WILL SERBS BE RUN OUT OF MITROVICA> (ip204.los-angeles17.ca.pub-ip.psi.net)
Date: 01-09-2000 08:40

THE SERBS HAVE BEEN RUN OUT OF PRISTINA, AND EVERY OTHER PART OF KOSOVO THE ALBANIANS ARE TRYING TO GET A FOOT IN MITROVICA, IF THEY DO THE SERBS ARE LOST. KFOR TRYING TO HELF THE ALBANIANS REGAIN MITROVICA.
Albanians Cross Lines in Divided Kosovo City

Reuters Photo
By Andrew Gray
KOSOVKSA MITROVICA, Serbia (Reuters) - It says a lot about a city when people need a military escort to visit a graveyard on a religious holiday.
But the convoy that rolled through the streets of Mitrovica in northern Kosovo on a cold Saturday morning was widely seen as a small sign of hope rather than despair.
Under a deal between Serb and ethnic Albanian leaders, Albanians were able to visit the graves of their loved ones in peace on the Muslim holiday of Eid-al-Fitr, known here as Bajram, in a part of the divided city now dominated by Serbs.
In return, the Albanians had pledged there would be no problems the previous day, when Serbs were escorted to the main Orthodox Church, which is in the Albanian-controlled side, to celebrate Orthodox Christmas.
As both excursions passed off without major incident in a city where the post-war tensions between Serbs and Albanians are particularly high, international officials could breathe a small sigh of relief although they realize they have a long way to go.
``We'd like to have a normal bus service between the two sides of the city,'' said Nagette Belqacem, a protection officer for the U.N. refugee agency UNHCR, which helped broker the deal between the two sides and

ganize the transport.
``But we're still far from that objective,'' she told Reuters in a snow-covered car park on the edge of Mitrovica, as ethnic Albanians climbed aboard a UNHCR bus for the journey to the graveyard. ``The situation isn't favorable for that yet.''
Standoff Frustrates Albanians
After NATO's bombing last year to drive Serb forces out of Kosovo and end repression of Albanians, Mitrovica Serbs grouped together in one part of the city north of the River Ibar.
The Serbs say they acted to protect themselves from the revenge attacks which have plagued Kosovo since June.
Serb men with two-way radios patrol the north side of the city's main bridge to stop any Albanians they feel would threaten them from crossing into their territory. French troops from the NATO-led KFOR force try to keep the peace.
The slightly Cold War-style standoff means ethnic Albanians who fled Serb forces' campaign of terror during the NATO bombing cannot return to their homes in northern Mitrovica.
For one of the Albanians tramping through frosted undergrowth at the unkempt hillside cemetery, the frustration was too much. He tried to leave the graveyard and visit the nearby home he had not seen for almost a year.
He was stopped by French troops and local Serbs, keeping a watchful eye on the graveyard visit which is traditional on the holiday marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan.
``One Serb guy approached me and told me to go back, that I couldn't go because there was an agreement that that no one would leave the cemetery,'' said a visibly angry Hakif Mehmeti, a 19-year-old charity worker.
KFOR officers and officials from the United Nations administration charged with running Kosovo, which legally remains a part of Serb-dominated Yugoslavia, insist they will not accept a permanent partition of Mitrovica.
But they also stress that calming tensions and bringing normality to the industrial city will take time. For them, Friday and Saturday's operations were part of the process.
``I'd say this is one more positive step,'' said Captain Olivier Saint-Leger, a press officer for the French forces. ``It shows people respect their commitments and that's important.''

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Author: saivils <mailto:ssaivil@hotmail.com?subject=That's why he's their man - devious> (1Cust142.tnt1.washington.dc.da.uu.net)
Date: 01-08-2000 21:34

Russia and Yugoslavia Prepare to Test NATO
4 January 2000

SUMMARY

Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic is once again reviving nationalism in order to divert attention away from Yugoslavia's domestic woes. This time the focus is on the continuing problems that NATO faces in maintaining order in Kosovo. It appears that Russia and Yugoslavia are teaming up to put NATO in an impossible corner. They plan to make NATO live by the very agreement it forced on Yugoslavia at the end of last year's war, which would allow Yugoslav troops to return to Kosovo - causing immediate chaos from Kosovar Albanians. Or, they plan to make NATO violate the agreement by refusing Yugoslavia's return, thus painting NATO and its members as hypocrites when they speak of the international rule of law.

ANALYSIS

Yugoslavia's official Tanjug news agency announced Dec. 28 that Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic had promoted a number of officers, raising some to the rank of general, reshuffled a number of senior commands and decorated military units and individuals. The announcement came just four days after Yugoslavia's parliament adopted its 2000 budget. The parliament had allocated 73 percent of the $1.94 billion total to finance the Yugoslav army. A week earlier, the Serbian assembly had adopted the republic's 2000 budget of $2.49 billion, of which nearly 25 percent was earmarked for the Milosevic-controlled police force.

days after the announcement about the military, on Dec. 30, Milosevic said that Yugoslavia was determined to hold onto Kosovo. In an interview with the Politka daily, as reported by Tanjug, Milosevic said that the presence of NATO troops in the Serbian province was "temporary." Reviving his nationalistic rhetoric, he said, "We must put up with it and show great patience." He added, "no one can take Kosovo from us."

Milosevic's comments reiterated those of Gen. Nebojsa Pavkovic, head of Yugoslavia's Third Army, who said two weeks ago that his troops would go back into Kosovo, probably in June, as authorized by a NATO agreement with Yugoslavia reached at the conclusion of last year's war.

Playing into Milosevic's hand, U.S. Gen. Wesley Clark, supreme commander of NATO forces in Europe, immediately ruled out any return of the Yugoslav army to Kosovo, in an interview released the same day. Clark told the Montenegrin weekly newspaper Monitor that "the Yugoslav Army will not be authorized to return to Kosovo." He said, "If by chance it tries, it will be prevented."

Nevertheless, under the June 9, 1999, military technical agreement between NATO and Belgrade, and the subsequent Annex 2 of U.N. resolution 1244, a small, lightly armed contingent of Yugoslav soldiers and police is authorized to return to Kosovo to guard cultural sites and Yugoslavia's borders as well as aid in the clearing of minefields.

In making these aggressive statements, Milosevic is invoking a familiar strategy of generating nationalistic fervor to detract attention from serious domestic problems, such as the reconstruction of critical infrastructure and the revitalization of the economy. Milosevic has consistently attempted to provoke the United States into a diplomatic confrontation in order to maintain his position of power. To this point, he has succeeded in turning the sanctions, the possible secession of Montenegro and the continued violence in Kosovo to his favor. When a crisis isn't pressing, Milosevic raises the public's awareness of the NATO intervention by holding awards ceremonies and having the Yugoslav army hold special operations and army training exercises, some near the Kosovo border.

However, this new round of confrontation with the West is different due to the re-emergence of Russia in Yugoslav diplomacy. On Dec. 22, four days after Duma elections, in a key victory for interim Russian President Vladimir Putin and the nationalist centrist movement in Russia, Russian policy toward Kosovo began to shift.

ITAR-Tass news agency reported Dec 22 that the head of the Defense Ministry's Main Directorate for International Military Cooperation, Col. Gen. Leonid Ivashov, said that Russia "will revise the forms and degree of its participation," if NATO does not comply with its obligations. However, he added, "Russia is not considering any ways of its withdrawal and exit from Kosovo."

NATO's agreement in Kosovo was to let the Yugoslav army eventually return. Ivashov made it clear that if NATO doesn't live up to its agreement, Russia would not withdraw troops but may "stop cooperating."

Not coincidentally, the next day Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev, at the head of a delegation of Russian officers, arrived in Belgrade for

[redacted]ks with Milosevic focused on bilateral relations, Kosovo and other issues affecting southeastern Europe. At a military reception in Beli[redacted]vor following talks, Milosevic decorated prominent Russian officers for their contribution to the development of relations between the armed forces of the two countries. Milosevic also awarded Sergeyev and Gen. Anatoly Kvashnin the Yugoslav Star Order of the First Degree.

On Dec. 24, Sergeyev met with Gen. Klaus Reinhardt, the commander of NATO's KFOR peacekeeping troops, in Kosovo's capital of Pristina. He reiterated the clause in the military-technical agreement, allowing the Yugoslav army and police to return to Kosovo. As well, on Dec. 30 - the same day Milosevic vowed to re-enter Kosovo and Clark vowed to stop him if he tried - Yugoslav Defense Minister Pavle Bulatovic said that Yugoslavia would seek greater military cooperation with Russia to boost its capability. The Belgrade daily Vecernje Novosti also reported that same day that Sergeyev had discussed the possible shipment of modern Russian anti-aircraft missiles and Sukhoi-27 and MiG-29 combat planes during his recent visit to Yugoslavia.

To a lesser degree, these developments point to a small domestic victory for Milosevic by detracting attention away from Yugoslavia's economic woes. It is also a victory for Russian nationalists disenchanted by Yeltsin's capitulation to the West over Kosovo. Also, it puts the Russians in a strong position in Yugoslavia through threats to pullout of the international peacekeeping force. It provides them with a lever to use against NATO and especially the United States. But most importantly, for both Russia and Yugoslavia, these moves put the United States and the rest of NATO in an awkward position, forcing NATO to choose between adhering to or breaking the military technical agreement.

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Author: smiley <mailto:kblj@earthlink.net?subject=THEY KILL ALL THE SERBS AND THEN PRAY> (ip159.los-angeles17.ca.pub-ip.psi.net)
Date: 01-08-2000 10:18

OFFER FORGIVENESS BUT THE SERBS SHOULD NOT FORGIVE.

Kosovo Clerics Urge Remembrance

PRISTINA, Yugoslavia (AP) -- Kosovo's leading Muslim clerics urged thousands of ethnic Albanians celebrating Islam's most important holiday Saturday to remember those who gave their lives fighting for the province's independence and to forgive past wrongs.
In an address marking the end of Islam's holy month of Ramadan, Rexhep Boja, the head of Kosovo's Islamic community, told ethnic Albanians to offer forgiveness for past injustices.
``We have to reconcile, because reconciliation gives us the strength to achieve a fully independent Kosovo,'' he said.
NATO peacekeepers entered Kosovo in June after a 78-day bombing campaign intended to force Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to end a crackdown on ethnic Albanian militants. Some 10,000 people were killed in the province by forces loyal to Milosevic.
Orthodox Christmas, celebrated by Serbs on Friday, was marred by scattered attacks on Serbs and Serbian churches across the province. In one case, NATO forces reported a mortar attack on a Serb church in the southwest part of the province late Friday, but said no one was injured.
On Saturday, clerics told 5,000 ethnic Albanians packed into Pristina's sports center for a mass prayer service that it was time to move on.
Niam Trnava, the head of Pristina's Islamic school, who conducted the service, urged Kosovo Albanians to remember those who gave their lives for the province's independence and pray for the release of those who remain imprisoned in Serbia.

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