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Kosovo Five Years Later: Is intervention better than cure?

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 By *Aidan Hehir*

No military campaign in history was so heralded as "the right thing to do" by Western political leaders before, during, and after its initiation, as NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999. The unprecedented moralistic rhetoric that accompanied Operation Allied Force suggested that NATO was forging a peaceful era for the inhabitants of Kosovo and the wider world. It was, according to Tony Blair, "A war fought for the values of civilization." However, the recent riots in Mitrovica (and the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq) illustrate that not only has the immediate aim of the intervention failed utterly, but also that the template established in Kosovo facilitated the escalation of aggressive Western hegemony in the post-Cold War world.

In March 2004, amid the scenes of renewed violence, smouldering churches, and huddled refugees, bewildered UN officials witnessed the re-emergence of the Western theory that "ancient ethnic hatreds" ultimately determine events in the Balkans. In assessing the periodic violence in the Balkans, George Kennan stated, "Deeper traits of character inherited, presumably, from a distant tribal past" continue to plague the region and "seem to be decisive as a determinant of the troublesome, baffling and dangerous situation that marks that part of the world." This ultimately racist outlook is echoed by chief UN officials currently "administering" Kosovo. While touring the province in the aftermath of the recent carnage that left 31 people dead and over 850 injured, the head of the UN mission in Kosovo, Harri Holkeri, solemnly declared, "The concept of multiethnic Kosovo that the international community has been persistently attempting to implement in recent years is no longer tenable." In other words, the incompatible ethnic identities endemic in Kosovo have triumphed over the West's "earnest" efforts to instill a culture of multi-ethnicity. This is simply untrue. The international community, in the guise of NATO, accentuated the ethnic fissure in Kosovo through its intervention in 1999 and the record of the UN since the cessation of Operation Allied Force has been marked by a tolerance of low level ethnic oppression more so than by any genuine attempts to reconcile the communities.

Western diplomatic efforts in the Balkans throughout the 1990s were consistently predicated on the flawed logic of ethnic hatreds. Violence in the region was portrayed as the consequence of embedded ethnic prejudices, rather than Western interference. Whenever Western diplomatic initiatives failed, as they did, it was because the locals couldn't extricate themselves from their primitive ethnic identities and genetic predilection for violence. If the region were to ever become civilized, the argument went, order would have to be forcibly imposed by the West.

This contemporary variant of the "white man's burden" has engendered among Western actors in the Balkans a psychological detachment from the consequences of their actions and imbued the myriad "internationals" who wield enormous power throughout the region with a sense of cultural and political superiority. It is, therefore, not surprising that Holkeri could survey the wreckage of the March riots without seeing any correlation between the violence and Western actions. In reality, the violence did not occur despite Western involvement in Kosovo, but because of it.

Where, then, did it all go wrong? Throughout the 1990s the EU and the U.S., at the behest of then-ally Milošević, declared Kosovo an "internal matter" and the issue was consciously ignored. The lack of any

provision relating to Kosovo in the Dayton Accords enflamed the Kosovar Albanians and support gradually shifted from the pacifist LDK party to the Kosova Liberation Army. By 1998, the conflict had escalated dramatically and Western politicians became concerned that the conflict might spread to Macedonia where it could potentially engulf key NATO allies Greece and Turkey. After a number of initiatives failed, the Kosovar Albanians and the Yugoslavs were ordered to peace talks at Rambouillet, France in February 1999.

Despite the lofty rhetoric proffered at the time, it is now clear that Rambouillet was not a genuine attempt to achieve a settlement. In April 2000, Madeline Albright's personal secretary James Rubin admitted, "Our internal goal was not to get a peace agreement at Rambouillet." The real internal U.S. goal was "to get a war started with the Europeans locked in," by orchestrating a situation whereby the Yugoslav delegation would be made to appear intransigent and beyond diplomatic reason. This was achieved through the dismissal of repeated compromises suggested by the Yugoslavs and the determined courting, by U.S. officials, of the Kosovar Albanian delegation and, in particular, KLA leader, Hashim Thaçi.

According to Pleurat Sejdiu, a Kosovar press spokesperson at Rambouillet, "It was an open secret that while sequestered with Hashim Thaçi, Albright was telling him that his delegation had to sign because otherwise NATO could not carry out its threat." In a press statement on April 21, Rubin admitted, "All of the officials who have worked on this have made very clear that in order to move towards military action, it has to be clear that the Serbs were responsible." On April 23, Albright declared, "It's now up to the Kosovar Albanians to create this black or white situation."

During the two-week break in negotiations, increased U.S. pressure was exerted on the Kosovar Albanians and the KLA in particular. Nightly broadcasts of "Agreement for Peace," comprising interviews with senior U.S. officials urging the Kosovars to sign, produced by the United States Information Agency, were aired on Albanian television. No similar effort was made in Serbia. When the talks resumed Albright assured the Kosovar Albanians, "You'll get NATO to protect your people. Don't mind the small print because you will be running the show and many of the problems in the text will be irrelevant." The U.S.-led propaganda campaign worked and as LeBor writes, "The Albanians signed in much the same spirit that the Bosnian government had agreed to various peace plans—knowing that as the Serbs would reject them, they might as well take the diplomatic credit." The Yugoslavs refused, largely on the basis of the provisions of Annex B, which sanctioned the deployment of an implementation force comprised exclusively of NATO troops. In addition to immunity from prosecution, the annex stipulated, "NATO personnel shall enjoy, together with their vehicles, vessels, aircraft, and equipment, free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including associated airspace and territorial waters." This was tantamount to asking Yugoslavia to surrender its sovereignty as there was no logical reason why any implementation force deployed to oversee political transitions in Kosovo should have had the right to travel throughout Vojvodina and Montenegro.

In 2000, Lord Gilbert, minister of state in the British Ministry of Defense from 1997-1999, outlined the West's motives at the negotiations when he stated to the Defense Select Committee of the House of Commons, "I think certain people were spoiling for a fight in NATO at that time.... If you ask my personal view, I think the terms put to Milošević at Rambouillet were absolutely intolerable; how could he possibly accept them; it was quite deliberate. That does not excuse an awful lot of other things, but we were at a point when some people felt that something had to be done, so you just provoked a fight." The Yugoslav delegation had consistently stated they were willing to "discuss the scope and character of the international presence in Kosovo," but would not agree to an exclusively NATO force. The proposed security provisions afforded to NATO were more expansive than even the Kosovar Albanians had sought. The Independent International Commission on Kosovo concluded that compromising on this aspect of the deal was "an obvious negotiating opening that might have broken the impasse." NATO, however, insisted the provisions were non-negotiable, thereby deliberately choosing war over diplomacy. Significantly, the deal brokered by the EU and Russia that ended the air strikes omitted the contentious provisions rejected at Rambouillet.

Humanitarian Bombing

The immediate consequence of NATO's bombardment was to escalate the suffering endured by the Kosovar Albanians. NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, General Wesley Clark, warned his political superiors that without a ground contingent reprisals against the Kosovars were "inevitable." However, fearing a backlash against U.S. casualties, President Clinton insisted that the intervention be limited to air strikes. NATO pilots were instructed to fly at 15,000 feet to avoid anti-aircraft fire, while a refugee crisis of unprecedented proportions erupted on the ground. NATO's priorities were obvious. The wholly inadequate provisions made for the "inevitable" exodus further exacerbated the plight of the Kosovars. Neither the UN High Commission for Refugees nor the governments of Albania or Macedonia were readied for the crisis, prompting Macedonian Prime Minister Ljupco Geogijevski to lament, "The people in Brussels started this war then left for the Easter holidays."

The manner in which the military campaign was prosecuted belied its humanitarian motives. As detailed by Amnesty International and even the normally pro-U.S. Human Rights Watch, NATO dropped cluster bombs and depleted uranium, bombed television stations, hospitals, and water treatment facilities, purposely targeting civilians. Yet the bombing impacted negligibly on the Yugoslav security forces responsible for the expulsions. Robert Hayden, Director of the Center for Russian and East European Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, noted, "The casualties among Serb civilians in the first three weeks of the war were higher than all the casualties on both sides in the three months that led up to the war, and yet those three months were supposed to be a humanitarian catastrophe." When asked if he was worried about an investigation into NATO war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), NATO spokesperson Jamie Shea stated candidly that he was "certain" no investigation would take place because "NATO is a friend of the Tribunal.... NATO countries are those that have provided the finances to set up the Tribunal, we are among the major financiers." In June 2000, the ICTY issued its report on NATO's conduct of the war. The report notes that answers given by NATO to specific questions "were couched in general terms and failed to address the specific incidents." However, in what was a damning indictment of its supposed impartiality, the Tribunal decided not to pursue the matter further having based its investigation on "statements made by NATO and NATO countries," which the Tribunal "tended to assume were generally reliable...and honestly given."

Peacekeeping

According to a November 2003 report by the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs, based on data from the Red Cross, the UN, and the ICTY, 1,192 Serbs and 593 other nationals had been murdered in Kosovo since the deployment of 21,000 NATO peacekeepers in June 1999. Up to 200,000 Serbs and 67,000 Slavic Muslims were estimated to have fled the region, while a further 790 people remained unaccounted for. The number of non-Albanian refugees who have returned to Kosovo is, according to the UN Security Council, "a small fraction of the number of Kosovo Serbs internally displaced in Serbia and Montenegro." A 2003 Amnesty International report outlined the appalling conditions endured by non-Albanians, noting, "Serbs and other ethnic minorities in Kosovo remain at serious risk of death or injury...beatings, stabbings, abductions, drive-by shootings and the use of hand grenades to intimidate and kill members of these minorities are common in the province." The fortunes of the Albanian community have improved, yet, under the aegis of the UN and NATO, one form of ethnic oppression has replaced another. NATO and the UN's inability and unwillingness to stop the violence against the minority population has stifled the development of a civil society essential to the functioning of any democracy. Institutional paralysis in Kosovo has been accompanied by an accentuation of the original societal fissure.

NATO's bombing campaign further soured relations between Kosovars and Serbs and the wider Slavic community. In Vojvodina, where previously there was significant support for the Kosovars plight, the NATO bombardment provoked an upsurge in resentment towards the Kosovar Albanians among both the Serb and Hungarian population. Within Serbia and throughout the Balkans, the NATO intervention induced a degree of pan-Slavic solidarity that has negatively impacted on any support the Kosovar Albanians may have previously had.

Kosovo's ombudsperson, Marek Antoni Nowicki, reported to the Council of Europe in February 2004 that human rights in Kosovo were "far from the minimum of international standards," warning that it is the intent of certain sections of the Albanian community to "cleanse this land from the presence of all Serbs." His words proved prophetic in mid-March when Kosovar Albanians went on the rampage in Northern Kosovo. The spark for the violence was the allegation that Serbs had chased three Albanian children to their deaths with wild dogs. This later proved untrue, with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, among others, stating that the violence was orchestrated well in advance by elements within the Albanian community.

The frustration felt by ethnic Albanians is understandable. Having initially welcomed NATO and the UN as emancipators, Kosovar Albanians soon realized that their faith in the West was misplaced. UN Security Council resolution 1244, drafted to consolidate the post-war situation, reaffirmed "The commitment of all member states to the sovereign and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia." This explicit recognition of Belgrade's authority over Kosovo is an anathema to the Albanian community. As Michael Mandelbaum, director of American Foreign Policy at John Hopkins University, notes, "NATO intervened in a civil war and defeated one side, but embraced the position of the party it had defeated on the issue over which the war was fought." The UN Mission In Kosovo (UNMIK) has been unable to overcome this inherent paradox in Kosovo's status. With UNMIK now administering the province, the Kosovar Albanian's lack of influence over political power in the region persists and, according to Aldo Blumi, executive director of the Albanian Institute for International Studies, "What has changed in Kosovo since June 1999 is the nature of rule not the discursive relationship between power and subjects."

As new concerns have come to dominate the international agenda, the final status of Kosovo has stagnated

without any diminution of the Serbs' or Albanians' mutually exclusive claims on the province. In December 2003, UNMIK stipulated that no examination of Kosovo's final status would take place until certain political humanitarian standards were reached, suggesting 2006 as the earliest date. UNMIK thus looks likely to emulate the UN administration in Bosnia that has now run eight years over its original remit with few signs of a resolution of the underlying problems. As David Chandler has noted, "The ethnic Albanians are discovering that removing Belgrade appointees from positions of power is not necessarily a step towards greater autonomy or self rule." UNMIK's lack of a clear exit strategy and the central paradox of refusing to endorse Kosovar independence while negating Serbia's influence, has meant that since Operation Allied Force, UNMIK has become isolated from both communities. The ethnic Albanians' calls for self-determination have become increasingly militant in the face of UN prevarication on Kosovo's final status. The attacks in March against the UN and NATO, as well as the Serbs, illustrate the depth of Albanian frustrations.

As in Bosnia and Northern Ireland, the political solution imposed by external actors in Kosovo have been based on those imagined nationalist fissures that created the initial tension. UNMIK has institutionalized the ethnic divisions that emerged in the province and, while in the short term this is conducive to the reduction of tension, the underlying fissure between ethnic groups will eventually impact on the functioning of the political system. In Northern Ireland the division between Unionists and Nationalists persists and no cross-cultural political movement has achieved electoral success since the Belfast Agreement came into effect in 1998.

The imposition of ethnic homogenization in Bosnia, as defined by the terms of Dayton, has all but destroyed the inter-cultural climate that existed in the country prior to the conflagration that erupted in the 1990s. The international community has mistakenly perceived ethnic disharmony in these regions as a product of local prejudices and accepted them as a permanent fixture. This perspective fails to appreciate the divisive influence of external actors in provoking the disintegration of inter-community relations. The imposition, therefore, of political provisions based on these false fissures and contrived differences is inherently flawed. As Blumi states, "The world should be appalled at the UN's adoption of ethnic categories to parcel out a number of operational domains for Kosovo's population. Unless reversed, any future interaction between Kosovars will be permanently based on criteria beyond their control; giving self asserted nationalists veto over any policy inside Kosovo."

In tandem with the political reforms imposed on Kosovo, Western officials have undertaken an aggressive privatization policy. Despite the influx of EU and U.S. loans, unemployment stands at 57 percent. This has added to the disillusionment and discontent. According to UNMIK economist Iain King, what growth there has been in Kosovo since OAF has been almost wholly the result of external support, based largely on loans and aid packages. Imports outnumber exports by ten to one and, as King notes, "Much of the new wealth earned in Kosovo is being used to create jobs elsewhere. The combination of external management and monetary support has meant that Kosovo's economy is arguably less independent today than when under Tito's economic system of workers management."

The intervention in Kosovo illustrates that military victory is less important to future stability than a coherent post-conflict Administration, yet the crises in both Afghanistan and Iraq show that this lesson has not been learned. By siding with the Albanian community and intervening on their behalf, to the extent of cooperating with the KLA whose expressed aim is an ethnically pure Kosovo, the international community accentuated the divisions in Kosovo, hardening Serbian hearts to the Albanian's cause, and imbuing the Albanians with a sense of righteous infallibility. The current efforts to institutionalize the existing impermanence will continue to prove futile unless the oppression of the minority population is stopped and a coherent plan for the final status of Kosovo is implemented.

Rather than heralding the intervention, the international community should decry the moral duplicity, violence, and political inertia that has characterized the record of the UN and NATO during the past five years in Kosovo. The combination of empty rhetoric, administrative impotence, and a UN-aided entrenchment of aggressive ethnic identification bodes ill for the future stability of "the powder keg of Europe" and illustrate the limits of the West's "nation building" capabilities. The adverse consequences of the U.S. interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq have been more immediately obvious, but the effects of the U.S.-led campaign in Kosovo, and the subsequent mishandling of the post war situation, are becoming apparent. The violence in Mitrovica may be just the beginning. Of course, when further violent unrest does return to the region don't expect any admissions of Western culpability—those endemic ancient ethnic hatreds will be to blame.

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Monopoly Media Manipulation

by Michael Parenti

In a capitalist "democracy" like the United States, the corporate news media faithfully reflect the dominant class ideology both in their reportage and commentary. At the same time, these media leave the impression that they are free and independent, capable of balanced coverage and objective commentary. How they achieve these seemingly contradictory but legitimating goals is a matter worthy of study. Notables in the media industry claim that occasional inaccuracies do occur in news coverage because of innocent error and everyday production problems such as deadline pressures, budgetary restraints, and the difficulty of reducing a complex story into a concise report. Furthermore, no communication system can hope to report everything, hence selectivity is needed.

To be sure, such pressures and problems do exist and honest mistakes are made, but do they really explain the media's overall performance? True the press must be selective, but what principle of selectivity is involved? I would argue that media bias usually does not occur in random fashion; rather it moves in more or less consistent directions, favoring management over labor, corporations over corporate critics, affluent whites over low income minorities, officialdom over protestors, the two-party monopoly over leftist third parties, privatization and free market "reforms" over public sector development, U.S. dominance of the Third World over revolutionary or populist social change, and conservative commentators and columnists over progressive or radical ones.

Suppression by Omission

Some critics complain that the press is sensationalistic and invasive. In fact, it is more often muted and evasive. More insidious than the sensationalistic hype is the artful avoidance. Truly sensational stories (as opposed to sensationalistic) are downplayed or avoided outright. Sometimes the suppression includes not just vital details but the entire story itself, even ones of major import. Reports that might reflect poorly upon the national security state are least likely to see the light of day. Thus we hear about political repression perpetrated by officially designated "rogue" governments, but information about the brutal murder and torture practiced by U.S.-sponsored surrogate forces in the Third World, and other crimes committed by the U.S. national security state are denied public airing, being suppressed with a consistency that would be called "totalitarian" were it to occur in some other countries.

The media downplay stories of momentous magnitude. In 1965 the Indonesian military – advised, equipped, trained, and financed by the U.S. military and the CIA – overthrew President Achmed Sukarno and eradicated

Indonesian Communist Party and its allies, killing half a million people (some estimates are as high as a million) in what was the greatest act of political mass murder since the Nazi Holocaust. The generals also destroyed hundreds of clinics, libraries, schools, and community centers that had been established by the Communists. Here was a sensational story if ever there was one, but it took three months before it received passing mention in Time magazine and yet another month before it was reported in the New York Times (April 5, 1966), accompanied by an editorial that actually praised the Indonesian military for "rightly playing its part with utmost caution."

Over the course of forty years, the CIA involved itself with drug traffickers in Italy, France, Corsica, Indochina, Afghanistan, and Central and South America. Much of this activity was the object of extended congressional investigation — by Senator Church's committee and Congressman Pike's committee in the 1970s, and Senator Kerry's committee in the late 1980s. But the corporate capitalist media seem not to have heard about it.

Attack and Destroy the Target

When omission proves to be an insufficient mode of censorship and a story somehow begins to reach larger publics, the press moves from artful avoidance to frontal assault in order to discredit the story. In August 1996, the San Jose Mercury News, drawing from a year-long investigation, ran an in-depth series about the CIA-*contra* crack shipments that were flooding East Los Angeles. Holding true to form, the major media mostly ignored the issue. But the Mercury News series was picked up by some local and regional newspapers, and was flashed across the world on the Internet copiously supplemented pertinent documents and depositions supporting the charges against the CIA. African American urban communities, afflicted by the crack epidemic, were up in arms and wanted to know more. The story became difficult to ignore. So, the major media began an all-out assault. A barrage of hit pieces in the Washington Post and New York Times and on network television and PBS assured us that there was no evidence of CIA involvement, that the Mercury News series was "bad journalism," and that its investigative reporter Gary Webb was irresponsibly playing on the public's gullibility and conspiracy mania. By a process of relentless attack and shameless mendacity, the major media exonerated the CIA from any involvement in drug trafficking.

Labeling

Like all propagandists, mainstream media people seek to prefigure our perception of a subject with a positive or negative label. Some positive ones are: "stability," "the president's firm leadership," "a strong defense," and "a healthy economy." Indeed, not many Americans would want instability, wobbly presidential leadership, a weak defense, and a sick economy. The label defines the subject without having to deal with actual particulars that might lead us to a different conclusion.

Some common negative labels are: "leftist guerrillas," "Islamic terrorists," "conspiracy theories," "inner-city gangs," and "civil disturbances." These, too, are seldom treated within a larger context of social relations and issues. The press itself is facetiously and falsely labeled "the liberal media" by the hundreds of conservative columnists, commentators, and talk-shows hosts who crowd the communication universe while claiming to be shut out from it. Some labels we will never be exposed to are "class power," "class struggle," and "U.S. imperialism."

A new favorite among deceptive labels is "reforms," whose meaning is inverted, being applied to any policy dedicated to undoing the reforms that have been achieved after decades of popular struggle. So the destruction of family assistance programs is labeled "welfare reform." "Reforms" in Eastern Europe, and most recently in Yugoslavia, have meant the heartless impoverishment of former Communist countries, the dismantling of what remained of the public economy, its deindustrialization and expropriation at fire sale prices by a corporate investor class, complete with massive layoffs, drastic cutbacks in public assistance and human services, and a dramatic increase in unemployment and human suffering. "IMF reforms" is a euphemism for the same kind of bruising cutbacks throughout the Third World. As Edward Herman once noted, "reforms" are not the solution, they are the problem.

In April 2001, the newly elected prime minister of Japan, Junichiro Koizumi, was widely identified in the U.S. media as a "reformer." His "free-market" reforms include the privatization of Japan's postal saving system. Millions of Japanese have their life savings in the postal system and the "reformer" Koizumi wants private investors to be able to get their hands on these funds.

"Free market" has long been a pet label, evoking images of economic plenitude and democracy. In reality, free-market policies undermine the markets of local producers, provide state subsidies to multinational corporations, destroy public sector services, and create greater gaps between the wealthy few and the underprivileged many.

Another favorite media label is "hardline." Anyone who resists free-market "reforms," be it in Belarus, Italy, Peru, or Yugoslavia, is labeled a "hardliner." An article in the New York Times (10/21/97) used "hardline" and "hardliner" eleven times to describe Bosnian Serb leaders who opposed attempts by NATO forces to close down the "hardline Bosnian Serb broadcast network." The radio station in question was the only one in all of Bosnia that offered a perspective critical of Western intervention in Yugoslavia. The forceful closing of this one remaining dissenting media voice was described by the Times as "a step toward bringing about responsible news coverage in Bosnia." The story did note "the apparent irony" of using foreign soldiers for "silencing broadcasts in order to encourage free speech." The NATO troops who carried out this repressive task were identified with the positive label of "peacekeepers."

It is no accident that labels like "hardline" are never subjected to precise definition. The efficacy of a label is that it not have a specific content which can be held up to a test of evidence. Better that it be self-referential, propagating an undefined but evocative image.

Preemptive Assumption

Frequently the media accept as given the very policy position that needs to be critically examined. Whenever the White House proposes an increase in military spending, press discussion is limited to how much more spending is needed, how much updating of weaponry; are we doing enough or need we do still more? No media exposure is given to those who hotly contest the already gargantuan arms budget in its totality. It is assumed that U.S. forces must be deployed around the world, and that hundreds of billions must be spent each year on this global military system.

Likewise with media discussion of Social Security "reform," a euphemism for the privatization and eventual abolition of a program that is working well. The media preemptively assume the very dubious position that needs to be debated: that the program, is in danger of insolvency (in thirty years) and therefore in need of drastic overhauling today. Social Security operates as a three-pronged human service: in addition to retirement pensions, it provides survivors' insurance (up until the age of 18) to children in families that have lost their breadwinner, and it offers disability assistance to persons of pre-retirement age who have sustained serious injury or illness. But from existing press coverage you would not know this — and most Americans do not.

Face-Value Transmission

Many labels are fabricated not by news media but by officialdom. U.S. governmental and corporate leaders talk about "our global leadership," "national security," "free markets," and "globalization" when what they mean is "All Power to the Transnationals." The media uncritically and dutifully accept these official views, transmitting them to wider publics without any noticeable critical comment regarding the actual content of the policy. Face-value transmission has characterized the press's performance in almost every area of domestic and foreign policy.

When challenged on this, reporters respond that they cannot inject their own personal views into their reports. Actually, no one is asking them to. My criticism is that they already do, and seldom realize it. Their conventional ideological perceptions usually coincide with those of their bosses and with officialdom in general, making them face-value purveyors of the prevailing orthodoxy. This uniformity of bias is perceived as

activity."

The alternative to challenging face-value transmission is not to editorialize about the news but to question the assertions made by officialdom, to consider critical data that might give credence to an alternative view. Such an effort is not an editorial or ideological pursuit but an empirical and investigative one, albeit one that is not usually tolerated in the capitalist press beyond certain safely limited parameters.

Slighting of Content

One has to marvel at how the corporate news media can give so much emphasis to surface happenings, to style and process, and so little to the substantive issues at stake. A glaring example is the way elections are covered. The political campaign is reduced to a horse race: Who will run? Who will get the nomination? Who will win the election? News commentators sound like theater critics as they hold forth on how this or that candidate projected a positive image, came across effectively, and had a good rapport with the audience. The actual issues are accorded scant attention, and the democratic dialogue that is supposed to accompany a contest for public office rarely is heard through the surface din.

Accounts of major strikes -- on those rare occasions the press attends to labor struggles -- offer a similar slighting of content while focusing heavily on process. We are told how many days the strike has lasted, the inconvenience and cost to the public and the economy, and how negotiations threaten to break down. Missing is any reference to the substance of the conflict, the grievances that drive workers reluctantly to the extreme expediency of a strike, such as, cutbacks in wages and benefits, loss of seniority, safety issues, or the unwillingness of management to negotiate a contract.

Media pundits often talk about the "larger picture." In fact, their ability or willingness to link immediate events and issues to larger social relations is almost nonexistent, nor would a broader analysis be tolerated by their bosses. Instead, they regularly give us the smaller picture, this being a way of slighting content and remaining within politically safe boundaries. Thus the many demonstrations against international free-trade agreements beginning with NAFTA and GATT are reported, if at all, as contests between protestors and police with little reference to the issues of democratic sovereignty and unaccountable corporate power that impel the protestors.

Consider the press treatment of the suppression of the vote in Florida during the 2000 presidential campaign. After a count of ballots by the Miami Herald and USA Today, that took a limited view of what was open to challenge, major media across the country announced that Bush in fact won in Florida. Other investigations indicate that such was not the case at all, but these remain largely unpublicized. Furthermore, press treatment has focused almost exclusively on problems relating to questionable counts, with much discussion of ballot "dimples" and "chads." But in the aftermath, hardly a word was uttered about the ballots that were never collected, and the thousands of people who were disfranchised by the repressive ploys of Florida officials and state troopers. Again, what we got was the smaller (safer) picture, one that does not challenge the legitimacy of the electoral process and the authorities who preside over it.

False Balancing

In accordance with the canons of good journalism, the press is supposed to tap competing sources to get both sides of an issue. In fact, both sides are seldom accorded equal prominence. One study found that on NPR, supposedly the most liberal of the mainstream media, right-wing spokespeople are often interviewed alone, while liberals -- on the less frequent occasions they appear -- are almost always offset by conservatives. Furthermore, both sides of a story are not usually all sides. The whole left-progressive and radical portion of the opinion spectrum is amputated from the visible body politic.

False balancing was evident in a BBC World Service report (December 11, 1997) that spoke of "a history of violence between Indonesian forces and Timorese guerrillas" -- with not a hint that the guerrillas were struggling

their lives against an Indonesian invasion force that had slaughtered 200,000 Timorese. Instead, the genocidal invasion of East Timor was made to sound like a grudge fight, with "killings on both sides." By imposing a neutralizing gloss, the BBC announcer was introducing a serious distortion.

The U.S.-supported wars in Guatemala and El Salvador during the 1980s were often treated with that same kind of false balancing. Both those who burned villages and those who were having their villages burned were depicted as equally involved in a contentious bloodletting. While giving the appearance of being objective and neutral, one actually neutralizes the subject matter and thereby drastically warps it.

Follow-up Avoidance

When confronted with an unexpectedly dissident response, media hosts quickly change the subject, or break for a commercial, or inject an identifying announcement: "We are talking with [whomever]." The purpose is to avoid going any further into a politically forbidden topic no matter how much the unexpected response might seem to need a follow-up query. An anchorperson for the BBC World Service (December 26, 1997) enthused: "Christmas in Cuba: For the first time in almost forty years Cubans were able to celebrate Christmas and go to church!" She then linked up with the BBC correspondent in Havana, who observed, "A crowd of two thousand have gathered in the cathedral for midnight mass. The whole thing is rather low key, very much like last year." Very much like last year? Here was something that craved clarification. Instead, the anchorperson quickly switched to another question: "Can we expect a growth of freedom with the pope's visit?"

On a PBS talk show (January 22, 1998), host Charlie Rose asked a guest, whose name I did not get, whether Castro was bitter about "the historic failure of communism". No, the guest replied, Castro is proud of what he believes communism has done for Cuba: advances in health care and education, full employment, and the elimination of the worst aspects of poverty. Rose fixed him with a ferocious glare, then turned to another guest to ask: "What impact will the pope's visit have in Cuba?" Rose ignored the errant guest for the rest of the program.

Framing

The most effective propaganda relies on framing rather than on falsehood. By bending the truth rather than breaking it, using emphasis and other auxiliary embellishments, communicators can create a desired impression without resorting to explicit advocacy and without departing too far from the appearance of objectivity. Framing is achieved in the way the news is packaged, the amount of exposure, the placement (front page or buried within, lead story or last), the tone of presentation (sympathetic or slighting), the headlines and photographs, and, in the case of broadcast media, the accompanying visual and auditory effects.

Newscasters use themselves as auxiliary embellishments. They cultivate a smooth delivery and try to convey an impression of detachment that places them above the rough and tumble of their subject matter. Television commentators and newspaper editorialists and columnists affect a knowing tone designed to foster credibility and an aura of certitude, or what might be called "authoritative ignorance," as expressed in remarks like "How will this situation end? Only time will tell." Or, "No one can say for sure." Trite truisms are palmed off as penetrating truths. Newscasters learn to fashion sentences like "Unless the strike is settled soon, the two sides will be in for a long and bitter struggle." And "The space launching will take place as scheduled if no unexpected problems arise." And "Unless Congress acts soon, this bill is not likely to go anywhere." Stuff Just Happens

Many things are reported in the news but few are explained. Little is said about how the social order is organized and for what purposes. Instead we are left to see the world as do mainstream pundits, as a scatter of events and personalities propelled by happenstance, circumstance, confused intentions, bungled operations, and individual ambition -- rarely by powerful class interests. Passive voice and impersonal subject are essential rhetorical constructs for this mode of evasion. So we read or hear that "fig hting broke out in the region," or "many people were killed in the

...ances," or "famine is on the increase." Recessions apparently just
 ... some natural phenomenon ("our economy is in a slump"), having
 ... to do with the constant war of capital against labor and the
 ... contradictions between productive power and earning power.

If we are to believe the media, stuff just happens. Consider
 "globalization," a pet label that the press presents as a natural and
 inevitable development. In fact, globalization is a deliberate contrivance
 of multinational interests to undermine democratic sovereignty throughout
 the world. International "free trade" agreements set up international trade
 councils that are elected by no one, are accountable to no one, operate in
 secrecy without conflict of interest restrictions, and with the power to
 overrule just about all labor, consumer, and environmental laws, and all
 public services and regulations in all signatory nations. What we actually
 are experiencing with GATT, NAFTA, FTAA, GATS, and the WTO is
 deglobalization, an ever greater concentration of politico-economic power in
 the hands of an international investor class, a global coup d'etat that
 divests the peoples of the world of any trace of protective democratic
 input.

In keeping with the liberal paradigm, the media never asks why things
 happen the way they do. Social problems are rarely associated with the
 politico-economic forces that create them. So we are taught to truncate our
 own critical thinking. Imagine if we attempted something different. Suppose
 we report, as is seldom reported, that the harshly exploitative labor
 conditions existing in so many countries generally has the backing of their
 respective military forces. Suppose further that we cross another line and
 note that these rightwing military forces are fully supported by the U.S.
 national security state. Then suppose we cross that most serious line of all
 and instead of just deploring this fact we also ask why successive U.S.
 administrations have involved themselves in such unsavory pursuits
 throughout the world. Suppose we conclude that the whole phenomenon is
 consistent with a dedication to making the world safe for free-market
 corporate capitalism, as measured by the kinds of countries that are helped
 and the kinds that are attacked. Such an analysis almost certainly would not
 be printed anywhere except in a few select radical publications. We crossed
 too many lines. Because we tried to explain the particular situation (bad
 labor conditions) in terms of a larger set of social relations (corporate
 class power), our presentation would be rejected out of hand as "Marxist" --
 which indeed it is, as is much of reality itself.

In sum, the news media's daily performance under what is called
 "democratic capitalism" is not a failure but a skillfully evasive success.
 We often hear that the press "got it wrong" or "dropped the ball" on this or
 that story. In fact, the media do their job remarkably well. Media people
 have a trained incapacity for the whole truth. Their job is not to inform
 but disinform, not to advance democratic discourse but to dilute and mute
 it. Their task is to give every appearance of being conscientiously
 concerned about events of the day, saying so much while meaning so little,
 offering so many calories with so few nutrients. When we understand this, we
 move from a liberal complaint about the press's sloppy performance to a
 radical analysis of how the media maintain the dominant paradigm with much
 craft and craftiness.

Michael Parenti's most recent books are *To Kill a Nation: The Attack
 on Yugoslavia* (Verso) and *History as Mystery* (City Lights).



Amnesty International and Yugoslavia: Duped or Accomplice?

by Philip Greenspan

June 11, 2001

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While browsing my mail, Monday, May 21, my attention was drawn to an item on page 1 of Amnesty International's periodical *amnesty now*. A highlighting red circle enclosed an appeal for members to support the transfer of Slobodan Milosevic to the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague. Only five days before, convinced of the unjust treatment he had been subjected to, I had added my name to a petition -- endorsed by many people from countries all over the world -- to free him. I was shocked and disheartened to discover the position taken by Amnesty International (AI). Accordingly, I e-mailed them the following:

"For several years I have been a member of AI; and was very proud of its human and civil rights positions. However, I was deeply disappointed when I opened the current edition of 'amnesty now' to see a circled request for members to urge the transfer of Slobodan Milosevic to the International Criminal Tribunal.

An organization that fights so hard on behalf of those unjustly punished should not be an instigator of just such an injustice. The exaggerated claims of atrocities have subsequently been shown to be completely false. Additionally, the International Criminal Tribunal as a court of justice is as shocking as those false atrocity charges.

So many articles have been published by reliable sources, on both the court and the atrocities (if you are unaware of them, I will provide you with some) that it should have, at least, caused hesitancy.

I may be mistaken to assume you are much too knowledgeable and intelligent to be duped by the lies of governments and their subservient media. It is extremely disheartening to find that a worldwide human rights organization of your stature taking such a reprehensible action.

Sincerely,

Philip Greenspan"

What impelled me to criticize such a well-known and respected human rights organization with a million members and currently celebrating forty years of existence?

A combination of several factors provided the motivation.

- a.. A rejection of the lies, distortions, and omissions that are characteristic of the major media.
- b.. Access to sources that provide accurate information and logical and intelligent analyses.
- c.. An interest in Yugoslavia -- the country and its people.
- d.. U.S. policies since the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- e.. Foreign interventions responsible for the breakup of Yugoslavia.
- f.. How disturbances in Kosovo were augmented into a NATO provoked war.
- g.. NATO's unconscionable wartime activities targeting innocent civilians.
- h.. A spurious court (The International Criminal Tribunal); a deception to place the blame on the victim Serbs for the unconscionable and illegal acts of the NATO perpetrators.

Each element could be the subject of an extensive essay. What follows are brief explanations.

1. A cynicism of the major media

'Opinions Based on Fact Not on Prejudice' appeared above the blackboard in my high school homeroom. It was a maxim that impressed me so much that I have diligently sought to discover the truth before 'shooting off my mouth!' Accordingly I analyze news stories before coming to conclusions.

In my analyses over the years, it became apparent that the media was overly biased. A great deal of literature by prominent experts is available to substantiate this charge. But one need not rely on that source. One's own intelligent observations will reveal that bias in support of the government domestic and foreign policies, the military, and the corporate establishment.

For instance, foreign dictators (puppets for the U.S.) who receive political, military and economic support are praised by the media and described as democratic rulers. But very often they are overthrown by their people. The media will then reveal what they previously suppressed: how corrupt and undemocratic the regime was. Amongst this group are: the Shah of Iran, Marcos of the Philippines, Pinochet of Chile, 'Baby Doc' of Haiti, Suharto of Indonesia. The reverse are countries with Communist or Socialist 'dictators' that are vilified for their 'terrorist' activities and abuse of human rights. Not only are they deprived of support but are subjected to hostile acts such as embargoes, CIA instigated 'dirty tricks', etc. An example is Castro of Cuba. He has been successfully in power for over 40 years -- all during that time the media was predicting his immanent downfall.

2. Reliable news sources

I have found many fine sources, including small book publishers, periodicals of the alternate press and the Internet. It took me a while before I was able to determine which few among the very many were reliable. But the search is unending and there certainly are more sources yet to discover. I was delighted when I recently found *Swans* (see [The Media](#) by Deck Deckert) on the Web.

A very good Internet source is the foreign press which has not yet been overwhelmed by the U.S. media. However, each time I come across a new article from whatever source I evaluate it against what other information is currently available and my own prior knowledge.

A few excellent authors are Noam Chomsky, Michael Parenti, and Howard Zinn. Their output is usually found in the small press but at times a major publisher will take on a book. I visit the local library frequently and browse. By reading the blurb on the cover and seeing who may be endorsing a book I frequently strike gold -- an unknown (at least to me) who is a legitimate expert who has been shunned by the mainstream because his views do not conform to accepted wisdom. Within this group are 'whistle blowers' who previously were employed by the government such as William Blum (State Department), John Stockwell (CIA), M. Wesley Swearingen (FBI) and Michael Levine (DEA).

There are several journalists who have maintained their integrity. They get their news from the source and not from a government press briefing or the local ambassador. In the past George Seldes and I. F. Stone stand out. Among some of the good ones today are Robert Fisk, John Pilger, Diana Johnstone, Amy Goodman and Alex Cockburn.

3. Knowledge of the subject matter

In 1973 I visited Yugoslavia for two weeks. Although you can't learn too much on a short visit, it was sufficient to dispel many myths about the country and the people that were then prevalent. It also inspired me to learn more. Accordingly I read numerous books about its recent history and have kept up to date on current events there.

4. U.S. foreign policy since the collapse of the Soviet Union

With the collapse of the Soviet Union the U.S. was confronted with problems and opportunities. Both had some bearing on what has transpired in Yugoslavia.

Problem: How can a decrease in the defense budget be prevented? The military-industrial complex was concerned. The country was expecting a 'peace dividend'. Solution: A suitable enemy had to be found to replace the 'evil empire'. Iraq filled the bill very quickly and the 'peace dividend' was forgotten. Since then the U.S. has created

several potential enemies, Yugoslavia being one.

Opportunities: Eastern Europe became a fertile field for exploitation. The same neo-colonialism that prevails in Latin America and the Middle-East could now be applied in that area. An existing country or a newly created one would become a target for takeover. Financial support and pledges of future goodies would be promised to dissidents who would be recruited to take over the country and reform the government to U.S. specifications. The CIA's intrigues provide insurance for such operations. Upon completion the country would be in the hands of the friendly quislings.

5. The breakup of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

With the Soviets gone Yugoslavia was no longer a Cold War asset.

Step one in the scenario: put pressure on the country. The IMF exerted its demand for austerity and the country's economic situation, already in poor shape, became catastrophic.

Next, encourage republics to secede. With assistance from some of its European allies, particularly Germany, the U.S. instigated the breakup of the federation by getting several of the republics to declare independence (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia). In Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, because of large ethnic minorities within them, Civil Wars ensued.

6. Tragedy in Kosovo

Yugoslavia's remaining republics Serbia and Montenegro did not yield to the U.S.'s neo-colonial ambitions. Therefore, a new strategy was called for to snare this prize.

The autonomous province of Kosovo within the republic of Serbia would provide the key. For some time the Albanians within the province had been clamoring for more rights and a small splinter group, the KLA, had resorted to armed actions. Until then the KLA had been described by both the State Department and the media as a terrorist organization that was involved in the drug trade.

Police battles against the KLA became the pretext for the U.S. and its proxy NATO to intervene in what could at best be called a Civil War. The KLA was now clandestinely supported by the U.S. in its aggressive acts. The response of the Yugoslav police and army to the KLA actions were characterized as war crimes.

Negotiations to resolve the Albanian problem were conducted between NATO and Yugoslavia, but they were a sham. The terms were so onerous that it forced rejection.

A battle between the police and the KLA was blown up to become an atrocity, the 'Racak Massacre'. NATO could now go to war to protect the poor Albanians and force Yugoslavia to its senses and enter into an agreement.

7. NATO's bombardment of Serbia

How NATO conducted the war shows exactly how concerned they are about atrocities. Targets were civilians, railroad trains, bridges, the Chinese embassy, etc. All non-military targets.

One of the most egregious targets was the Petrochemical Industrial Complex in Pancevo which was bombed several times. The devastating toxic cocktail that poured into the adjacent Danube and the atmosphere was so environmentally damaging that the resulting pollution affected many other Balkan countries. Another highly toxic weapon is depleted uranium, which has been affecting civilian populations for many years after its use. (The U.S. military has discounted all claims of its harmful effects. A similar denial was made for many years about Agent Orange until finally admitting it was toxic.)

Rather than focusing on these atrocities, the media stressed the plight of the Albanians and the destruction of the Yugoslavian army. After the cease fire the numerous Yugoslav atrocity murders, claimed in some reports to be in the hundreds of thousands, were nowhere to be found and the army remained largely intact!

8. The International Criminal Tribunal

Not leaving any conceivable stone unturned they now must find war criminals to prove to the world that their intervention was justifiable. To convict the Serbs in a show trial when there is no evidence of a crime can only be accomplished with a kangaroo court. Among the many prominent legal scholars who have exposed this court as a fraud is Christopher Black, a Toronto attorney. Three of his articles in *Swans's* archives -- dated [6/20/99](#), [11/28/99](#) and [2/13/00](#) -- point out that the court is a creation of the U.S.; that most of its funding comes from the U.S. and American NGOs; that its staff is mostly from the U.S.; and that it is a court of inquisition devoid of the customary procedural protections for the accused.

Walter Rockler, a former prosecutor at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials said of the attempt by Black and other lawyers to prosecute NATO in the court: "NATO policymakers clearly are guilty of war crimes in Yugoslavia, but the prosecution staff of the [International Criminal] Tribunal [for the Former Yugoslavia] is not independent, so they are not going to charge those who effectively appointed them. It's like asking administration officials to jail their boss."

All of the above leads to one conclusion. Milosevic's accusers, the U.S. and its puppet NATO cannot be trusted to seek justice. They are not honorable or honest. They have ulterior motives. They need him as a scapegoat for the horrors that they themselves have caused. If there are criminals it is they, the accusers, who are GUILTY!

(Note: On June 1, I sent this follow-up mail to Amnesty International: "Over eleven days ago I sent you an e-mail letter (a copy is reproduced at the end of this message) but have not had the courtesy of a reply. Why can't Amnesty -- an organization that relies so heavily on the letter writing of its members -- furnish a timely response?"

I have yet to hear back from AI.)

Philip Greenspan's bio is concise and right to the point: 75 years old, married 49 years, 2 children, 3 grandchildren. Veteran World War II Army of the U.S. Graduate Brooklyn Law School, member of the NY bar. Private law practice, followed by employments in the motion picture industry -- distribution and exhibition, and data processing industry -- retailing and stock market; retired 6 years.

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From: www.DeWaarheid.nu <de.waarheid@tiscali.nl>
 To: <Undisclosed-Recipient:;@rebecca.tiscali.nl>
 Sent: zaterdag 16 februari 2002 00:09
 Subject: United States War Crimes

----- Original Message -----

From: "www.DeWaarheid.nu" <de.waarheid@tiscali.nl>
 Sent: Saturday, February 16, 2002 9:08 AM
 Subject: United States War Crimes

United States War Crimes

Lenora Foerstel and Brian Willson

Centre for Research on Globalisation (Ca), January 26, 2002

<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/TOE201A.html>

The issue of War Crimes emerged after World War I at the Versailles Conference, but it was not until the end of World War II that a more comprehensive definition of what constitutes war crimes was developed. First among new international conventions addressing war crimes was the 1950 Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal. Its fundamental premise was that the conduct of war in violation of international treaties was a crime against peace. Ill treatment of prisoners of war, killing hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages was a war crime. Crimes against humanity include murder, extermination, deportation, and prosecution based on political, racial or religious grounds.

The 1949 Geneva Convention gave recognition to the development of new technologies which exposed civilian life to greater threats of destruction. A 1977 addendum further emphasized the right of civilians to be protected against military operations. This included the protection of civilians against starvation as a method of warfare. Article II of the Geneva Convention addressed the issue of genocide, defined as killing or causing serious bodily harm to individuals based on their nationality, ethnic, racial or religious group and with the intent to destroy that group.

Since the Geneva Convention, a number of other significant international treaties addressing war and human rights have been drafted, but the United States has rejected almost all of them. Among the treaties that the United States has refused to sign are the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (1966); the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (1966), and the American Convention on Human Rights (1965).

The United States has been particularly reluctant to sign treaties addressing the "laws of war". It has refused to sign The Declaration on the Prohibition of the Use of Thermo-Nuclear Weapons (1961); The Resolution on the Non-Use of Force in International Relations and Permanent Ban on the Use of Nuclear Weapons (1972); The Resolution on the Definition of Aggression (1974); Protocols Additional to the 1949 Geneva Convention (1977); and the Declaration on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (1989).¹

Equally disturbing was the U.S. refusal to sign the Convention on Rights of the Child, introduced into the United Nations General assembly on November 20, 1989 and subsequently ratified by 191 countries.

The first use of atomic weapons against human beings occurred on August 6-9 1945, when the United States incinerated the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II, killing an estimated 110,000 Japanese citizens and injuring another 130,000. By 1950 another 230,000 died from injuries and radiation. Earlier in 1945 two fire bombing raids on Tokyo

killed 140,000 citizens and injured a million more.

Since World War II the US has bombed twenty-three nations. Author William Blum notes: "It is sobering to reflect that in our era of instant world wide communications, the United States has, on many occasions, been able to mount a large or small scale military operation or undertake other equally blatant forms of intervention without the American public being aware of it until years later if ever."²

The growing primacy of aerial bombardment in the conduct of war has inevitably defined non-combatants as the preferred target of war. Indeed, the combination of American air power and occupation ground forces has resulted in massive civilian casualties around the world.

Korea: 1943-1953

On August 15, 1945, the Korean people, devastated and impoverished by years of brutality from Japanese occupation forces, openly celebrated their liberation and immediately formed the Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence (CKPI). By August 28, 1945, all Korean provinces on the entire Peninsula had established local people's democratic committees, and on September 6, delegates from throughout Korea, north and south, created the Korean People's Republic (KPR). On September 7, the day after the creation of the KPR, General Douglas MacArthur, commander of the victorious Allied powers in the Pacific, formally issued a proclamation addressed "To the People of Korea." The proclamation announced that forces under his command "will today occupy the Territory of Korea south of 38 degrees north latitude."

The first advance party of U.S. units, the 17th Regiment of the 7th Infantry Division, actually began arriving at Inchon on September 5th, two days before MacArthur's occupation declaration. The bulk of the US occupation forces began unloading from twenty-one Navy ships (including five destroyers) on September 8 through the port at Inchon under the command of Lieutenant General John Reed Hodge. Hundreds of black-coated armed Japanese police on horseback, still under the direction of Japanese Governor-General Abe Nobuyuki, kept angry Korean crowds away from the disembarking US soldiers.

On the morning of September 9, General Hodge announced that Governor-General Abe would continue to function with all his Japanese and Korean personnel. Within a few weeks there were 25,000 American troops and members of "civil service teams" in the country. Ultimately the number of US troops in southern Korea reached 72,000. Though the Koreans were officially characterized as a "semi-friendly, liberated" people, General Hodge regrettably instructed his own officers that Korea "was an enemy of the United States...subject to the provisions and the terms of the surrender."

Tragically and ironically, the Korean people, citizens of the victim-nation, had become enemies, while the defeated Japanese, who had been the illegal aggressors, served as occupiers in alliance with the United States. Indeed, Korea was burdened with the very occupation originally intended for Japan, which became the recipient of massive U.S. aid and reconstruction in the post-war period. Japan remains, to this day, America's forward military base affording protection and intelligence for its "interests" in the Asia-Pacific region.

Seventy-three-year-old Syngman Rhee was elected President of South Korea on May 10, 1948 in an election boycotted by virtually all Koreans except the elite KDP and Rhee's own right-wing political groups. This event, historically sealing a politically divided Korea, provoked what became known as the Cheju massacre, in which as many as 70,000 residents of the southern island of Cheju were ruthlessly murdered during a single year by Rhee's paramilitary forces under the oversight of U.S. officers. Rhee took office as President on August 15 and the Republic of Korea (ROK) was formally declared. In response, three-and-a-half weeks later (on September 9, 1948), the people of northern Korea grudgingly created their own separate government, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), with Kim Il Sung as its premier.

Korea was now clearly and tragically split in two. Kim Il Sung had survived

as a guerrilla fighter against the Japanese occupation in both China and Korea since 1932 when he was twenty years old. He was thirty-three when he returned to Pyongyang in October 1945 to begin the hoped-for era of rebuilding a united Korea free of foreign domination, and three years later, on September 9, 1948, he became North Korea's first premier. The Rhee/U.S. forces escalated their ruthless campaign of cleansing the south of dissidents, identifying as a suspected "communist" anyone who opposed the Rhee regime, publicly or privately. In reality, most participants or believers in the popular movement in the south were socialists unaffiliated with outside "communist" organizations.

As the repression intensified, however, alliances with popular movements in the north, including communist organizations, increased. The Cheju insurgency was crushed by August 1949, but on the mainland, guerrilla warfare continued in most provinces until 1959-51. In the eyes of the commander of US military forces in Korea, General Hodge, and new "President" Syngman Rhee, virtually any Korean who had not publicly professed his allegiance to Rhee was considered a "communist" traitor. As a result, massive numbers of farmers, villagers and urban residents were systematically rounded up in rural areas, villages and cities throughout South Korea. Captives were regularly tortured to extract names of others. Thousands were imprisoned and even more thousands forced to dig mass graves before being ordered into them and shot by fellow Koreans, often under the watch of U.S. troops.

The introduction of U.S./UN military forces on June 26, 1950 occurred with no American understanding (except by a few astute observers such as journalist I.F. Stone) that in fact they were entering an ongoing revolutionary civil war waged by indigenous Koreans seeking genuine independence after five years of U.S. interference. The American occupation simply fueled Korean passions even more while creating further divisions among them.

In the Autumn of 1950, when U.S. forces were in retreat in North Korea, General Douglas MacArthur offered all air forces under his command to destroy "every means of communication, every installation, factory, city and village" from the Yalu River, forming the border between North Korea and China, south to the battle line. The massive saturation bombing conducted throughout the war, including napalm, incendiary, and fragmentation bombs, left scorched cities and villages in total ruins. As in World War II, the U.S. strategic bombing campaign brought mass destruction and shockingly heavy civilian casualties. Such tactics were in clear violation of the Nuremberg Charter, which had, ironically, been created after World War II, largely due to pressure from the U.S. The Nuremberg Tribunal defined "the wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages" to be a war crime and declared that "inhuman acts against any civilian population" were a crime against humanity.

From that fateful day on September 8, 1945 to the present, a period of 56 years, U.S. military forces (currently numbering 37,000 positioned at 100 installations) have maintained a continuous occupation in the south supporting de facto U.S. rule over the political, economic and military life of a needlessly divided Korea. This often brutal occupation and the persistent U.S. support for the repressive policies of dictatorial puppets continues to be the single greatest obstacle to peace in Korea, preventing the inevitable reunification of the Korean Peninsula.

Until 1994, all of the hundreds of thousands of South Korean defense forces operated under direct U.S. command. Even today, although integrated into the Combined Forces Command (CFC), these forces automatically revert to direct US control when the US military commander in Korea determines that there is a state of war.

Indonesia: (1958-1965)

After 350 years of colonialism, President Sukarno, with the cooperation of the communist party (PKI), sought to make Indonesia an independent socialist democracy. Sukarno's working relationship with the PKI would not be tolerated by Washington. Under the direction of the CIA, rebels in the Indonesian army were armed, trained and equipped in preparation for a military coup. The Indonesian army's campaign against the PKI in 1965-66 brought the dictator Suharto to power. Under his rule, teachers, students,

civil servants and peasants were systematically executed. In Central and East Java alone, 60,000 were killed. In Bali, some 50,000 people were executed, and thousands more died in remote Indonesian villages. In some areas citizens were confined in Navy vessels which were then sunk to the bottom of the sea.

The most extensive killing were committed against suspected PKI supporters identified by U.S. intelligence. Historian Gabriel Kolko states that the slaughter in Indonesia "ranks as a crime of the same type as the Nazi perpetrated."³

Recent revealed documents at George Washington University's National Security Archive confirmed how effectively the Indonesian army used the U.S.-prepared hit list against the Indonesian communist party in 1965-66. Among the documents cited is a 1966 airmail to Washington sent by U.S. ambassador Marshall Green stating that a list from the Embassy identifying top communist leaders was being used by the Indonesian security authorities in their extermination campaign.

For example, the US Embassy reported on November 13, 1965 that information sent to Suharto resulted in the killing of between 50 to 100 PKI members every night in East and Central Java. The Embassy admitted in an April 15, 1966 airmail to Washington: "We frankly do not know whether the real figure for the PKI killed is closer to 100,000 or 1,000,000."⁴

The Indonesian military became the instrument of another counter revolutionary offensive in 1975 when it invaded East Timor. On September 7, 1975, just 24 hours after the highest officials of the United States government, President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, had been in Jakarta on a state visit, 30,000 Indonesian troops landed in East Timor. Napalm, phosphorus bombs and chemical defoliants were delivered from US supplied planes and helicopters, resulting in the killing of tens of thousands of people, and the conflict continues to simmer.⁵

Vietnam: (1954-1975)

President Harry Truman began granting material aid to the French colonial forces in Indochina as early as 1946, and the aid was dramatically increased after the successful Chinese revolution in 1949 and the start of the "hot" Korean War in June 1950. By the time the French army was defeated in 1954, the U.S. was paying nearly 80 percent of the French military expenditures and providing extensive air and logistical support.

The unilateral U.S. military intervention in Vietnam began in 1954, immediately following the humiliating French defeat in early May 1954. The July 21, 1954 Geneva Agreement concluded the French war against the Vietnamese and promised them a unifying election, mandated for July 1956. The U.S. government knew that fair elections would, in effect, ensure a genuine democratic victory for revered Communist leader Ho Chi Minh. This was unacceptable. In June 1954, prior to the signing of the historic Geneva agreement, the U.S. began CIA-directed internal sabotage operations against the Vietnamese while setting up the puppet Ngo Dinh Diem (brought to Vietnam from the U.S.) as "our" political leader. No elections were ever held. This set the stage for yet another war for Vietnamese independence - this time against U.S. forces and their South Vietnamese puppets.

The significance of U.S. intentions to interfere with independence movements in Asia cannot be underestimated. U.S. National Security Council documents from 1956 declared that our national security would be endangered by communist domination of mainland Southeast Asia. Secret military plans stated that nuclear weapons will be used in general war and even in military operations short of general war. By March 1961, the Pentagon brass had recommended sending 60,000 soldiers to western Laos supported by air power that would include, if necessary, nuclear weapons, to assure that the Royal Laotian government would prevail against the popular insurgency being waged against it. For the next ten years the U.S. unleashed forces that caused (and continue to cause) an incomprehensible amount of devastation in Vietnam and the rest of Southeast Asia.

Eight million tons of bombs (four times the amount used by the U.S. in all of World War II) were dropped indiscriminately, leaving destruction which,

if laid crater to crater, would cover an area the size of the state of Maine. Eighty percent of the bombs fell on rural areas rather than military targets, leaving ten million craters. Nearly 400,000 tons of napalm was dropped on Vietnamese villages. There was no pretense of distinguishing between combatants and civilians.

The callous designation of as much as three-fourths of South Vietnam as a "free fire zone" justified the murder of virtually anyone in thousands of villages in those vast areas. At the time, Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara cited a 1967 memo in which he estimated the number of Vietnamese civilians killed or seriously injured by U.S. forces at 1000 per week. The CIA's Phoenix program alone killed as many as 70,000 civilians who were suspected of being part of the political leadership of the Viet Cong in the south.

There was a historically unprecedented level of chemical warfare in Vietnam, including the indiscriminate spraying of nearly 20 million gallons of defoliants on one-seventh the area of South Vietnam. The vestigial effects of chemical warfare poisoning continue to plague the health of adult Vietnamese (and ex-GIs) while causing escalated birth defects. Samples of soil, water, food and body fat of Vietnamese citizens continue to reveal dangerously elevated levels of dioxin to the present day.

Today, Vietnamese officials estimate the continued dangerous presence of 3.5 million landmines left from the war as well as 300,000 tons of unexploded ordnance. Tragically, these hidden remnants of war continue to explode when farmers plow their fields or children play in their neighborhoods, killing thousands each year. The Vietnamese report 40,000 people killed since 1975 by landmines and buried bombs. That means that each day, 4 or 5 Vietnamese civilians are killed day by U.S. ordnance.

The U.S. and its allies killed as many as 5 million Southeast Asian citizens during the active war years. The numbers of dead in Laos and Cambodia remain uncounted, but as of 1971, a congressional Research Service report prepared for the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee indicated that over one million Laotians had been killed, wounded, or turned into refugees, with the figure for Cambodia estimated two million. More than a half million "secret" US bombing missions over Laos, begun in late 1964, devastated populations of ancient cultures there. Estimates indicate that around 230,000 tons of bombs were dropped over northern Laos in 1968 and 1969 alone. Increasing numbers of U.S. military personnel were added to the ground forces in Laos during 1961, preparing for major military operations to come.

The "secret" bombing of Cambodia began in March 1969, and an outright land invasion of Cambodia was conducted from late April 1970 through the end of June, causing thousands of casualties. These raging U.S. covert wars did not cease until August 14, 1973, by which time countless additional casualties were inflicted. When the bombing in Cambodia finally ceased, the U.S. Air Force had officially recorded the use of nearly 260,000 tons of bombs there. The total tonnage of bombs dropped in Laos over eight and a half years exceeded two million.

The consensus today is that more than 3 million Vietnamese were killed, with 300,000 additional missing in action and presumed dead. In the process the U.S. lost nearly 59,000 of her own men and women, with about 2,000 additional missing, while combatants from four U.S. allies lost over 6,000 more. The South Vietnamese military accounted for nearly 225,000 dead. All of this carnage was justified in order to destroy the basic rights and capacity of the Vietnamese to construct their own independent, sovereign society. None of the victims deserved to die in such a war. Vietnamese, Laotians, Cambodians, and U.S. military "grunts" were all victims.

All of these corpses were created to perpetuate an incredible lie and to serve a "cause" that had been concocted by white male plutocrats in Washington, many of whom possessed Ph.Ds from prestigious universities. Like most of their predecessors throughout U.S. history, these politicians and their appointees, along with their profit-hungry arms makers/dealers, desired to assure the destruction of people's democratic movements in East Asia that threatened the virtually unlimited American hegemony over markets, resources, and the profits to be derived therefrom. But never did a small country suffer so much from an imperial nation as the Vietnamese did from the United States.

Iraq:1991-2001

The royal family in Kuwait was used by the United States government to justify a massive assault on Iraq in order to establish permanent dominion over the Gulf. The Gulf War was begun not to protect Kuwait but to establish US power over the region and its oil.⁶ In 1990, General Schwarzkopf had testified before the Senate that it was essential for the U.S. to increase its military presence in the Gulf in order to protect Saudi Arabia. However, satellite photos showed no Iraqi troops near the Saudi Border.

After Iraq announced that it was going to annex Kuwait, the United States began its air attacks on Iraq. For 42 days the US sent in 2000 sorties a day. By February 13, 1991, 1,500 Iraqi citizens had been killed. President George Bush ordered the destruction of facilities essential to civilian life and economic production.

The Red Crescent Society of Jordan announced at the end of the war that 113,000 civilians were dead and sixty percent were women and children. Some of the worst devastation was wrought by the US military's use of Depleted Uranium (DU) on battlefields and in towns and cities across Iraq. It left a legacy of radioactive debris which has resulted in serious environmental contamination and health problems, particularly among Iraqi children. Child mortality rates have risen by 380 percent. Between August 1990 and August 1997 some 1.2 million children in Iraq died due to environmental devastation and the harsh economic sanctions imposed in 1991. Not satisfied with such havoc, the U.S. and Britain have recently sought to tighten the blockade against Iraq by imposing so-called "smart sanctions." This would continue the aggression against northern and southern Iraq and lead to the deaths of more women, children and elderly.

The 78 day bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia targeted schools, hospitals, farms, bridges, roads communication centers, and waterways. Because a large number of chemical plants and oil refineries bombed by US/NATO planes were located on the banks of the Danube river, the bombing of these industrial sites polluted the Danube, a source of drinking water for ten million people in the region. The environmental damage done to the soil, water and air of Yugoslavia soon spread to Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Macedonia, Greece and Italy. Countries like Russia, Ukraine and Georgia, which border on the Black Sea, into which the Danube empties, also continue to face health hazards.

Afghanistan:(1979-2001)

"The Bush-Afghan war calls up memories of the Vietnam War in both actions and rhetoric, the massive use of superior arms heavily impacting civilians, deliberate food deprivation, wholesale terror allegedly combating 'terrorism', but always sincere regrets for collateral damages."⁹

Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York City, the U.S. has waged a merciless war against the Afghan people, using chemical, biological and depleted uranium (DU) weapons. The use of DU continues to spread radiation throughout large parts of Afghanistan and will affect tens of thousands of people in generations to come, causing lung cancer, leukemia and birth defects. DU was also used against Iraq and Yugoslavia, where the frequency of cancer has tripled.

The bombing of the Afghan population has forced thousands of civilians to flee to Pakistan and Iran, and seven to eight million civilians are facing starvation. UNICEF spokesman Eric Larcke has stated, "As many as 100,000 more children will die in Afghanistan this winter unless food reaches them in sufficient quantities in the next six weeks."¹⁰

The racist underpinnings of the American world-view allows the American press and its political leaders to be silent on the mass killing of Third World children. Donald Rumsfeld, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, has stated

that the U.S. is not looking to negotiate peace with the Taliban and Al-Quida in Afghanistan. There is a clear indifference to the daily carnage in Afghanistan, where sixty percent of the casualties are women and children. Human rights organizations have expressed concern over reports of Kosovo, an autonomous region of Serbia, is the site of the most recent, and perhaps most disastrous, U.S. military intervention. Kosovo's problems began after World War II when immigrants from Albania flooded into the region, sparking political confrontation between Albanians and Serbs, escalated into military conflict. The "Kosovo Liberation Army, an Albanian terrorist/separatist group, escalated tensions by directing their violence against not only Serbian civilians, but Albanian who refused to join their cause. As the war intensified, a United Nations team of observers in the Kosovo village of Racak found 44 Albanian bodies. The Serbs identified them as KLA fighters killed during one of the now frequent gun battles with police. William Walker, a US diplomat, who had earlier acted as an apologist for the death squads in El Salvador, led a group of journalists to view the bodies, and their subsequent claims of Serb war crimes made world-wide headlines.⁸

President Clinton used this event to bring delegates from the contending forces in Bosnia to Rambouillet, and the proposed Rambouillet Accords served as a prelude to U.S. intervention in Kosovo. The accords, if accepted, would have allowed NATO forces complete access to all of Yugoslavia, a virtual foreign occupation, with all associated costs to be borne by the Yugoslav government. As the Rambouillet negotiations began to stall, U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright ordered the bombing of Yugoslavia to begin.

On March 16, 1999, twenty three thousand missiles and bombs were dropped on a country of eleven million people. Thirty five thousand cluster bombs, graphite bombs and 31,000 rounds of depleted uranium weapons were used, the latter scattering radioactive waste throughout the Yugoslav countryside.

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that the U.S. is not looking to negotiate peace with the Taliban and Al-Qaida in Afghanistan. There is a clear indifference to the daily carnage in Afghanistan, where sixty percent of the casualties are women and children. Human rights organizations have expressed concern over reports of large-scale executions of would-be Taliban defectors in the city of Kunduz, and the United Nations has echoed human rights groups in demanding an investigation into the slaughter of prisoners at the Qala-i-Jhangi fort near Mazar-i-Sharif. With more than 500 people dead and the fort littered with bodies, allegations of war crimes against the U.S. and UK for ignoring the Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war have led the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, to call for an urgent inquiry.

"Once we recognize the pattern of activity designed to simultaneously consolidate control over Middle Eastern and South Asian oil and contain and colonize the former Soviet Union, Afghanistan is exactly where they need to go to pursue that agenda."¹¹

In his book *The Grand Chessboard*, Zbigniew Brzezinski writes that the Eurasian Balkans are a potential economic prize which hold an enormous concentration of natural gas and oil and important minerals as well as gold. Brzezinski declares that the Central Asian region and the Caspian Sea basin are "known to contain reserves of natural gas and oil that dwarf those of Kuwait, the Gulf of Mexico, or the North Sea."¹² Afghanistan will serve as a base of operations to begin the control over the South Asian Republic in order to build a pipeline through Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan to deliver petroleum to the Asian market. This pipeline will serve as a bonanza of wealth for the US oil companies.

Conclusion:

An examination of the American conduct of its wars since World War II shows the US to be in violation of the Nuremberg Principles, the 1949 Geneva Convention relating to protection of civilian prisoners of war, the wounded and sick, and the amended Nuremberg Principles as formulated by the International Law Commission in 1950 proscribing war crimes and crimes against humanity. The massive murder and destruction of civilian infrastructure through the use of biological, chemical and depleted uranium weapons violates not only international laws but the moral and humanitarian standards expected in modern civilization.

Notes

1. Ward Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas, 1942 to the Present*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1977, p. 371.
2. William Blum, *Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Intervention Since World War II*, Monro, Maine: Common Courage Press, 1995, p. 17.
3. Gabriel Kolko, *A War Crimes and the Nature of the Vietnam War*, Bertrand Russell Foundation, <http://www.homeusers.prestel.co.uk/littleton/br7006gk.htm>
4. George Washington University's National Security Archive, July 27, 2001, www.Narchives.org
5. Deirdre Griswold, *Indonesia: the Second Greatest Crime of the Century*, 2d edition. New York: World View Publishers, 1979, p. vii.
6. Ramsey Clark, *The Fire This Time: U.S. War Crimes in the Gulf*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1992, p. 3.
7. Scott Taylor, *INAT: Images of Serbia and the Kosovo Conflict*. Ottawa, Canada: Espirit de Corps Books, 2000, p. 15.
8. Michael Parenti, *To Kill a Nation: The Attack on Yugoslavia*. New York: Verso, 2000, p. 106.

goal of these big powers is to shift the blame for the war they fomented onto the victims, the Serbian people and all the other peoples of Yugoslavia." The delegation will be participating in meetings and press conferences denouncing the ICTY in Amsterdam and The Hague on Feb. 11 and Feb. 12. They will also attend the trial to hear President Milosevic's opening statement, which is expected to be a political defense of his people and their role in the war.

Speaking boldly in his own defense before an ICTY hearing on Jan. 30, President Milosevic said this to the officials appointed to judge him:

"With all due respect, the real judges of this trial-not you who wear the robes-want to bet those who decided to murder children in my country, who launched NATO's aggression and dropped 25,000 tons of bombs in 78 days, murdering mostly elderly people, children and women.

This is the role they would like to play, but they will not be allowed to be the judges."

"The Yugoslav president is confident that if the people know the truth, they will rally against the NATO court," said Doares. "The truth, for example, that U.S./NATO bombs and rockets destroyed much of Yugoslav industry in Serbia, while killing only 14 tanks in Kosovo, where war crimes were alleged to be taking place."

LE COMBAT DE L'ICDSM & #8217; CONFERENCE DE PRESSE A LA HAYE LE 12 FEVRIER. REVUE DE PRESSE : SES AVOCATS DENONCENT UNE «COUR MARTIALE» «UN PRISONNIER POLITIQUE»

Par Marc SEMO, LIBERATION (Paris), Le mercredi 13 février 2002
La Haye envoyé spécial
« C'est un grand hôtel moderne et un peu triste, à quelques centaines de mètres à peine du Tribunal pénal international pour l'ex-Yougoslavie, où descendent régulièrement avocats et membres des familles des accusés qui retrouvent dans ses interminables couloirs ou dans ses bars en sous-sol bruyants et enfumés un peu de l'atmosphère du pays. Là, depuis hier, se déroulent toutes les manœuvres politiques et les batailles en marge du procès de l'ancien président

9. Edward Herman, A Genocide as Collateral Damage, but with Sincere Regrets, Centre for Research on Globalisation (CRG) at <http://globalresearch.ca> , 2001

10. 100,000 Afghan Children Could Die This Winter, The Times of India, October 16, 2001.

11. Stan Goff, A September 11th Analysis, October 27, 2001, www.maisonneuvepress.com .

12. Zbigniew Brzezinski, The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperative, New York: Harper

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Lenora Focrstel is author of War, Lies & Videotape: How media monopoly stifles truth ,

Brian Willson is a Vietnam war veteran, peace activist and author. Brian Willson has carefully documented the balance sheet of US government war crimes in Vietnam and Korea.

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Interview with Alan Roberts, UN spokesperson in Knin: Systematic Burning

Feral Tribune, 8/14/95, Split, Croatia

UN commission for human rights has counted 45 burned houses between Drnis and Knin. "These houses were destroyed according to a plan, assiduously and systematically," claims Alan Roberts. "All houses and apartments outside the Knin city center look as if they were broken into and looted."

Since Tuesday afternoon, when we were allowed to enter some of the villages around Knin, UN military observers and civil police have seen many burned houses, as well as some which were still burning. UN commission has established that the houses had been destroyed according to a plan and - what is interesting - very assiduously and systematically! This is a part of a statement given by Alan Roberts to Feral's journalist. Alan Roberts is a UN official in Knin, and he was there when the Croatian Army liberated the city. Asked to back up his claims with a proof, Roberts responded:

On Thursday night, 10 August, UN representative for human rights, counted along 18 kilometers of the road between Drnis and Knin 45 houses in flames. Smoke was coming out of some of them. They had been set on fire minutes earlier.

Q: What are your informations about the situation in Knin? What happened during the military operations?

As far as as we could tell, in the streets outside of the city center, almost all houses and apartments looked as they had been broken into and looted. We found clothing and furniture, children toys and other similar items at the city dump, not far from the center of the city. We can not talk about the number of civilian victims or about the behavior of the Croatian Army immediately after the the end of military operations since we left the camp for a first time on Tuesday.

Q: Why?

UN observers and civilian police did not get the Croatian military authorities permission to enter the city. Only on Tuesday afternoon, when everything had been already finished, after a lot of effort, a regular patrol was allowed to walk through the city. Therefore it is impossible for UN to tell whether the Croatian Army behaved appropriately or not.

Q: Croatian authorities have, however, informed the UN about the start of operation "Storm"?

That is correct but it does not offer much comfort. Several hours before the start of operation "Storm", UN military headquarters in Zagreb received the Croatian authorities warning that the definite attack would start on Friday at 3 a.m. - maybe 3:15 a.m. - and that the bombardment would commence 2 hours later. That is how it happened. Everybody left the city on Friday afternoon or during the Friday on Saturday night. Street fighting occurred on the outskirts of the city, where every sign of civilian life had disappeared.

Q: You have about 600 people from the Knin area in your camp. According to the information published in the local daily press, alleged war criminals are among them. What can you tell us about that?

We know about that and we immediately took a stand on that issue. According to the Akashi's agreement, alleged war criminals will remain under the jurisdiction of the military authorities in sector South until the Croatian authorities start legal proceedings against them. Cases like those require careful investigation which can not be conducted carelessly or quickly. Until the evidence against alleged war criminals is revealed, in detail and clearly, they will, regardless of what anyone might think about that, remain in the sector South camp. They cannot leave the camp - neither voluntarily or under pressure - since helicopter link between Zagreb and Knin is only maintained in case of emergency and used by UN officials.

Q: Have the Croatian military authorities tried to reduce tensions in the area?

Yes, they have, but their methods are rather strange. For example, work of UN commander for sector South has been hampered by Croatian police which, unfortunately, keeps doing the opposite of what it should and keeps provoking clashes. The commander of sector South simply cannot transfer the message of reconciliation between these two separated communities, which both suffer from the tragic consequences of the war.

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Testimonies from General Sir Michael Rose, Commander of the UN Protection Force in Bosnia and author of the book "Fighting for Peace"

page 197, .. "More serious were reports we started to receive from the French in the city that the Bosnian forces were sometimes firing on their own citizens. In one such incident a tram had been fired on from building on the Bosnian side of the conflict line normally occupied by paramilitary police. In another incident, following a mortar attack near the Residency that killed two children, two more shells had been fired at the same location while the French Army team was investigating the first incident. These secondary shots could only have come from the Bosnian side of the firing line. On the other side of the city, on several occasions, UN and NATO aircraft at Sarajevo airport had been fired at from the Muslim-held suburb of Butmir."

Page 162:.. "The French battalion guarding the airport had managed to pin down one of the firing points that was in the Bosnian held town of Butmir, close to confrontation line. On one occasion, a French soldier had actually seen a mortar fired from Butmir, across the airfield, at aircraft waiting to unload on the dispersal apron. The Bosnian forces were evidently doing this to sustain the image of a city under siege. Ganic (Bosnian Muslim Vice-President) agreed he would stop these attacks, but he never did."

Page 163:.. "In mid-August, the Bosnian Army shelled the Serb town of Ilijas on the outskirts of Sarajevo. Ilijas was well within the 20-kilometre exclusion zone around Sarajevo, and once again Bosnians were in breach of the NATO ultimatum. In the attack, a school was hit and women and children killed. I told Granic (Bosnian Vice-President) that I would have no alternative but to call in NATO air strikes if his forces carried an action again...the Bosnian Army stopped shelling immediately, demonstrating to me once again that the trail of blood in Bosnia always leads to the top."

Page 173:.. "By then they (Serbs) were using their own artillery and mortars to fire at the Bosnian mortars, one of which had been established in the grounds of Kosevo (Sarajevo) hospital; a tactic already observed and protested about my predecessor, Gen. Francis Brinquemont. The Bosnians had evidently chosen this location with the intention of attracting Serb fire, in the hope that the resulting carnage would further tilt international support in their favour.

History is likely to pass judgement on the Bosnian leaders for using inhuman tactics.

I presented Izetbegovic (Bosnian President) with the evidence produced by the Cymbeline mortar-locating troop showing that the Bosnian Army had plainly started the fighting and had deliberately fired from positions around the hospital, the Presidency, and even close to my own HQ (all locations in Sarajevo). Probably the first time in the war, the Bosnians had been caught red-handed. The evidence was incontrovertible and their actions probably constituted A WAR CRIME as well as a violation of the NATO ultimatum, as it is against Geneva Protocol deliberately to involve civil populations to war."

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"Toronto Star" - October 15, 1996 -Honor for our troops in Canada's secret battle
Fighting in Croatia heaviest since Korea

My guys did a great job under extremely difficult conditions. They have a lot to be proud of - Lt.-Col. Jim Calvin, commander 2nd Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry

OTTAWA (CP) - In 1993, Canadian soldiers fought their biggest battle since the Korean War. The action pitted Canadian personnel and French troops under Canadian command against the war-hardened Croatian army in a tiny corner of the former Yugoslavia. When the shooting stopped, there were four Canadian and seven French soldiers wounded, Croatian media put their army's casualties at 27 dead or wounded.

The battle earned the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, a unit citation from the United Nations commander, the first such award given a battalion in the U.N. mission. But until now few Canadians outside of the military knew of the engagement or the performance of their troops. It is Canada's secret battle. This omission of history is partly owing to the absence of any Canadian media in that part of the former Yugoslavia at the time. It is mostly because of a publicity-shy Department of National Defence that had turned inward because of events six months earlier in Africa, when Canadian peacekeepers killed several Somalis.

The military released only euphemistic statements about Canadian troops "monitoring" the area and "establishing control." But months after the battle, Warrant Officer Bill Johnson was awarded a Medal of Bravery for rescuing a French peacekeeper trapped in a minefield during the closing days of the operation. Lt. -Col. Jim Calvin, commander of the 2nd Battalion, received the Meritorious Service Cross, "My guys did a great job under extremely difficult conditions," Calvin said. "They have a lot to be proud of." On Sept. 9, 1993, the Croatian army had attacked near the town of Medak in the Krajina, an area controlled by Serbs in eastern Croatia. More than 2,500 Croatian troops, backed by tanks, had advanced into a 35-square-kilometre area known as the Medak Pocket. After several days of heavy fighting with the Serbs, the Croats had agreed to a U.N.-brokered ceasefire that required them to pull back to their original lines.

Calvin and French Gen. Jean Cot, head of the U.N. mission, had agreed that the Patricias would establish a buffer zone between Serb and Croatian armies. Cot told Calvin the U.N. had a credibility problem and needed a successful mission in Yugoslavia. No more would U.N. troops pull back each time the Croats or Serbs attacked. It was now time to enforce the peace. Calvin and his men had already endured a 24-hour Croatian artillery and mortar barrage, and some Canadians were still shaken. In Medak, where Canadians manned an observation post, 525 bombs had landed, and four of Calvin's soldiers had been wounded.

The six-month tour of duty with the U.N. mission was coming to an end for the Canadians and they looked forward to returning to their home base in Winnipeg in less than three weeks.

About noon on Sept. 15, 250 Canadian troops and 500 French soldiers under Calvin's command started to move in between the Serb and Croat front lines. They were supported by another 375 Canadian soldiers, including engineers, medics and anti-tank teams. More than half the Canadians were reservists. The Serbs watched as the U.N. troops advanced but did nothing. The Croats opened fire. Sgt. Rod Dearing's men of 8 Platoon, Charlie Company, were digging in around the village of Sitlik when the Croats attacked. "The whole place just lit up," said Dearing, a native of Armstrong, B. C. "They started firing at us with everything - 20-millimetre cannon, mortars, machineguns, everything. It was crazy."

The Canadians scrambled into their trenches and returned fire. The Croats had ambushed and killed some French peacekeepers eight months earlier. The French soldiers had quickly retreated after that fight. "I guess the Croats figured we'd do the same thing if they caused us casualties," recalls Dearing, a veteran soldier. During a second attack, the platoon spotted the Croats. Flashes from their machineguns could be seen from a hedgerow and trees 150 metres away.

Dearing divided his men into groups. "One group, hedgerow, rapid fire. Two group, tree line, rapid fire." After a fierce firefight, the shooting on the Croatian side died down. Dearing and his troops weren't the only Canadians fighting back. Twenty separate gun battles would be fought that day and night with the Croats.

At 9 a. m. the following morning, French troops who were in the rear started moving forward. Backed by armored vehicles, they moved up past the Canadians and toward the Croatian positions. By then the Croats were falling back. Later that morning, the Canadians heard small-arms fire and explosions, and saw smoke rising from Serb villages behind the Croatian lines. The Croats were killing Serb civilians. An armored platoon started toward the burning villages but was stopped for 90 minutes by a heavily armed Croatian unit which apparently wanted to delay the Canadians, to enable their ethnic cleansing units to finish their killing and looting.

"That was the hardest thing - to sit there and watch that and be essentially helpless to do anything," recalled Calvin, who had moved up to the barricade. Calvin didn't have the firepower to match the Croats, but he did have another weapon: A European television crew and several Serb journalists were with the column. Calvin gave an impromptu news conference in the middle of the road, telling reporters the Croats were killing civilians just on the other side of the barricade.

The Croatian commander, worried about his country's image, opened the roadblock and let the Canadians pass. When they finally reached the villages, the Canadians found 16 bodies of civilian victims. Every single building in the Medak Pocket, 312 houses and barns, had been destroyed. More than 130 large farm animals had been slaughtered. Scattered on the ground were hundreds of pairs of surgical gloves. It appeared that more people had been murdered and the Croats wore the gloves when piling bodies into trucks for removal from the area. Days later, the Croats turned over 50 bodies.

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Le Monde Paris, France

WERE THE RACAK DEAD REALLY COLDLY MASSACRED?

by Christophe Chatelot

The version of the facts spread by the Kosovars leaves several questions unanswered. Belgrade says that the forty-five victims were UCK "terrorists, fallen during combat, but rejects any international investigation.

Isn't the Racak massacre just too perfect? New eye witness accounts gathered on Monday, January 18, by Le Monde, throw doubt on the reality of the horrible spectacle of dozens of piled up bodies of Albanians supposedly summarily executed by Serb security forces last Friday. Were the victims executed in cold blood, as UCK says, or killed in combat, as the Serbs say?

According to the version gathered and broadcast by the press and the Kosovo verification mission (KVM) observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the massacre took place on January 15 in the early after-noon. "Masked" Serbian police entered the village of Racak which had been shelled all morning by Yugoslav army tanks. They broke down the doors and entered people's homes, ordering the women to stay there while they pushed the men to the edge of the village to calmly execute them with a bullet through the head, not without first having tortured and mutilated several. Some witnesses even said that the Serbs sang as they did their dirty work, before leaving the village around 3:30 p.m.

The account by two journalists of Associated Press TV television (AP TV) who filmed the police operation in Racak contradicts this tale. When at 10 a.m. they entered the village in the wake of a police armored vehicle, the village was nearly deserted. They advanced through the streets under the fire of the Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) fighters lying in ambush in the woods above the village. The exchange of fire continued throughout the operation, with more or less intensity. The main fighting took place in the woods. The Albanians who had fled the village when the first Serb shells were fired at dawn tried to escape. There they ran into Serbian police who had surrounded the village. The UCK was trapped in between.

The object of the violent police attack on Friday was a stronghold of UCK Albanian independence fighters. Virtually all the inhabitants had fled Racak during the frightful Serb offensive of the summer of 1998. With few exceptions, they had not come back. "Smoke came from only two chimneys", noted one of the two AP TV reporters.

The Serb operation was thus no surprise, nor was it a secret. On the morning of the attack, a police source tipped off AP TV: "Come to Racak, something is happening". At 10 a.m., the team was on the spot alongside the police; it filmed from a peak overlooking the village and then through the streets in the wake of an armored vehicle. The OSCE was also warned of the action. At least two teams of international observers watched the fighting from a hill where they could see part of the village. They entered Racak shortly after the police left. They then questioned a few Albanians about the situation, trying to find out whether there were wounded civilians. Around 6 p.m., they took four persons -- two women and two old men -- who were very slightly wounded toward the dispensary of the neighboring town of Stimje. The verifiers said at that time that they were "incapable of establishing the number of casualties of that day of fighting".

The publicity given by the Serbian police to that operation was intense. At 10:30 a.m., it gave out its first press release. It announced that the police had "encircled the village of Racak with the aim of arresting the members of a terrorist group who killed a policeman" the previous Sunday. At 3 p.m., a first bulletin announced fifteen Albanians killed in fighting. The next day, Saturday, it welcomed the success of the operation which, it said, had resulted in the death of dozens of UCK "terrorists" and the capture of a large stock of weapons.

The attempt to arrest an Albanian presumed to have murdered a Serb policemen turned into a massacre. At 5:30 p.m., the police evacuated the site under the sporadic fire of a handful of UCK fighters who continued to hold out thanks to the steep and rough terrain. In no time, the first of the Albanians who had got away came back down into the village, those who had managed to hide came out in the open and three KVM vehicles drove into the village. One hour after the police left, night fell.

The next morning, the press and the KVM came to see the damage caused by the fighting. It was at this moment that, guided by the armed UCK fighters who had recaptured the village, they discovered the ditch where a score of bodies were piled up, almost exclusively men. At midday, the chief of the KVM in person, the American diplomat William Walker, arrived on the spot and declared his indignation at the atrocities committed by "the Serb police forces and the Yugoslav army".

The condemnation was total, irrevocable. And yet questions remain. How could the Serb police have gathered a group of men and led them calmly toward the execution site while they were constantly under fire from UCK fighters? How could the ditch located on the edge of Racak have escaped notice by local inhabitants familiar with the surroundings who were present before nightfall? Or by the observers who were present for over two hours in this tiny village? Why so few cartridges around the corpses, so little blood in the hollow road where twenty three people are supposed to have been shot at close range with several bullets in the head? Rather, weren't the bodies of the Albanians killed in combat by the Serb police gathered into the ditch to create a horror scene which was sure to have an appalling effect on public opinion? Don't the violence and rapidity of Belgrade's reaction, which gave the chief of the KVM forty-eight hours to leave Yugoslavia, show that the Yugoslavs are sure of what they are saying?

Only an international inquiry above all suspicion will make it possible to clarify these obscure points. Finnish and Belurussian legal doctors were expected to arrive in Pristina on Wednesday to attend the autopsies being carried out by Yugoslav doctors. The problem is that the Belgrade authorities have never been cooperative in this matter. Why? Whatever the conclusions of the investigators, the Racak massacre shows that the hope of soon reaching a settlement of the Kosovo crisis seems quite illusory.

END report by Christophe Chatelot, Le Monde, dated 21 January 1999.

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Racak Revisited: Whose Massacre?

Accuracy In Media
Weekly Column

By Reed Irvine
January 13, 2000

Using dubious excuses to start wars has been common throughout history, but it usually takes historians a long time to get at the truth. The excuse that President Clinton used to start NATO's air war against Yugoslavia last year was the alleged massacre of 45 Albanian civilians in the little village of Racak in Kosovo on Friday, January 15, 1999. This was denounced as a crime against humanity and a violation of the cease-fire agreement worked out between the Serbs and the Albanians a few months earlier.

But only two days after the French newspaper, Le Figaro, published a big story by Renaud Girard, its correspondent in Yugoslavia, about this terrible crime against humanity, it ran a second story by him charging that he and other foreign journalists had been fooled by the KLA. At least two other French newspapers, Le Monde and Libération, exposed the deception.

In a telephone interview, Girard explained why he had repudiated his story about the Racak massacre. He said that on the morning of January 15, the government media center in Pristina called the AP TV and suggested that they be at Racak at 10:30 a.m. He and the other foreign journalists had other plans that day. At 2:30 p.m., the media center issued a press release saying that an attack on the KLA-controlled village had been carried out and 15 terrorists had been killed. AP TV had videotaped the operation, and some of it was shown on television. In addition, observers for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) had watched it from a nearby hill.

The next day, the press center urged foreign journalists to go to Racak. Girard and a few others did so. Two teams of OSCE observers were already there, and the village was filled with uniformed KLA soldiers. The journalists were shown a lot of dead bodies in a ravine just a few kilometers from the village. Villagers told them that they had been massacred by the Serbs. Girard was shocked. He wrote a long story about what he had seen and heard. It was published on Jan. 18.

Christophe Chatelot, the reporter for Le Monde, then told him that he had gone to Racak the previous Friday, the day of the police operation, arriving at 4 p.m. He said the village appeared to be more or less normal. He spoke to an American OSCE observer who had been there all day. He said nothing about a massacre, and there were no bodies in sight. There were a few people with minor wounds. He found nothing worth writing about, and so he didn't revisit Racak the next day with the other journalists.

Girard and Chatelot interviewed the Serbian AP TV camera crew and viewed their tape. There was no one to be seen in the village, and the attacking force went after the KLA soldiers entrenched in the hills. Girard described the village as "fortified" with lots of trenches. He found the whole thing "weird." Why did the Serbs urge the journalists to go to Racak if they intended to commit a massacre or had committed one? Why was no mention or sign of a massacre encountered by those who were there on Friday? Why did the observers who had been there on Friday swallow the stories the villagers told them on Saturday? Why didn't they go to the police in the village a few kilometers away and ask what they knew about what had transpired the previous day or during the night?

Le Figaro on Jan. 20 published Girard's story challenging the claim that there was a massacre of innocent civilians in the peaceful village of Racak on Jan. 15. He said it angered the "Anglo" reporters, who accused him of "killing their story" and the AP told its Serb camera crew they would be fired if they talked to any more reporters.

Amb. William Walker, who was in charge of the observers, was also angry about what he had written. Girard thought that Walker was partial to the KLA, and he questioned whether he wanted the observer mission to succeed. Walker had met privately with the KLA leaders for 45 minutes after he arrived at Racak late on Saturday. He did not meet with the Serbs.

Girard said he himself had no bias in favor of the Serbs. He had exposed their atrocities in Bosnia. At Racak, however, it was the KLA that deceived the foreign reporters with the help of those OSCE observers who knew that the dead bodies appeared long after the Serb forces had withdrawn, returning control of Racak to the KLA.

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Interview with Alan Roberts, UN spokesperson in Knin: Systematic Burning

Feral Tribune, 8/14/95, Split, Croatia

UN commission for human rights has counted 45 burned houses between Drnis and Knin. "These houses were destroyed according to a plan, assiduously and systematically," claims Alan Roberts. "All houses and apartments outside the Knin city center look as if they were broken into and looted."

Since Tuesday afternoon, when we were allowed to enter some of the villages around Knin, UN military observers and civil police have seen many burned houses, as well as some which were still burning. UN commission has established that the houses had been destroyed according to a plan and - what is interesting - very assiduously and systematically! This is a part of a statement given by Alan Roberts to Feral's journalist. Alan Roberts is a UN official in Knin, and he was there when the Croatian Army liberated the city. Asked to back up his claims with a proof, Roberts responded:

On Thursday night, 10 August, UN representative for human rights, counted along 18 kilometers of the road between Drnis and Knin 45 houses in flames. Smoke was coming out of some of them. They had been set on fire minutes earlier.

Q: What are your informations about the situation in Knin? What happened during the military operations?

As far as as we could tell, in the streets outside of the city center, almost all houses and apartments looked as they had been broken into and looted. We found clothing and furniture, children toys and other similar items at the city dump, not far from the center of the city. We can not talk about the number of civilian victims or about the behavior of the Croatian Army immediately after the the end of military operations since we left the camp for a first time on Tuesday.

Q: Why?

UN observers and civilian police did not get the Croatian military authorities permission to enter the city. Only on Tuesday afternoon, when everything had been already finished, after a lot of effort, a regular patrol was allowed to walk through the city. Therefore it is impossible for UN to tell whether the Croatian Army behaved appropriately or not.

Q: Croatian authorities have, however, informed the UN about the start of operation "Storm"?

That is correct but it does not offer much comfort. Several hours before the start of operation "Storm", UN military headquarters in Zagreb received the Croatian authorities warning that the definite attack would start on Friday at 3 a.m. - maybe 3:15 a.m. - and that the bombardment would commence 2 hours later. That is how it happened. Everybody left the city on Friday afternoon or during the Friday on Saturday night. Street fighting occurred on the outskirts of the city, where every sign of civilian life had disappeared.

Q: You have about 600 people from the Knin area in your camp. According to the information published in the local daily press, alleged war criminals are among them. What can you tell us about that?

We know about that and we immediately took a stand on that issue. According to the Akashi's agreement, alleged war criminals will remain under the jurisdiction of the military authorities in sector South until the Croatian authorities start legal proceedings against them. Cases like those require careful investigation which can not be conducted carelessly or quickly. Until the evidence against alleged war criminals is revealed, in detail and clearly, they will, regardless of what anyone might think about that, remain in the sector South camp. They cannot leave the camp - neither voluntarily or under pressure - since helicopter link between Zagreb and Knin is only maintained in case of emergency and used by UN officials.

Q: Have the Croatian military authorities tried to reduce tensions in the area?

Yes, they have, but their methods are rather strange. For example, work of UN commander for sector South has been hampered by Croatian police which, unfortunately, keeps doing the opposite of what it should and keeps provoking clashes. The commander of sector South simply cannot transfer the message of reconciliation between these two separated communities, which both suffer from the tragic consequences of the war.

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October 29, 1995 British experts dispute Sarajevo bombing probe

By Hugh McManners, London Sunday Times

British ammunition experts serving with the United Nations in Sarajevo have challenged key "evidence" of the Serbian atrocity that triggered NATO's devastating bombing campaign this year. The experts, who examined the scene of the market massacre in Sarajevo in August, said they found no evidence that Bosnian Serbs had fired the lethal mortar round. They suspected the Bosnian government army might have been responsible.

They said French analysts who also examined the scene agreed with them. But they were overruled by the senior American officer, and the UN issued a statement saying it was beyond any doubt that the Bosnian Serbs were responsible for the blast, in which 37 people were killed and 90 wounded. The carnage was used as the pretext for NATO's huge air campaign against the Bosnian Serbs, which was followed by extensive battlefield losses and forced the Serbs to the negotiating table. The British experts were part of a UN team that reached the Trznica market in Sarajevo 40 minutes after the mortar attack on the morning of August 28. They began their inspection amid a bloody scene of smashed fruit stalls and screaming people.

Five mortars had been fired. The size of the craters and metal splinters indicated that they were all of 120 mm caliber, probably from towed mortars that are regularly fired into the city.

The splinters were too small for any more precise identification to be possible. But the analysts were able to determine from the pattern of splinters and the shape of the craters the direction from which each bomb was fired. They concluded that four of the mortars, which had caused no injuries or loss of life, had been fired from areas indicating Serb positions. The fifth shell, which caused the bloodshed, had come from a position they could not identify.

They suspected that the perpetrator might easily have been the Bosnian government army, which has been implicated in other incidents such as a rocket attack on Sarajevo's television station on June 29 in which five people died and 30 others were injured. The observations and findings were confirmed by the French, and they returned to base to make their report. A senior American officer at the United Nations Protection Force headquarters in Sarajevo dismissed their findings, however, citing a small groove known as a "fuse furrow" made in the ground by the bomb head.

He said this indicated that the fatal mortar round had come from the same direction as the others. Neither British nor French analysts noticed such a groove. By nightfall, the UN announced that the Bosnian Serbs were to blame. Fewer than 48 hours later, the NATO air strikes and artillery campaign began. Behind the technicalities of the dispute lies the murderous ability of Sarajevo's mortar teams. Mortars usually have to be adjusted onto a target by firing single bombs, a forward observer passing back corrections until the target is hit. Since the siege of the city started in April 1992, the significant targets have become well known to mortar men from all sides, making the target adjustments unnecessary. Single mortar rounds can be fired without warning into crowded squares or streets with enough accuracy to ensure casualties. Last month, the United Nations was defensive about the August massacre. One official said that after two previous mortar strikes to which the Bosnian Serbs had owned up – one of which had killed an Egyptian UN soldier – using this particular attack to trigger NATO action was, at its most charitable, a presentational error. There is growing concern among UN officials over reports from UN peacekeepers, European Community monitors and Amnesty International that Croatian army and police units have been beating and killing Serb civilians and burning down their homes in recaptured areas of Croatia. UN peacekeepers had recorded more than 120 civilian deaths by the beginning of October. Only about 4,000 Serbs of the original 185,000 have remained in the Krajina region of Croatia since its recapture in August. Croatia has given them 90 days to reclaim their homes.

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Kosovo and Canada's participation in NATO's war

Subject: Submission on Canada's Kosovo Policy

To: Mr. Bill Graham, Chair, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade

From: Donald Fleming, Vancouver, April 21/2000

Subject: Kosovo and Canada's participation in NATO's war

Dear Mr. Graham,

I understand the Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, of which you are Chair, has been looking into follow-up questions relating to Canada's involvement in the Kosovo war. I'm not sure what the intent is but I would like to offer some comments for your consideration, in the hopes that your committee will move beyond just reciting "chapter and verse" to justify NATO actions in Kosovo and Canada's support of those actions. Unfortunately I was unable to respond by April 4th, the date I was advised of by Ms. Janice Hilchie for a draft report from your committee on Kosovo, but nevertheless I trust my comments and concerns will still be given due consideration at this time.

First let me be clear. My quarrel is with the decision-making process at the top levels of the Canadian government in the formulation of its Kosovo policy not with members of the Canadian armed forces who were charged with the responsibility of having to carry out those regrettable decisions. The "chapter and verse" context referred to above was clearly in evidence in an exchange in the House last month (parl web site), in which Mr. Robert Bertrand, speaking on behalf of the Minister of National Defence, chose to ignore a serious and important question (from a Dr. Bertell) about the use of Depleted Uranium by NATO forces in Kosovo (and the Gulf War) with some jingoistic response about how proud we can be of our Canadian forces. This kind of "shooting the messenger" reply represents, unfortunately, the kind of mental midgetry that has characterized Canada's lock-step response to the Kosovo crisis since its beginning.

In a March 21st article in the Globe and Mail Brian Milnar offered the phrase "selective indignation", to which one might add "selective morality" and "selective truths", in describing NATO's response to Serb provocation in Kosovo, and the lapse of both sound judgement and moral perspective that sustained it in its mindless prosecution of that war. The meaning of these kinds of phrases resonate in memory as well from the United States' prosecution of its war in Vietnam, where a policy of "search and destroy" became its sustaining *raison d'être*, over a generation ago. (Even today the long term effects, both genetic and environmental, of the widespread and criminal chemical warfare use of Agent Orange by the US military in that conflict are coming to light).

The process of selective (moral) indignation and selective truths that was part and parcel of the Kosovo war began with the lie of Rambouillet, where the Serb and particularly Slobodan Milosevic was portrayed as alternately brutal and intransigent. (Forgetting of course that Milosevic was Time Magazine's "Man of the Year" at that time for his role in helping to broker the Dayton peace accords for Bosnia).

Yes, there were understandable grounds for world concerns about Serbian policy and brutality towards Kosovar Albanians, brought into focus by some particularly heinous crimes at the time, in which whole families were murdered (ostensibly by rogue elements of the Serbian police, but never proven), which, it has been argued, catalyzed the (re)birth of the KLA and its decision to take up arms. The understandable emotional response to those kinds of crimes notwithstanding, the truth of the matter was (is) that both the KLA and its earlier incarnations, including Albanian Nazi sympathizers during the German occupation in WWII, have long had the goal in mind of a "greater Albania". The Serbs too have long aspired to a "greater Serbia". That both Serb and Albanian have long-established claims to the land of Kosovo, written in their blood down through the centuries, should have been abundantly clear to anybody around the table at Rambouillet.

It is worth noting, for example, at the end of WWII the population of Kosovo, claimed by Serbia as part of its heartland for centuries, was roughly 50-50 Serb and Albanian. Even before NATO's war, it was apropos to ask "who has been cleansing who"? The outcome of this process has been made abundantly clear of late as KFOR struggles to prevent the de-facto if not de-jure creation of Kosovo as an Albanian state, after NATO's duplicity (however ingenuous) in guaranteeing the "ethnic cleansing" of Serbs from Kosovo.

The other part of the lie that was Rambouillet was its claim to have been a "negotiation" between the parties (which in fact never met) when it was basically nothing more than an ultimatum, delivered by Mme. Albright to Serbia. This called for a NATO presence throughout the FRY (not just in Kosovo) and the holding of free elections in Kosovo after a three-year period, which would have effectively guaranteed Kosovo becoming part of Albania, and as such represented an intolerable denial of Serbian sovereignty. What country in the world would/could agree to the equivalent conditions? Would the Govt. of Canada, for example, have agreed to US troops in Ottawa during the FLQ crisis of the early 70's, justified by Washington's concerns about maintaining stability on its north-eastern borders?

How did NATO get to this selectively indignant position of misplaced morality? You will remember "Mr. Clean" of the US diplomatic service, Richard Holbrooke, who having successfully helped to broker the Dayton agreement to end the Bosnian war, with the cooperation of Time's aforementioned "Man of the Year", was also able, it appeared, and to his credit, to have brokered a shaky peace in Kosovo, to be overseen by a lightly-armed OSCE observer force. (It can be noted that frequent claims of Serbian violations of this accord, mainly by US observers, were never fully corroborated.) Then, with this trump card in hand, the UN and NATO threw it away. Why? We were told because Milosevic reneged on the deal (true) and then demanded that the OSCE force leave Kosovo. In this game of international-stakes poker, that bluff should have been called and in the process the UN/NATO (I've forgotten the trail of command here) should have significantly augmented the military strength of its observer force.

Had Canada first insisted on maintaining this (strengthened) OSCE force, necessary to maintain stability in the region, thereby providing a much-needed opportunity for meaningful negotiations between Serbs and the KLA, and contributed additional forces in support of its presence at the time, then this would indeed have been worthy of respect (and might have given people like Mr. Bertrand something genuine to be proud of).

Unfortunately, that opportunity was sacrificed on the altar of political intransigence (on all sides) and this OSCE protection force was withdrawn. Fast forward about one year to the "shock" expressed by NATO capitals at the flood of Kosovar refugees accompanying the start of its bombing campaign. That was a distortion of the truth, at best, once again in the guise of selective indignation. It was well known that Milosevic and his cadre of Serb nationalists were planning "Operation Horseshoe", which in effect called for a massive removal (ethnic cleansing) of Albanians, effectively abrogating their legitimate rights in Kosovo (a process Milosevic put in motion about 10 yrs. earlier). However reprehensible such a policy of blatant denial of human rights represented to NATO and the UN, it was certainly not without precedent in the region (as the massive resettlement of populations following the Balkan wars on the eve of WWI give testimony to), and most recently seen in the Bosnian war when about 300,000 Serbs were evicted from their homes in the Krajina region by Croat forces. Since part of the basis for the war crimes charges against Milosevic was this policy of ethnic cleansing that his government

Apparently advocated, WHY was Franjo Tudjman of Croatia never charged with similar "crimes against humanity"? Just another example of "selective indignation"!

What did NATO expect then when it began its bombing campaign, knowing full-well the resentment that every Serb on the ground would feel when it would have seemed obvious that NATO was actively supporting the KLA and in the process denying Serbian heritage in Kosovo. The flood of refugees that resulted was entirely predictable after NATO created the very conditions for the human catastrophe that they said they went to war to prevent. Their feigned shock as the tapestry of history in the region unraveled before their eyes was just an early example of selective indignation.

Indeed, one has to ask, was the withdrawal of the OSCE observers a ploy to sucker Milosevic into a position from which the might of selective western morality could be brought to bear? I think history will probably demonstrate the answer to this question is "yes", taking it's place among the annals of classic entrapment strategies, exemplified as well somewhat earlier by Ms. Glaspie's response to Saddam Hussein prior to the Gulf War- "Oh, no, Mr. Hussein, the United States has no vested interest in territorial disputes between Iraq and Kuwait" (Ms. Glaspie was the US ambassador to Iraq at the time). And Canada would like to claim it's proud of participating in this kind of manipulation?

To be sure, the plight seen every night on our TV screens of Albanian refugees was cause for genuine concern on the part of the world community. However this too was yet another example of selective indignation, orchestrated by NATO, in which the worlds' press robotically acted out what became its familiar role of NATO cheerleader (with CNN leading the high-kicks), in a disturbing display of total lack of journalistic integrity that surpassed even its abandonment of that integrity in the Gulf War. (Noam Chomsky would label this "manufactured consent".) To put this in perspective Mr. Graham, how many times, for example, did you see the aftermath of Serbian civilians, including children, blown to bits by NATO bombs? How many news reports of NATO crimes against humanity did you read about? How informed do you think the public is about war crimes charges brought against NATO at the Hague by an international consortium of lawyers and jurists?

This seedy mantle of selective morality that NATO and its allies, including Canada, constantly wrapped itself in, permeated the Kosovo conflict throughout, punctuated with several outrageous examples of NATO propaganda along the way. In the realm of selective indignation, Mr. Graham, ask yourself, what is the difference between NATO dropping cluster bombs on civilian markets in Nis and Serb shells on Sarajevo? What is the difference between purposely targeting trains and busses and civilians on bridges, not to mention (Albanian) refugee columns (first vehemently denied and then only grudgingly admitted by NATO), and Serb shells falling on Kosovo houses? The Serb claim that the KLA was a terrorist organization was not without credibility. Has NATO bombed Ankara in retaliation for Turkish attacks on its Kurdish minority? What is the difference between destroying a TV station and all the people inside it, simply because NATO doesn't like what was being said, and killing people for their ethnic origin? As one Serbian mother remarked: "of course there was Serbian propaganda, there was also NATO propaganda- the difference is that Serbia was not dropping bombs on NATO".

This is the ugly reality of NATO's war, in which it attacked a sovereign country, in violation of its own Charter and international law, not to mention making a mockery of its "Partnership for Peace" program that it had concluded with Russia only a year or so earlier. (Russian tactics and brutality recently in Chechnya were very likely a direct consequence of NATO's actions in Kosovo!). And Canada feels proud of contributing to this?

The most egregious example of NATO propaganda, providing fodder for yet more media condemnation of the "brutal Serb" (in sync with the tactics of the likes of Josef Goebels) was the frequently stated claims by high-ranking NATO officials, including Javier Solana, former secretary general of NATO, and William Cohen, US secretary of defence, of "mass graves of 100,000 Kosovar Albanians brutally murdered by Serbs" (captured for posterity on CNN video tape, minus only the sex). In the ongoing and largely civil war that has characterized the conflict between Serb and Albanian in Kosovo for centuries, of which we have perhaps just witnessed its most horrific excesses, war crimes and crimes against humanity are, regrettably, part of that tapestry of history that NATO helped unravel. BUT, this was not the genocide that NATO constantly portrayed it to be. (Where was NATO or the UN in Rawanda? Where has it been in Kurdistan?).

Carla de Ponte, current chief prosecutor of the Hague war crimes tribunal, has stated before a US House Committee, that the number of dead in Kosovo mass graves numbers about 2000, a figure that while nevertheless is cause for concern and cries out for answers ("tell me, those of you who are living, why have I died?"), it is NOT evidence for genocide! (Go to Rawanda for that). In fact many of these so-called mass graves were marked with crosses, some by the Serb military themselves, after hasty burials between NATO air strikes- hardly the mark of a war crime. It can also be remarked that Louise Arbour, while still Chief Prosecutor, committed a serious breach of judicial impartiality, when she was invited to Kosovo (by the KLA), to see for herself these so-called mass graves, where upon she pronounced judgement against the Serbs before any evidence had been rendered. (This should have been reason enough to have her removed from her post).

The lies, selective judgement and misplaced morality that characterized NATO actions in Kosovo and Serbia, gave renewed credence to that old adage about truth being the first casualty of war, which continued into the peace agreement that was concluded as well. Echoing earlier and frequently intoned remarks by General Wesley Clark at his NATO pep talks- "we will disrupt, decimate and ultimately destroy the FRY army", we were told what a great "victory" had been achieved by NATO, with thousands of Serbian casualties compounded by the loss of about half their tanks and other heavy weapons. In reality NATO killed as many civilians as it did Serb soldiers and destroyed about a dozen tanks, at most. Had NATO forces actually invaded Kosovo they would have met a largely intact and united Serb military, something confirmed by KFOR forces on the ground.

Selective truths were in evidence too when we were told by NATO that the conditions of the peace agreement concluded between Serbia and NATO last June guaranteed adherence to the conditions set down at Rambouillet, the basis, supposedly, of NATO's prosecution of the Kosovo war in the first place. That was a lie! This agreement, accepted by the Serb military and ratified by their parliament (while Milosevic may be an autocrat, Serbia is not a dictatorship, another selective interpretation of the truth frequently offered up by NATO's lap dogs, the world press) differed from Rambouillet in two major respects: there would be no NATO troops in the FRY beyond Kosovo, and Kosovo would remain (in principle) a province of Serbia. In a recent interview on the BBC program "Panorama", General Clark offered the perfect definition of selective truths that characterized NATO reports on Kosovo from the beginning: "of course we told the truth, the trick was in knowing just what part of the truth to tell". And Canada feels proud to be part of such a process?

How much did Canada contribute to this "victory"? What fraction of the tons and tons of bombs dropped on Yugoslavia were from Canadian pilots, the result of a decision-making process based on the perceived moral omnipotence of Western and particularly US power? (Kosovo had its mirror image in the Gulf war where now a generation of Iraq's is threatened both by the destruction of Iraq's infrastructure and by UN and mainly US-imposed sanctions). How many cluster bombs were dropped by Canadian planes, many of which did not explode and now lie in wait for children to discover (tens if not hundreds have already been killed)? Are these the kinds of things that we as Canadians are proud of?

What was the real motivation behind this war? To ensure the removal of socialist Yugoslavia (Serbia) as an independent state standing in the way of NATO expansion across Europe? Some confirmation of this Machiavellian goal is provided by recent (almost laughable) reports of Croatia becoming part of NATO (assuming of course that it can pay the price in the purchase of US war planes)

What kind of a victory NATO actually won is a matter of considerable debate, but it was surely pyrrhic at best. Can they now win the peace? Evidence to date says no! The current tally of kidnapped or murdered Serbs is about 1500. A Serbian population that was about 10% prior to the Kosovo war (and one that had been steadily declining since the end of WWII) is now at 1%, and there is no question that NATO, wittingly or dim-wittedly, has contributed to this cleansing. The situation on the ground in Kosovo continues to deteriorate, with the real potential of engulfing a much wider swath of the Balkans, including

...ce and Montenegro. The KLA, to nobody's surprise (at least nobody who ever thought about it, which probably automatically lets out most of the hierarchy of NATO) remains essentially fully armed and seeks full independence for Kosovo, in violation of the June 1999 peace agreement. What will NATO do when Serbia, citing that same peace agreement, justifiably objects and threatens military action in defence of its territorial claims to Kosovo? In this scenario NATO will face a much less compliant Russia. And Canada is proud of contributing to NATO's creation of this Frankenstein in the Balkans?

It would appear that NATO and the UN now face a lose-lose situation. Either they have to double their present troop levels and accompanying logistical and materiel support, with the proviso of an open-ended commitment enforcing an artificial peace between Serb and Albanian protagonists (not unlike the situation in Cyprus which Canada finally withdrew from after 30 years), which could well evolve into direct confrontation with the KLA as they tighten their grip on Kosovo; or NATO will have to find a face-saving way to withdraw, paving the way for renewed conflict in the region, which would be an unmitigated admission of a vacuous policy to begin with and a failed mission to end with. Nobody who thought about it could have expected much else as NATO charged off on its moral high horse to "prevent a humanitarian catastrophe", testimony to relearning that kindergarten lesson that two wrongs never make a right!

What to do now to try and salvage what appears to be a lost cause, short of walking away and ignoring the dynamic of hatred set in motion by NATO? Two things seem obvious.

First there will never be peace in Kosovo until both Serb and Albanian can lay claim to the land, which will necessarily mean a division of Kosovo into Serbian and Albanian parts. Much of the historic claim of Serbia and many of its monasteries lie in the South (which have been constant targets of Albanian nationalists in their own policies of ethnic cleansing, something never mentioned by the world's press), currently under the control of the KLA and their NATO "allies". While it would be far from easy for Serbs to relinquish their historic claim to this region, this is already de-facto the situation, and in any event what other possibly workable options are there?. This option has in fact constantly been rejected by NATO, starting at Rambouillet, for reasons that have never been clear.

The second policy that MUST be put into place is a recognition that, after a 1000 NATO aircraft (of which about 90% were US) and 40,000 sorties delivered mega-tonnage of destruction throughout the FRY, reconstruction aid is required for ALL of Yugoslavia, not just in Kosovo. Yes, this will cost billions, 50 billion perhaps (a blink of an eye on the Dow or TSE) but anything short of this kind of commitment will only serve to isolate Serbia, fossilize continuing instability in the Balkans, and guarantee that the world will reap the seeds of renewed conflict.

One only needs to look at the deplorable situation in Iraq (a cradle of world "civilization") to see the folly of trying to isolate an individual regime, no matter how objectionable that regime may appear to be in NATO/UN capitals. After almost TEN years of punishing sanctions, insisted upon primarily by the US and UK on the Security Council as "punishment" for Saddam Hussein's attack on Kuwait, which ushered in the Gulf War (the morality of which was also highly suspect, as alluded to above), a whole generation in Iraq is on the brink of total devastation. Perhaps the UN is comfortable with their rendition of the "punishment fits the crime", but the purposeful and wholesale destruction of infrastructure (water, power, sewage, transportation, schools, hospitals) in Iraq, particularly in Baghdad, wrought once again by mega-tons of bombs wrapped in western morality, is in the process of devastating a generation of Iraq's young. (Think about the long-term consequences of that for the West in general and for the US in particular as millions of Iraqis grow up in an environment not far removed from that of the Dark Ages). Moreover there are still weekly if not daily reports of Iraqis killed by US (and UK) enforcers of UN-imposed "no fly zones", an example of selective morality if ever there was one. Have you ever heard of a similar zone imposed on Turkey for its not infrequent violations of Iraq's air space in pursuit of and attacks on Kurdish nationalists?

While the level of destruction wrought by NATO was probably less in Yugoslavia/ Kosovo than in Iraq (thankfully), it is still of major consequence, with fully half of the water, sewage and power facilities destroyed. It is here that Canada, as a respected middle (even small) power must play an advocacy role to try and ensure, out of the ashes of a dismal and failed NATO strategy, that a winnable peace may yet emerge IF a "Marshall Plan" for the FRY/Kosovo (and Iraq) can be put in place. If Canada can help to secure a real peace in the Balkans, we as Canadians will all feel the better for it and Canadian youths could again wear the maple leaf with pride on their backpacks. Referring again to Iraq in this context, it is Canada and notably Lloyd Axworthy, to his credit, who is currently championing the cause for the removal of sanctions against that devastated country, in the hopes that it may once again join the world community. We cannot change history, but let us draw the proper lessons from it, otherwise we will be dooming ourselves to repeat it.

The message for the future Mr. Graham? That Canada should return to its traditional role of world peace maker, a beacon for internationalism and humanitarianism in the world (for example, Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa again desperately needs a massive relief effort) and not be so willingly seduced into participating in jingoistic, myopic and misguided military responses offered up as supposed solutions to world conflicts. With rare exception (WWII and probably Korea, alone in the 20th century) these are doomed to the kind of failure and bankrupt morality that is Kosovo or Chechnya (or Somalia or the Gulf war or Vietnam or.... stretching back to the earlier Balkan wars and the "war to end all wars" where the bloom of youth became the poppies in Flanders Fields).

Canada MUST redefine its independence on the world stage, and in particular set a course in foreign policy independent of the United States. There are already welcome signs of this, including the aforementioned policy on Iraq as well as Canada's advocacy role in trying to establish a world ban on the use of land mines, again to the credit of Minister Axworthy. There is much to recommend the long-standing relationship between Americans and Canadians across the longest undefended border in the world, but lock-step adherence to US foreign (military) policy is not one of them. (A recent example of this kind of concern was provided on the CBC National News last night, when the Minister of Defence, Mr. Art Eggleton, a singularly unimpressive individual, opined that Canada should consider contributing to the resurgent, ultimately destabilizing and doomed-to-failure US "star wars" missile defence program).

In this way Canada will recover the world-respect it deserves from an earlier time, and rediscover its mandate to provide a much needed forum of sober second thought, a necessary counter measure to those "great powers" too often inebriated by their own self-righteous views that "moral might makes right". That is the real parallel to be drawn between Kosovo and the Nazi holocaust in Europe!

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns (and hopes for the future).

Sincerely yours,

Donald Fleming
(Professor, UBC)

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THE LOS ANGELES TIMES, June 10, 2000

Questions Surface Over NATO's Revised Take on the War in Kosovo

Balkans: Official accounts have been rewritten or contradicted by insiders in the past year.

By PAUL RICHTER, Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON—To hear some of the generals talk today, the Kosovo Liberation Army and NATO could scarcely have worked more closely during the alliance's 78-day air war in Kosovo.

KLA guerrillas constantly were on the phone to NATO "to tell us there were 15 bad guys down the road," U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. Michael C. Short, North Atlantic Treaty Organization air operations boss, told a conference in Virginia last month. And NATO itself "instigated" the KLA's biggest offensive of the war in May 1999, German Gen. Klaus Naumann, former head of the NATO military committee, told an interviewer.

This collaboration might not be noteworthy—except that NATO leaders so emphatically denied it during the war. And the revisionist accounts are but one example of the way the official accounts have been rewritten or contradicted by insiders since the war.

While the air war is history, the issue is not just academic: The alliance can't afford widespread doubts about its conduct of the war as it struggles to continue a peacekeeping effort that is likely to drag on for years in the province.

During the conflict, officials of NATO countries said that as many as 700,000 of Kosovo's 1.9 million people had been internally displaced. Now, NATO officially puts the figure at 500,000, and sources within the alliance acknowledge that it could be much smaller—perhaps fewer than 100,000.

Likewise, during the war, U.S. officials said "tens of thousands" of Albanian men might have been slaughtered by the Serbs. Now, the official estimate is a maximum of 10,000 killed. A number of analysts believe the figure is 6,000 or fewer.

There also has been a reduction in official estimates of how much Serb military equipment was destroyed.

On May 23, 1999, even before NATO had begun the final crescendo of bombing that did most of the damage, President Clinton claimed alliance warplanes had damaged or destroyed one-third of the 1,100 Serb armored vehicles believed to be in Kosovo. When the war ended two weeks later, Defense Secretary William S. Cohen declared that NATO warplanes had "severely crippled" the Serbs' Third Army, which was deployed to the province.

But official estimates of the damage began falling soon thereafter.

Three months after the air campaign ended, officials said the number of destroyed tanks was 93, rather than the 120 that had been previously estimated. Last month, the Air Force acknowledged that, in a postwar site visit, they had been able to find physical evidence of damage to only 26.

Air Force officials insisted that evidence from other sources—such as witness accounts and satellite pictures—indicated that 93 were struck. But one military officer who had reviewed the evidence said that assertion was "a real stretch."

Gen. Michael Jackson, the British commander in Kosovo, acknowledged to a parliamentary committee last month: "It's a matter of record that the actual damage in Kosovo was rather less than the estimated damage."

The former commanders have let slip other details that contradict the presentation of information during the war.

Short, who retires this month, said that after the embarrassing bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, NATO ruled out strikes in the center of the Yugoslav and Serbian capital.

Short said that although "there were political and military targets I'd have gone after," NATO leaders "had a circle drawn around downtown Belgrade, within which we couldn't hit anymore." This prohibition effectively gave the Serbian leadership an area within which it could safely operate, he told PBS' "Frontline" program.

Short declined a request for an interview for this report.

With all of these examples, allied officials have insisted that they never intended to deceive, and revised their estimates as soon as they learned of inaccuracies.

Jamie Shea, NATO's chief spokesman during the war, asserted last month that NATO set "a new standard for transparency" during the war. Its briefings provided "more complete and accurate information" than were made available in any previous conflict.

NATO contends that, while its damage estimate was cut back, the downward adjustment was far smaller than in previous wars.

In past wars, battle damage was "sometimes overstated by three or four times," said Mark Laity, a deputy NATO spokesman. He said NATO officials believe that the latest estimates are generally accurate. But officials do not claim that they are perfect, he said, and realize that "there may be military people who are skeptical."

Despite the recent comments of the generals, Laity strongly denied that NATO collaborated with the KLA. "We didn't. Full stop," he said.

Ivo H. Daalder, a former National Security Council aide now at the Washington-based Brookings Institution think tank, said NATO's statements should be seen in the context of its deep anxiety about maintaining public support for a war it thought would be over in a few days.

Eager to portray the Serbian regime in a bad light, "they always assumed the worst" about the situation inside Kosovo, he said. And in the interest of averting pressure for a ground war, which they feared would sunder the alliance, they drew the most optimistic interpretations of the success of their air campaign, said Daalder, who has just had a book published about the war with analyst Michael E. O'Hanlon.

How much of a price will there be for being wide of the mark?

... H. Hamilton, former chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said he believes that some NATO leaders were guilty of "great manipulation of the news" during the Kosovo war. Yet he said leaders are always tempted to exaggerate the facts, and he doubts there will be much cost to the United States or NATO.

"It's typical in a democracy to try to achieve immediate policy goals by overstating and overselling," Hamilton said. But while historians and policy experts might remember, he said, the public's memory is short.

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Deutsche Presse, January 17, 2001 **Finnish experts find no evidence of Serb massacre of Albanians**

DATELINE: Berlin/Belgrade

Finnish forensic experts in a final report on the circumstances of the deaths two years ago of some 40 people in the village of Racak in Kosovo found no evidence of a massacre by Serb security forces, a German newspaper reported Wednesday.

Berliner Zeitung said the report, which was made available to the Berlin paper prior to its publication, found no evidence that ethnic Albanian civilians had been executed by Serbian security forces in Racak.

The report by experts Juha Rainio, Kaisa Lalu and Antti Penttila would soon be published in the forensic magazine "Forensic Science International", it said.

The bodies were found on January 15, 1999 in the hills above the village in the troubled Serbian province.

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said in spring 1999 it had found evidence for slayings of unarmed civilians in Racak, many of whom were found disfigured and shot at close range.

The alleged massacre strengthened Western resolve against then Yugoslav strongman Slobodan Milosevic despite official denials that Serbian forces had been behind the killings.

Belgrade authorities at the time insisted the bodies were slain rebels of the Kosovo Liberation Army which they said had deliberately set up the scene to make OSCE observers believe there had been a massacre.

"Only now does the truth come out, at that time no one believed us," a source in the Serbian Interior Ministry said Wednesday.

Rainio, Lalu and Penttila belonged to a panel of Finnish experts led by Helena Ranta that was asked by the European Union in spring 1999 to investigate the killings. The probe was carried out along with Serbian and Belarussian experts.

The report said the panel was unable to confirm that the victims were villagers from Racak. The experts were also unable to reconstruct the "events" prior to the autopsies of the bodies.

The report said even the exact site of the incident had not been established either.

The three experts said there had been no evidence that the bodies had been disfigured after their deaths. The 40 bodies that had been examined had been found to show between one and 20 bullet wounds. Only in one case did they find traces of gun smoke that might point to an execution.

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van holst en steijnen

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Subject: Fw: [SIM] [SIN] Human Rights Watch Open Letter to Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica

----- Original Message -----

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Sent: Wednesday, March 07, 2001 12:54 AM
Subject: [SIM] [SIN] Human Rights Watch Open Letter to Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica

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 > Human Rights Watch Open Letter to Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica
 >
 > March 2, 2001
 >
 >
 > President Vojislav Kostunica
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 > FR Yugoslavia
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 > <http://www.hrw.org/press/2001/03/kostunica0302.htm>
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 > Related Material
 > Bush Administration Urged To Deny Aid to Yugoslavia
 > Human Rights Watch Press Release, March 1, 2001
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 > Your Excellency,
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 > Human Rights Watch is a privately funded international non-governmental
 > organization dedicated to documenting human rights abuse throughout the
 > world. In the past ten years, we have committed substantial time and
 > effort
 > to investigating violations of human rights and humanitarian law in the
 > former Yugoslavia. We have documented violations of humanitarian law by
 > all
 > sides to the armed conflicts in Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the NATO war
 > against FR Yugoslavia. We have also conducted substantial research on
 > human
 > rights abuses by the government of Slobodan Milosevic against ethnic
 > Albanians in Kosovo and his political opponents in the rest of Yugoslavia.
 > Our current research focuses on continued ethnic violence and the
 > impediments to the return of displaced persons throughout the region.

- Legal accountability for human rights and humanitarian law violations is a principal theme of our work throughout the world. Time and again we have
- > concluded that accountability is critically important to efforts to rebuild societies that are governed by the rule of law and that respect human rights. We have supported, and in some instances actively assisted, efforts
 - > by national governments to establish the responsibility of perpetrators of gross human rights abuses. We have also supported the work of the ad hoc international criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, which were founded because domestic courts were unable or unwilling to provide justice. We are currently monitoring efforts to establish hybrid national-international tribunals for Cambodia and Sierra Leone. Finally, Human Rights Watch has been extensively involved in the effort to establish
 - > a permanent International Criminal Court.
 - > For these reasons, Human Rights Watch is following with particular attention
 - > the new Yugoslav government's position concerning the issue of accountability of persons indicted before the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). We are concerned with the approach that some in the government have taken to the issue. Various statements by government officials suggest a continued unwillingness by the government to cooperate with the ICTY. Such attitudes threaten the cause of international justice and the quest of victims and their families throughout the former Yugoslavia for accountability for the crimes committed against them. What is more, these attitudes are likely to affect the developments in the FR Yugoslavia and the region in a negative way.
 - > Arguments raised by those Serbian and Yugoslav officials who oppose meaningful cooperation with the ICTY are untenable. The obligation of FR Yugoslavia to cooperate with the ICTY, including the surrender of those indicted for war crimes, is clear as a matter of international law and the promotion of international justice. It is regrettable that some in the new government in Belgrade overlook these facts and continue to use the very same anti-ICTY arguments championed by the previous government.
 - > One such argument is that the Yugoslav constitution "prohibits extradition" to the ICTY. Mr. President, you advanced this argument in a recent statement published in the daily newspaper "Glas Javnosti" (January 13, 2001). This interpretation of the Yugoslav constitution is manifestly wrong. The pertinent provision (article 17 (3)) of the Yugoslav constitution states: "A Yugoslav citizen may not be deprived of his citizenship, deported from the state, or extradited to another state." The constitution says nothing about transfer to an international tribunal. An international tribunal is not a "state," nor should it be treated as one for purposes of interpreting the Yugoslav constitution. Another "state," to which the Yugoslav constitution prohibits extradition, represents a competing authority with equal sovereign power to that enjoyed by FR Yugoslavia. The international tribunal, by contrast, represents the superseding authority of the United Nations, to which states, including the FR Yugoslavia, have transferred a part of their sovereignty and competencies.
 - > The very use of the word "extradition," in the discussion on the cooperation with the Tribunal, is misleading. The ICTY Statute does not require extradition, but rather the surrender of indictees. The difference between the two is enshrined in article 102 of the statute of the permanent International Criminal Court, which FR Yugoslavia signed on December 19, 2000. Surrender is defined as "the delivering up of a person by a State to

- Court," whereas extradition is "the delivering up of a person by one state to another as provided by treaty, convention or national legislation."
- > Another misleading argument, reinforced by your January statement, identifies the Dayton Agreement as the sole source of the legal obligation to cooperate with the ICTY. The fact, mentioned in your statement, that the Dayton Agreement has not been ratified by the Yugoslav parliament, then serves to suggest that FR Yugoslavia has no legal obligation to cooperate. However, the primary and sufficient source of the obligation is UN Security Council resolution 827 on the establishment of the ICTY (1993), followed by a host of other Security Council resolutions calling upon the FR Yugoslavia and other states to cooperate with the Tribunal. These resolutions bind FR Yugoslavia by virtue of Article 25 of the UN Charter, which stipulates that "the Members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter."
 - > Therefore, there is no doubt that the Yugoslav authorities have a preeminent legal obligation to cooperate fully with the ICTY.
 - > Mr. President, you have also introduced a set of political arguments to corroborate your rejection of cooperation. These arguments, upon closer inspection turn out to be equally unfounded.
 - > You have alleged that the Office of the Prosecutor is ethnically biased, because most of the indictees have been of Serbian ethnicity. Of 66 current indictees-including those serving ICTY sentences-50 are ethnic Serbs. The numbers alone do not, however, support an accusation of bias. Serbs were the only group involved in all major armed conflicts in the territory of the former Yugoslavia-in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. That in itself increases the likelihood of a high number of indictees. More importantly, the authorities in Belgrade and in Republika Srpska did not cooperate with the Office of the Prosecutor throughout most of the post-war period, and the lack of access to Serb victims prevented the Prosecutor from building cases against the perpetrators belonging to other ethnic groups. In Kosovo, crimes against Serbs erupted after June 1999, when the state of armed conflict ceased to exist. Because the Tribunal has jurisdiction only over crimes committed in armed conflict (excepting genocide), it has been prevented from investigating these more recent crimes committed by the Kosovo Albanians. Nonetheless, in November 2000, the ICTY prosecutor proposed that the Security Council expand the Tribunal's jurisdiction to cover the post-war abuses in Kosovo, clearly belying allegations that she harbors an anti-Serb bias.
 - > In addition, a rational discussion of the indictments cannot ignore the abundance of objective and authoritative accounts of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, including that by leading non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations, which indicate that Serb formations committed numerous crimes in violation of international humanitarian law. A high number of crimes committed by members of one ethnic group does not entail responsibility of the group as such. It does account for a larger number of indictments for the members of that group. Indeed, these indictments, aimed at identifying the individual perpetrators responsible for violations, are necessary to avoid the implication of group responsibility. Many in Serbia, unfortunately, continue to resist this conclusion and still believe that the inequality in the number of indictments stems from an "anti-Serb bias" in the ICTY and in the international community as a whole. The belief is reinforced by the irresponsible rhetoric of some members of the government. The speed with

which the international community has embraced post-Milosevic Serbia
 could
 > finally put an end to this line of reasoning.

>
 > Another issue that members of your government have raised in opposition to
 > the ICTY has been its occasional use of witness protection measures that
 > compete with the rights of the accused. While ensuring a fair trial is a
 > paramount concern, criticisms of the Tribunal on this score have been
 > largely misleading and ill-informed. In fact, like courts in most
 countries
 > and in accordance with international standards, in considering whether to
 > grant various forms of witness protection, the Tribunal is required by
 both
 > its Statute and its Rules of Procedure and Evidence to balance the
 interests
 > of victims and witnesses with the rights of the accused. The Tribunal's
 > practice to date reflects a careful balancing of these interests-according
 > protective measures only to the extent and for the duration necessary, and
 > only when adequate procedural steps can also be taken to safeguard the
 > rights of the accused. In some cases, the Tribunal, like most national
 > courts, including those of the FR Yugoslavia, has admitted statements
 > recorded prior to trial. While the witnesses in such cases are not present
 > at trial, their identity is known and the defendant has an adequate
 > opportunity to rebut their assertions. In other cases, the Tribunal has
 > withheld the identity of the witness from the public (designating him or
 > her, for example as "X"), but in most cases the identity is revealed to
 the
 > defendant, who again has a fair opportunity to cross-examine the witness.

In
 > some cases, the Tribunal has also permitted a witness to testify in a
 manner
 > that enables him or her to avoid seeing the defendant. The Tribunal has,
 > however, insisted that these arrangements nonetheless enable the defendant
 > and the judges to observe the witness as he or she testifies. In only one
 > case, the Tribunal has accorded a witness complete anonymity, withholding
 > her identity from the defendant as well as the public. In reaching this
 > decision, the Tribunal was guided by the jurisprudence of the European
 Court
 > of Human Rights, which has held that while such arrangements should be an
 > exception, they may be permissible where the disadvantages to the accused
 > are redressed by other procedural safeguards. The Tribunal's analysis of
 the
 > use of protected witnesses has been conducted on a case-by-case basis,
 > weighing the rights of the accused against concerns about the security or
 > traumatization of witnesses. In some cases it has refused protection
 sought
 > for victims and witnesses; in others it has accorded it.

>
 > Objections to the ICTY's use of sealed indictments is another argument its
 > critics in Belgrade routinely use. The denouncement of such indictments,
 to
 > which you have also resorted, obscures the simple fact that the practice
 of
 > the ICTY does not differ from the enforcement of criminal law in national
 > jurisdictions. Most arrests in states are carried out before the person is
 > notified of the existence of the arrest warrant and indictment. The
 > rationale is obvious: if the person knew about the impending arrest, he or
 > she would be likely to hide or to flee the country, in order to avoid the
 > arrest. This is precisely what the ICTY indictees have been doing, with at
 > least the passive assistance of authorities in Republika Srpska and FR
 > Yugoslavia. The decision by the ICTY Office of the Prosecutor to cease
 > disclosing indictments was therefore justified on both legal and practical
 > grounds.

>
 > Finally, Mr. President, we believe that the reluctance to cooperate, in
 > addition to contravening international law would be disrespectful to the
 > victims of war crimes and their families throughout the former Yugoslavia.
 > Accountability for the victims is essential for a meaningful and lasting
 > transition.

>
 > This failure to apply the rule of law would be irresponsible on the part
 of

the leadership of the citizens of FR Yugoslavia who wish to move away from the heritage of the Milosevic era. The latest opinion poll of FR Yugoslavia

- > citizens indicates that 60.3 percent believe that Milosevic should be tried
- > by the international tribunal in The Hague. We are confident that remaining
- > mistrust of the Tribunal would decrease if the position of your government were to change. The Tribunal would be seen as an effective instrument for resolution of the past and transition to the future. Indeed, during the recent visit by Chief Prosecutor Carla del Ponte to Belgrade, families of missing Serbs approached Ms. del Ponte to ask for help in resolving the fate
- > of their relatives, and not to swamp her with accusations.
- >
- > The argument raised recently by one of your close collaborators, Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic, that the indictees would become "national heroes"
- > if surrendered to the ICTY, appears unfounded. To corroborate the claim, Mr.
- > Svilanovic alleged that the Croat and Bosniac indictees have acquired the status of heroes in Croatia and Bosnia upon the surrender. This is simply counterfactual-opinion polls indicate that 60% of the Croatian population supports the Croatian government's efforts to cooperate with the Tribunal, including the transfer of indictees.
- >
- > It should also be noted that the governments in Sarajevo and Zagreb have invested significant political capital in cooperation with the Tribunal. The
- > reluctance of the new government in Belgrade to pursue a similar path strengthens the extreme nationalists in neighboring countries. The position
- > of political moderates in the region is weakened by the Yugoslav authorities' refusal to cooperate fully with the Tribunal and this is ultimately detrimental to all who seek respect for the rule of law and human
- > rights in the region.
- >
- > We hope, Mr. President, that you will give serious consideration to the points addressed in this letter, and, together with other officials in the Serbian and Yugoslav governments, make an unequivocal choice in favor of full-fledged cooperation with the ICTY.

> Respectfully,

> /s/

> Holly Cartner
 > Executive Director
 > Europe and Central Asia Division
 > <http://www.hrw.org/press/2001/03/kostunica0302.htm>

> Miroslav Antic,
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Sent: Wednesday, March 07, 2001 12:54 AM
Subject: [SIM] [SIN] Human Rights Watch Open Letter to Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica

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 >
 > Human Rights Watch Open Letter to Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica
 >
 > March 2, 2001
 >
 >
 > President Vojislav Kostunica
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 > 11070 Novi Beograd
 > FR Yugoslavia
 >
 > <http://www.hrw.org/press/2001/03/kostunica0302.htm>
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 > Related Material
 > Bush Administration Urged To Deny Aid to Yugoslavia
 > Human Rights Watch Press Release, March 1, 2001
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 > impediments to the return of displaced persons throughout the region.

van holst en steijnen

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To: Ruza Despotovic <ruzad@ggzba.nl>; Ksenija Sigulinski <sigu@worldonline.nl>; Jelle van der Meulen <jellevdmeulen@introweb.nl>; Nico /Neeltje Steijnen <n.h.van.holst@freeler.nl>; DOLF Loth <dolfloth@hotmail.com>; Globalreflexion <office@globalreflexion.org>; Herman de TI Tolenaar <my636847@asianhistory.myweb.nl>
Sent: vrijdag 2 maart 2001 14:11
Subject: FAIR MEDIA ADVISORY Media Ignore Questions About Incident That Sparked Kosovo W

FAIR

Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting 130 W. 25th Street New York, NY 10001

MEDIA ADVISORY:**DOUBTS ON A MASSACRE:**

Media Ignore Questions About Incident That Sparked Kosovo War

February 1, 2001

In 1999, the discovery of bodies in the Kosovo village of Racak helped push NATO into war. New evidence casting doubt on claims that the bodies were civilian victims of a massacre has stirred debate in the European media-- but there has been a virtual blackout on the news in the U.S. press.

In January of 1999, the American head of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission in Kosovo announced that 45 Kosovar Albanians from the village of Racak had been massacred by Serb soldiers. U.S. diplomat William Walker condemned the killings as a "horrendous" massacre, stating that the dead were all civilians who had been brutally executed, many of them mutilated after death.

Once the massacre story was reported in heart-wrenching detail by media across the globe, pressure for war intensified and previously reluctant European allies took a major step toward authorizing airstrikes. A **Washington Post** article (4/18/99) reconstructing the Kosovo decision-making process found that "Racak transformed the West's Balkan policy as singular events seldom do."

Troubling questions soon emerged, however, about whether or not there had actually been a massacre at Racak, or whether the incident had been manipulated to push NATO into war-- questions almost completely ignored by the U.S. media at the time.

Front-page news articles by veteran Yugoslavia correspondents questioning William Walker's account were published in French newspapers like **Le Figaro** ("Dark Clouds Over a Massacre," 1/20/99) and **Le Monde** ("Were the Dead in Racak Really Massacred in Cold Blood?," 1/21/99). The German daily **Berliner Zeitung** reported in March (3/13/99) that several European governments, including Germany and Italy, were pressing the OSCE to fire William Walker based on information from OSCE monitors in Kosovo that the Racak bodies "were not-- as Walker declared-- victims of a Serbian massacre of civilians," but were mostly KLA fighters killed in battle.

The **Sunday Times** of London (3/12/00) reported that Walker's team of American observers was covertly working with the CIA, pursuing a policy intended to push NATO into war. "European diplomats then working for the OSCE claim it was betrayed by an American policy that made airstrikes inevitable," the **Sunday Times** reported.

After the massacre, the European Union hired a Finnish team of forensic pathologists to investigate the deaths. Their report was kept secret until now, two years later. The U.S. media is ignoring the story, despite the report's finding that although people did indeed die at Racak, there is no evidence of a massacre.

According to the **Berliner Zeitung** (1/16/01), the Finnish investigators could not establish that the victims were civilians, whether they were from Racak, or even exactly where they had been killed. Furthermore, the investigators found only one body that showed traces of an execution-style killing, and no evidence at all that the bodies had been mutilated.

The **Berliner Zeitung** also reports that these findings were completed as early as June 2000, but that their publication had been blocked by the UN and the EU.

Except for one brief wire story from **United Press International** (1/18/01), not a single U.S. media outlet has run a story on the Finnish team's findings. News outlets continue to refer to the Racak massacre without qualification, despite the cloud of uncertainty hanging over the story.

A recent **Chicago Tribune** report (1/23/01) about the Albanian separatist militia in southern Serbia speculated that the Serbs might "revert to form and respond to an Albanian provocation with a Racak-style retaliation." (The KLA-linked militia, called the UCPMB, are reportedly preparing for a new war and recently fired on British KFOR troops-- London **Guardian**, 1/26/01.) The **Tribune** made no mention of any questions surrounding the Racak incident.

A recent **Philadelphia Inquirer** story (1/23/01) about Yugoslavia's relationship with the war crimes tribunal at The Hague claimed that "Serbs refuse to accept the world's vision of them as aggressors," and noted that Yugoslav president Vojislav Kostunica "alleges the killings [at Racak] were staged to look like a massacre to embarrass Yugoslavia." The Finnish team's findings about Racak, which prompted Kostunica's recent allegations, went unmentioned.

An **Associated Press** article (1/18/01) did elliptically note the new report's existence, reporting that Kostunica wants to discuss with The Hague "reports attributed to Finnish pathologists saying there was no evidence of a Serb massacre" at Racak (1/18/01).

With tensions in southern Serbia mounting and fears of a new Kosovo war escalating daily, the U.S. media's silence on this story is troubling.

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Sent: zondag 4 februari 2001 08:25
Attach: index.html@TopLeft; index.html@Top; index.html@BottomLeft; index.html@Bottom
Subject: Editorial Uranium Dust and the Specters of Racak (English Window, NZZ Online).h

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ENGLISH WINDOW Editorials**Uranium Dust and the Specters of Racak**

Two years after Operation "Allied Force" against Yugoslavia, NATO again finds itself the target of harsh criticism over its conduct of the war. First comes the controversy over the possible detrimental health effects from the use by American A-10 attack aircraft of anti-tank shells made with depleted uranium. It has nourished suspicions that the allies are concealing the true dimensions of the war in Kosovo. Second is a report by Finnish forensics experts that allegedly exonerates Belgrade in the shooting deaths of the 45 Kosovo Albanians whose bodies were discovered on 15 January 1999 in Racak. The report has prompted a new debate, especially in Germany, over whether NATO's first armed intervention to be undertaken without a UN mandate against a sovereign country was justified or not.

The two issues are grist for the mill of opponents of the intervention. Over and over for the last 24 months - at turns loudly and then more quietly - critics have been accusing the alliance (and the USA) of imperialistic ambitions, even war mongering, in the treatment of Belgrade and Milosevic leading up to the war. In this view, it was not the Serbs who were responsible for the escalating violence, but the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). The latter, supported by the USA, is charged with provoking the Serbian security forces in order to prompt Western intervention.

A massacre therefore had to happen in Racak, since the war was carefully planned in accord with the Western designs on the Balkans. From this point of view, the bloodletting represents a welcome event. It had a key role to play in justifying the intervention at home, and indeed may even have been orchestrated by dark forces close to the KLA. The writer Peter Handke, French intellectuals, the German media, as well as others, have advanced one such conspiracy theory after the other. Of course, constant repetition fails to make them any more plausible.

What actually happened in Racak will never be fully known. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and

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the United Nations Tribunal on war crimes operate on the assumption that a massacre took place. And a number of other signs, including suspicious behavior on the part of the Serbian security forces after the bodies were found, point to at least a guilty conscience in Belgrade. The report issued by the Finnish experts did not eliminate the possibility of a mass killing. The pathologists were simply not (any longer) capable of finding unambiguous evidence that one took place. It may be that only Milosevic knows the whole truth. For now, however, he sits silently in Belgrade, beyond the reach of interrogators.

If the uncertainty over what happened in Racak, or concern over the threat posed by uranium-tipped ammunition, is being exploited now to represent the NATO intervention as a conspiracy against the Serbian people, stripping it of all political and moral justification, it cannot be done without the facts being twisted. Of course "Racak" played a role in how the conflict developed. But, despite the fact that Western politicians, such as the German Foreign Minister Fischer, are calling the killing a "turning point," it certainly did not provide the initial motivation for the NATO intervention.

Forgotten from this simplistic point of view is that two massacres had already taken place in Kosovo, in February and March 1998, leaving nearly 90 dead. Ignored is the fact that, by the time NATO operations began on 24 March 1999, approximately 2000 Kosovo Albanians had died, and several thousand had been robbed of their possessions and driven out of the province. While this was happening, the West was offering Milosevic one negotiating incentive after the other, giving Belgrade a series of "absolute last chances" to desist.

The hesitation and the diplomats' satisfaction with lukewarm concessions from Milosevic went on far too long. What the West received in thanks was the disproportional exercise of force in Kosovo on the part of Belgrade. There is no doubt that the KLA was anything but scrupulous in its choice of weapons and how to use them. And of course it had an interest in a NATO intervention. Nevertheless, the primary concern for Belgrade was not fighting the guerillas, but driving the unwanted Kosovo-Albanian majority out of the territory.

Also brushed aside from this narrow perspective is the circumstance that, from the time of Milosevic's rise to power and despite ample warnings, the West stood by and did nothing about Serbian repression in Kosovo. For years, the Albanian opposition pursued its nonviolent struggle for equal rights, only to be put off time and again with empty promises for the distant future. And, as if it all never happened, there is no mention of the three wars unleashed on the Balkans at the slightest provocation by Belgrade, of the bombardment of Sarajevo, of conditions in the UN "safe areas" of Gorazde and Srebrenica and of the thousands of civilians that disappeared after the fall of Srebrenica into Serbian hands.

At the Rambouillet negotiations in February 1999 - after Racak - when Milosevic not only rejected the Western peace plan once again, but heaped scorn upon efforts to ease tensions by massively reinforcing troop strength in Kosovo at the same time, patience was exhausted. Only at this point did NATO intervene militarily.

Fortunately, pluralistic societies have a reluctance to resort to military force. The democratic process makes it imperative to justify the war in domestic terms. This was especially true in the case of Kosovo, which lacked a clear standing in international law. It was the opinion of those responsible for the war effort in the critical weeks during the spring of 1999 that only the most "humane" possible kind of war, one entailing no losses on the NATO side, had any chance of winning public acceptance.

One of the considerations involved in deciding which weapons would be used was the ability of the military to operate within these politically defined limits. Uranium-tipped shells are an example. Perhaps it would have been wiser had the sensitive public been informed more quickly, with fewer qualifications, as well as facts and expertise from a neutral standpoint, about the use of such shells and their possible consequences. But included in this information would be the fact that, among the reasons for using this kind of ammunition, not the least important is the protection of one's own soldiers. Uranium-tipped shells are more effective, and thus they lessen the ability of enemy tank crews to defend themselves and survive.

Politicians, who depend on votes, naturally have a hard time using blunt words to describe the essence of any war, which is to kill the enemy without being killed. And it would take courage to confront citizens with the question of whether a higher value should be placed on protecting one's own soldiers than on negative effects that might occur later on because a certain weapon was used. This same argument applies to the so-called cluster bombs. Many of them failed to detonate when they were dropped in Kosovo and south Serbia, and now comes the dangerous task of disarming them. The reason they were used by NATO in such great numbers is that allied fighters were generally not allowed to operate below 5,000 meters, to protect the pilots from Serbian fire.

Even two years later, the key to understanding the NATO intervention lies in circumstances such as these. It is possible to be in favor of the intervention, or to oppose it. But taking facts out of context, ignoring events and reducing historical developments to deterministic slogans is dishonest. It is also morally questionable, because it leads to a distorted perception of perpetrators and victims.

Markus Spillmann

1 February 2001 / Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 27/28 January 2001

Kontakt
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Sent: zondag 21 januari 2001 14:24
Subject: Fw: Neues in der Verschlussache Racak

----- Original Message -----

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 Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2001 9:39 PM
 Subject: Neues in der Verschlussache Racak

"Berliner Zeitung"
 Mittwoch, 17. Januar 2001

Neues in der Verschlussache Racak

Wissenschaftlicher Abschlussbericht finnischer Experten enthält keinerlei Beweis dafür, dass in dem Kosovo-Dorf unbewaffnete albanische Zivilisten von serbischen Einheiten exekutiert wurden Bo Adam und Roland Heine

BERLIN, 16. Januar. Für das angebliche Massaker im Kosovo-Dorf Racak vom 15. Januar 1999 finden sich auch in einem wissenschaftlichen Abschlussbericht finnischer Gerichtsmediziner keinerlei Beweise. In der renommierten rechtsmedizinischen Zeitschrift "Forensic Science International" soll in Kürze ein ausführlicher Aufsatz der Fachleute Juha Rainio, Kaisa Lalu und Antti Penttilä erscheinen, der die Untersuchung von 40 in Racak gefundenen Leichen zusammenfasst. Der Bericht, den die "Berliner Zeitung" vorab einsenden konnte, kommt nicht

zu dem Schluss, in Racak sei eine Gruppe friedfertiger albanischer Dorfbewohner von serbischen Sicherheitskräften exekutiert worden. Die Organisation für Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit in Europa (OSZE) hatte im Frühjahr 1999 erklärt, man habe Beweise für "Tötungen und Verstümmelungen unbewaffneter Zivilisten" gefunden, "viele aus extremer Nahdistanz erschossen". Das angebliche serbische Massaker von Racak diente vielen Politikern auch in Deutschland als Begründung für ihre Zustimmung zum Nato-Angriffskrieg gegen Jugoslawien.

Die Gerichtsmediziner Rainio, Lalu und Penttilä gehören zu einem finnischen Experten-Team unter Leitung von Frau Helena Ranta, das im Frühjahr 1999 von der Europäischen Union mit der Untersuchung des Geschehens von Racak beauftragt worden war. Die Untersuchungen wurden gemeinsam mit serbischen und belorussischen Fachkräften vorgenommen.

Herkunft der Toten blieb unklar

Die Aufgabe bestand darin, vier Fragenkomplexe zu beantworten: Identifikation der Opfer, Ursache, Art und Zeit des Todes, Umstände des Todes und schließlich die Frage nach eventuellen Verstümmelungen. Im finnischen Abschlussbericht heißt es: Das Team "konnte nicht feststellen, dass die Opfer aus Racak stammten". Auch die "Ereignisse"

bis zur Autopsie konnten "nicht festgestellt werden", und schließlich nicht einmal die "Lage der Opfer am Ort des Zwischenfalls".

Dagegen erklären die drei Experten, dass es "keine Anzeichen von nachträglichen Verstümmelungen" durch Menschen gab. Penibel listet der Bericht auf, dass an den 40 untersuchten Leichen zwischen einer und 20 Schusswunden entdeckt wurden. Doch nur in einem Fall fanden die

Gerichtsmediziner Pulverspuren, die auf eine Exekution hinweisen könnten.

Der Expertenbericht für die im Niederländischen Verlag Elsevier herausgegebene Fachzeitschrift "Forensic Science International" bestätigt die Schlussfolgerungen, zu denen die "Berliner Zeitung" in Auswertung geheim gehaltener Autopsie-Protokolle bereits im März 2000 gekommen war: Die seinerzeit von der OSZE und vielen westlichen Politikern behaupteten Beweise für eine Massenhinrichtung albanischer Zivilisten durch serbische Sicherheitskräfte gibt es nicht. Völlig ausgeblendet wurde die Frage, ob es sich nicht zumindest bei einem Teil der in Racak gefundenen Toten um Kämpfer der albanischen UCK handelte, die im Zuge von Gefechtshandlungen mit jugoslawischen Einheiten fielen. Das UN-Tribunal in Den Haag hatte noch nach der Veröffentlichung in der "Berliner Zeitung" erklärt, man gehe weiter davon aus, dass in Racak albanische Zivilisten ermordet wurden.

Rantas geheimes Referat

Aufschlussreich ist in diesem Zusammenhang die Tatsache, dass auf politischer Ebene bis zum heutigen Tag eine Veröffentlichung der Untersuchungsergebnisse verhindert wurde. Die Leiterin des finnischen Experten-Teams, Frau Helena Ranta, erläuterte am 17. März 1999 auf einer Pressekonferenz zwar ihre "persönliche Meinung". Doch dieses Statement enthielt Widersprüche und Halbwahrheiten, die fälschlicherweise zu Gunsten des Krieges ausgelegt wurden, wie sie später kleinlaut einräumte. Das deutsche Auswärtige Amt brachte die Ranta-Kommentare unter dem irreführenden Titel "Bericht der EU zu Racak" in Umlauf.

Nach Kriegsende stellte Frau Ranta im EU-Auftrag erneut Nachforschungen zu Racak an. Am 21. Juni 2000 lieferte sie einen Bericht beim Jugoslawien-Tribunal ab, das das angebliche Massaker von Racak zu einem der wesentlichen Anklagepunkte gegen die Alte jugoslawische Führung gemacht hatte. Der Bericht wurde sofort geheimgestempelt. Tags darauf referierte Frau Ranta hinter verschlossener Tür vor Beamten der EU-Staaten über ihre Erkenntnisse. Doch auch dieses Referat blieb geheim. Nicht nur den Medien, sondern sogar Europa-Parlamentariern wurde verwehrt, sich mit den Aussagen vertraut zu machen. Vielleicht hängt das damit zusammen, dass Frau Ranta auch vor den EU-Beamten wiederholte, was sie einer mit der "Berliner Zeitung" kooperierenden kanadischen Journalistin - weit weg von der interessierten europäischen Öffentlichkeit - mitteilte: Dass ihre Recherche die offizielle Version einer Massenhinrichtung nicht untermauert; dass sie nicht wisse, was in Racak wirklich passiert sei.

Vorsichtiges Umdenken

Ein internationales Gremium hat inzwischen Schlussfolgerungen aus den wachsenden Zweifeln gezogen: Die Parlamentarische Versammlung der Nato. In dem beim jüngsten Treffen verabschiedeten Generalbericht "Die Folgen des Kosovokonflikts" setzt sich das Gremium kritisch mit dem Krieg und vor allem mit dem vorangegangenen Krisenmanagement auseinander. In diesem Zusammenhang spricht die Nato-Versammlung von "dem bis heute nicht restlos aufgeklärten angeblichen Massaker von Racak".

Auch auf jugoslawischer Seite ist der Fall Racak präsent. Mit Blick auf die ständigen Überfälle albanischer Freischärler auf die entmilitarisierte Pufferzone, die nach dem Kosovo-Krieg auf Nato-Druck zwischen Zentralserbien und dem UN-verwalteten Kosovo errichtet worden war, zog Jugoslawiens Präsident Vojislav Kostunica bereits Parallelen zur Situation im Winter 1998/99. Er betonte den Willen, "die Souveränität des Landes im südlichen Serbien zu verteidigen". Zugleich aber warnte er, Jugoslawien dürfe nicht wieder hineingezogen werden in

"eine Art Provokation" wie in Racak, die "eine internationale Intervention" ausgelöst habe.

van holst en steijnen

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Sent: zondag 21 januari 2001 14:04
Subject: Fw: Racak

----- Original Message -----

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 Sent: Friday, January 19, 2001 10:24 PM
 Subject: Racak

> Finally the Finnish Racak verdict: no massacre!
 >
 > Deutsche Presse-Agentur
 > January 17, 2001, Wednesday, BC Cycle
 > 15:17 Central European Time
 > SECTION: International News
 > HEADLINE: Finnish experts find no evidence of Serb massacre of
 > Albanians DATELINE: Berlin/Belgrade
 >
 > Finnish forensic experts in a final report on the circumstances of
 > the
 > deaths two years ago of some 40 people in the village of Racak in
 > Kosovo found no evidence of a massacre by Serb security forces, a
 > German newspaper reported Wednesday.
 >
 > Berliner Zeitung said the report, which was made available to the
 > Berlin paper prior to its publication, found no evidence that ethnic
 > Albanian civilians had been executed by Serbian security forces in
 > Racak.
 >
 > The report by experts Juha Rainio, Kaisa Lalu and Antti Penttila
 > would
 > soon be published in the forensic magazine "Forensic Science
 > International", it said.
 >
 > The bodies were found on January 15, 1999 in the hills above the
 > village in the troubled Serbian province.
 >
 > The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said
 > in
 > spring 1999 it had found evidence for slayings of unarmed civilians
 > in
 > Racak, many of whom were found disfigured and shot at close range.
 >
 > The alleged massacre strengthened Western resolve against then
 > Yugoslav strongman Slobodan Milosevic despite official denials that
 > Serbian forces had been behind the killings.
 >
 > Belgrade authorities at the time insisted the bodies were slain
 > rebels
 > of the Kosovo Liberation Army which they said had deliberately set up
 > the scene to make OSCE observers believe there had been a massacre.
 >
 > "Only now does the truth come out, at that time no one believed us,"
 > a
 > source in the Serbian Interior Ministry said Wednesday.

van holst en steijnen

From: Despotovic Ruza <despot@wishmail.net>
To: Nico /Neeltje Steijnen <n.h.van.holst@freeler.nl>
Sent: zondag 21 januari 2001 13:50
Subject: Fw: - Ljudska prava - Re: Finally!: Finnish Racak verdict: no massacre]

----- Original Message -----

From: "petar" <petar@mail.cyberus.ca>
To: <Recipient list suppressed>
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2001 7:46 PM
Subject: - Ljudska prava - Re: Finally!: Finnish Racak verdict: no massacre]

>
>>>Subject: Re: Finally!: Finnish Racak verdict: no massacre]
>
>>>So now what we all knew has become 'official'. It now seems that the
ICTY is
>>>in a quandary along with NATO; how does the ICTY justify a lead charge
against
>>>Milosevic that has just been denounced by those whom it hired to find
>>>'evidence' of?
>>>
>>>This should make zero the number of 'official' charges dated before
March
>>>24/99 used by NATO to justify their bombings in Yugoslavia. So much for
>>>Clinton's claim that he had evidence that the dead at Racak were
executed
>>>after being forced to their knees 'in the mud'. (or the ICTY's claim
that half
>>>of the dead were first rounded up in a warehouse, beaten, and then
marched to
>>>a ditch where they were lined up and shot) Let's see if Del Ponte now
drops
>>>this charge from the Milosevic et al indictment. Let's also see if
anyone
>>>decides to interview that other bitch Louise Arbour in respect to this
latest
>>>report. A good lawyer will now take this Finnish report and use it to
defend
>>>others accused at the Hague, by rightly calling into question the
ability of
>>>Hague investigators to gather evidence and Hague prosecutors to fairly
use it;
>>>how could the Hague prosecutors have Racak 1/15/99 as the lead charge
against
>>>Milosevic et al when none of the 3 forensic teams gave them any evidence
with
>>>which to proceed?
>>>
>>>I'm sure Drs Dobricanin and Kuzmicov feel vindicated by this as well.
>>>
>>>Now the question becomes: if the Ranta team report apparently showed no
proof
>>>of execution on March 17/99 (when Ranta held a press conference to
discuss her
>>>team's findings), why did the NATO countries use 'massacre at Racak' to
>>>explain to their individual national publics the main reason for bombing
in
>>>the first place? We were all told by these people that the Ranta
forensic
>>>results, although not public at the time, fully supported the theory of
>>>'massacre' at Racak; many Canadians behind the bombing of Yugoslavia
point to
>>>this event as crucial to their decision to support the NATO air murders
in
>>>1999. Let's see if anyone interviews NATO's Robertson to get some
answers. Or

>>>Blair. Or Cook. Or Chretien. Or Axworthy. Or Eggleton.
>>>

>>>I also think this vindicates Roland Keith, who bucked his superiors at OSCE to

>>>tell it like he saw it. I would also like to think that now this mysteriously

>>>disappeared AP film footage of those hours at Racak will suddenly make a >>>'reappearance'. This report by the Finns has even more meaning when seen in

>>>context with Ranta's visits to Racak in Nov/99 and Mar/2000- presumably Ranta

>>>did not go to Racak twice within five months for holidays. (especially >>>considering that she and her team never even went to Racak during her original

>>>investigations) Maybe her visits had something to do with the fact that many

>>>of those so-called 'massacred civilians' at Racak were dug up from their >>>graves during this present KFOR occupation of Kosovo and re-buried in Albania

>>>with full KLA military honours. I don't suppose mainstream press published

>>>much about that.....

>>>And you can bet your bottom dollar that if Ranta's team had found evidence of

>>>a massacre at Racak by Yugoslav forces, we wouldn't have had to wait 2 years

>>>to see the 'proof'.

>>>Or Canada's Deputy PM Herb Gray, who refused to answer my charges when I told

>>>him and the rest of the audience at the University of Windsor during our >>>recent federal election campaign that the ICTY charges concerning Racak were a

>>>manufactured pretense forwarded by his government to justify first degree

>>>murders and a military occupation agenda.

>>>Let's also hope that those Serb Canadians whom on Jan 10 received a green

>>>light to proceed with charges against Canadian political leaders in regards

>>>these NATO bombings can use this report in their favour as well.

>>>The people responsible for first degree murder like to say: 'Not only must

>>>justice be done, but it must appear to be done as well.' Now is the time to

>>>put teeth into those lofty pontifications- let's see if Del Ponte (who is now

>>>in Belgrade) proceeds with 'official' charges against those responsible for

>>>deliberate falsification of evidence and slanderous misuse of international

>>>funds.

>>>

>>>She wouldn't have far to look. She works for them.

>>>

>>>Best, Chris Soda

>>>

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>>>john_peter maher wrote:

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>>>

>>>> Subject: fwd Finally!: Finnish Racak verdict: no massacre

>>>> Date: Fri, 19 Jan 2001 06:18:15 -0600
>>>> From: john_peter maher <jpmaher@neiu.edu>
>>>> To: john_peter maher <jpmaher@neiu.edu>
>>>>
>>>> Deutsche Presse-Agentur
>>>> January 17, 2001, Wednesday, BC Cycle
>>>> 15:17 Central European Time
>>>> SECTION: International News
>>>> HEADLINE: Finnish experts find no evidence of Serb massacre of
Albanians
>>>>
>>>> DATELINE: Berlin/Belgrade
>>>>
>>>> Finnish forensic experts in a final report on the circumstances of the
>>>> deaths two years ago of some 40 people in the village of Racak in
Kosovo
>>>>
>>>> found no evidence of a massacre by Serb security forces, a German
>>>> newspaper
>>>> reported Wednesday.
>>>>
>>>> Berliner Zeitung said the report, which was made available to the
Berlin
>>>>
>>>> paper prior to its publication, found no evidence that ethnic Albanian
>>>> civilians had been executed by Serbian security forces in Racak.
>>>>
>>>> The report by experts Juha Rainio, Kaisa Lalu and Antti Penttila would
>>>> soon
>>>> be published in the forensic magazine "Forensic Science
International",
>>>> it
>>>> said.
>>>>
>>>> The bodies were found on January 15, 1999 in the hills above the
village
>>>>
>>>> in
>>>> the troubled Serbian province.
>>>>
>>>> The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said in
>>>> spring 1999 it had found evidence for slayings of unarmed civilians in
>>>> Racak, many of whom were found disfigured and shot at close range.
>>>>
>>>> The alleged massacre strengthened Western resolve against then
Yugoslav
>>>> strongman Slobodan Milosevic despite official denials that Serbian
>>>> forces
>>>> had been behind the killings.
>>>>
>>>> Belgrade authorities at the time insisted the bodies were slain rebels
>>>> of
>>>> the Kosovo Liberation Army which they said had deliberately set up the
>>>> scene
>>>> to make OSCE observers believe there had been a massacre.
>>>>
>>>> "Only now does the truth come out, at that time no one believed us," a
>>>> source in the Serbian Interior Ministry said Wednesday.
>>>>
>>>> Rainio, Lalu and Penttila belonged to a panel of Finnish experts led
by
>>>> Helena Ranta that was asked by the European Union in spring 1999 to
>>>> investigate the killings. The probe was carried out along with Serbian
>>>> and
>>>> Belarussian experts.
>>>>
>>>> The report said the panel was unable to confirm that the victims were
>>>> villagers from Racak. The experts were also unable to reconstruct the
>>>> "events" prior to the autopsies of the bodies.
>>>>
>>>> The report said even the exact site of the incident had not been
>>>> established

>>>> either.
>>>>
>>>> The three experts said there had been no evidence that the bodies had
>>>> been
>>>> disfigured after their deaths. The 40 bodies that had been examined
had
>>>> been
>>>> found to show between one and 20 bullet wounds. Only in one case did
>>>> they
>>>> find traces of gun smoke that might point to an execution.
>>>>
>>>>
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>
> Za izlazak sa liste, posaljite prazno pismo na:
> ljudska_prava-unsubscribe@egroups.com
>
> Za upis novih clanova, prazno pismo sa emaila
> novog clana na adresu:
> ljudska_prava-subscribe@egroups.com
>
> Prezentacija je na adresi:
> http://www.egroups.com/group/ljudska_prava
>
>

van holst en steijnen

From: Despotovic Ruza <despot@wishmail.net>
To: Nico /Neeltje Steijnen <n.h.van.holst@freeler.nl>; Ruza Despotovic <ruzad@ggzba.nl>
Sent: zondag 21 januari 2001 13:56
Subject: Fw: Plavsic

----- Original Message -----

From: "St.Servisch Inf.- & Cult.Centrum" <ssicc@planet.nl>
 To: <Joveljic.Nebojsa.N@bhp.com>; <belininkovic@ptt.yu>; <yuamban@bart.nl>;
 <vaskoa@cunet.yu>; <despot@wishmail.net>; <office@globalreflexion.org>;
 <arthurjk@EUronet.nl>; <106057.1021@compuserve.com>;
 <michel.collon@skynet.be>
 Sent: Friday, January 19, 2001 10:24 PM
 Subject: Plavsic

> http://www.ecountries.com/eastern_europe/bosnia_herzegovina/news/25084
 > 14

> "Iron Lady" of Bosnian-Serb war appears in court

> by Catherine Lovatt (Fri, 12 Jan 2001 09:08:19)

> Biljana Plavsic, the former Bosnian Serb president, has voluntarily
 > surrendered to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.
 > She is still convinced of her innocence. If past ICTY trials are
 > anything to go by, it may be a long time before a decision emerges.

> Looking at 70-year old Biljana Plavsic, it is difficult to believe
 > that she could be responsible for brutal acts against humanity. But
 > appearances can be deceptive. On Wednesday, January 10, the United
 > Nations War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague formally indicted the former
 > president of the Bosnian Serb Republic. During the 1992-95 Bosnian-
 > Serb war the "Iron Lady" of Bosnia was an influential advisor to
 > Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, who is still wanted for his
 > role in the conflict. After toning down her nationalist stance,
 > Plavsic was elected president of the self-styled Serbian Republic of
 > Bosnia-Herzegovina, only to be defeated two years later.

> Plavsic surrendered herself to the International Criminal Tribunal
 > for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) after discovering her name had been
 > on a list of secret indictments since April 2000. On January 11, she
 > appeared before a Trial Chamber and pleaded not guilty to nine
 > charges including genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and
 > breaches of the Geneva Conventions in 1991 and 1992. A press
 > statement released by The Hague on January 10, 2001 stated that
 > Plavsic's voluntary surrender will offer her "the best possible
 > outcome" and the prosecutor called upon "Radovan Karadzic, Ratko
 > Mladic and all other persons similarly indicted to adopt the same
 > course."

> Since its formation in 1993 the ICTY has issued 96 public
 > indictments. There have also been several undisclosed indictments.
 > According to unofficial figures released by the ICTY only four of
 > those publicly accused have been transferred to serve their sentence,
 > 18 have had all charges dropped and another was acquitted. Twenty-
 > seven individuals remain at large.

> Plavsic is the first high-ranking Bosnian Serb official to face
 > charges at the tribunal. After seven years in existence, it has been
 > struggling to bring cases to trial. The most prolific offenders have
 > stayed in hiding, and those who are caught or surrender are subject
 > to lengthy and expensive trials and appeals.

> The "Iron Lady" has all this to come. But she's tough enough to

Een advertentie van Amnesty International

2000

Door onze correspondent

RENÉE POSTMA

BOEDAPEST, 30 DEC. Hongarije worstelt met zijn imago. Of liever gezegd, de centrum-rechtse regering van Viktor Orbán worstelt met het imago van Hongarije. Orbán is een bevlogen yup die Hongarije wil bevrijden van alles wat naar communisme riekt. Dat de internationale pers soms vraagtekens plaatst bij de manier waarop dat gebeurt, zint de jonge premier niet. Dat de Europese Commissie lovende rapporten uitbrengt over de vorderingen van Hongarije richting Europa, maar aanhoudend kritisch blijft over de achterstand van de Hongaarse Roma-bevolking, zint de felle Orbán evenmin.

Uit angst de aansluiting bij de Europa te verliezen – hetgeen dus geheel niet aan de orde is – besloot de regering daarom dit jaar tot een offensief om het imago te verbeteren. De buitenlandse pers kreeg telefoontjes van pr-burootjes die vroegen wat te doen. 'Gewoon normaal doen', antwoordden de buitenlandse correspondenten in Boedapest desgevraagd.

Hoe gevoelig de onzekere Hongaren zijn voor kritiek van buiten bleek tijdens de bespreking, in het parlement, van het voortgangsrapport van de Europese Commissie over Hongarije. Hongarije stond boven aan de lijst van kandidaat-lidstaten, maar de regering was woest. De socialistische oppositie had het namelijk gewaagd om ook op enkele kritiekpunten te wijzen: de positie van de Roma en de manier waarop de regering zich met de media probeert te bemoeien.

„De oppositie probeert het imago van Hongarije te ondermijnen en de toetreding tot de EU te frustreren”, riep de ideoloog van Orbán's partij, Kóvér, in het parlement. De premier zelf kwam met een lijst 'bewijsmateriaal' op de proppen: twaalf artikelen waarin selectief de oppositie zou zijn geciteerd zonder de regering te noemen. NRC Handelsblad werd twee keer geciteerd. In beide gevallen ten onrechte omdat in de

artikelen telkens beide kanten van de zaak belicht waren.

En zo werd de buitenlandse pers ongewild inzet van de strijd tussen 'rechts' en 'links' in de jonge Hongaarse democratie. Een ongemakkelijke positie, maar volgens minister Mártonyi van Buitenlandse Zaken niet verwonderlijk „omdat de buitenlandse pers nu eenmaal vaak leugens schrijft over Hongarije”. Op mijn vraag of dat ook voor NRC Handelsblad gold reageerde de minister terughoudend: „Ik lees uw krant niet, dus dat kan ik niet zeggen.”

Einde discussie, leek het. Maar korte tijd daarop kreeg de correspondent van NRC Handelsblad in

positie van de Roma in Hongarije.”

Kafka doemde op. De woorden van de schrijver Imre Kertész schoten me te binnen: de geschiedenis van de landen van Midden-Europa wordt bepaald door de verhouding van de overheid tot zijn burgers. Die overheid was mij nu vriendelijk doch dringend aan het vertellen wat ik moest doen. „Als u het niet eens bent met de advertentie moet u zich tot Amnesty wenden en niet tot de correspondent van het blad waar de advertentie in staat”, kon ik alleen maar zeggen. De dame van de kanselarij zei alleen maar een 'goede communicatie' na te streven.

Dagenlang hebben daarna de Hongaarse media – stevig gevoed door de overheid – bol gestaan van de advertentie in NRC Handelsblad. Het Hongaarse publiek was in rep en roer. De toekomst van het land stond op het spel. „Hongarije was slechts een voorbeeld voor schending van de rechten van het kind, we hadden net zo goed Bangladesh kunnen nemen”, zei een woordvoerder van Amnesty uit Nederland voor de Hongaarse radio. „Maar dat is niet hetzelfde”, riep de radioverslaggever. „Wij zijn hier geen Azië. Wij zijn op weg naar het lidmaatschap van de EU.”

Inmiddels heeft Amnesty in Hongarije excuses aangeboden voor de advertentie. De aantijgingen zouden onterecht zijn. Het trauma is er echter niet minder om. „Misschien zien jullie in Nederland twee keer per jaar iets over Hongarije. Als één keer daarvan zo'n negatief beeld schept, zullen jullie ons niet in Europa willen”, legt een Hongaarse vriend uit. Dat de regering de correspondent aanspreekt op een advertentie vindt hij niet verrassend. „De regeringsgetrouwe kranten hier leven van de advertenties die ze van de ministeries krijgen. Iedereen weet dat de afstand tussen de advertentie-afdeling en de redactie hier heel klein is.” Het imago van Hongarije wordt er al met al weinig helderder door.

HONGARIJE



Boedapest een telefoontje van de kanselarij van de premier. Of ik wist dat 'mijn' krant een pagina-grote advertentie had geplaatst van Amnesty International waarin Hongarije op grove wijze werd beticht van mishandeling van Romakinderen? Nee dat wist ik niet, maar, antwoordde ik, daar had ik ook niets mee te maken. De dame van de kanselarij ging onverstoord door dat de advertentie Hongarije in een slecht daglicht plaatste en dat ik nou eenmaal de correspondent was. Op mijn vraag of de Hongaarse regering van plan was om de correspondent voortaan niet alleen voor commerciële advertenties maar ook voor overlijdensberichten verantwoordelijk te stellen klonk een ontkennend antwoord. „We weten dat het om een commerciële advertentie gaat, maar omdat het uw krant is zult u over het onderwerp willen schrijven en wij willen u graag van de juiste informatie voorzien over de

juiste plaats, over leugen en waarheid, over manipulatie met statistieken, over verhullend taalgebruik.

Maarten van Dullemen schreef in december '68 een artikel in het tijdschrift *Te Elfder Ure* onder de sprekende titel 'Het moorden en de taal'. Het artikel maakt enigszins duidelijk wat ik hier bedoel. Een paar citaten: 'Waar de massa-moord van de nazi's en die van de Amerikanen op elkaar lijken, spreekt het vanzelf dat we daarvan in de gebruikte taal, de spiegel van het gebeuren, de sporen moeten terugvinden. De woorden waarmee de nazi's hun misdaden trachten te verhullen, woorden als "Endlösung", "Entjudung", "erfassen", "Sonderbehandlung", "Abschiebung", "Schutzhaft" etc. zijn ons zo vertrouwd dat we ons er nog maar nauwelijks van bewust zijn dat ze eens bedoeld waren om de werkelijkheid te verbergen en alleen door ingewijden begrepen te worden. In Vietnam vinden we een dergelijk verhullend taalgebruik terug. Uithongering van de bevolking in Bevrijdingsfrontgebieden wordt te weeg gebracht door "weedkillers" (onkruidodders) en "defoliants" (ontbladeringsmiddelen). Het doel van het gebruik van deze middelen is "food-denial" (voedselonthouding) aan de vijand. Weloordachte eufemismen voor het doden van planten met het doel de burgerbevolking uit te hongeren.'

'Gebieden die van mensen zijn ontdaan heten "sanitized" (gesaaneerd). Mensen waarop men schiet worden ontmenselijkt en men gaat zijn toevlucht nemen tot termen die aan de jacht zijn ontleend: "Down in the delta it's like rabbit-shoot."'

'Het woord doden (of moorden) wordt vervangen door het simpele "it": "if we see people within our free fire zone, they have had it." "We interrogated our prisoners in the field and if they don't cooperate, that's it."'

'Een Vietnamees die vermoord wordt, bewijst daarmee automatisch een "Vietcong" te zijn geweest: "We never found any dead soldiers but as it is the custom in VC controlled areas, all the dead were listed as VC killed in action."'

"The soldiers had a joke that ran: anything that's dead and isn't white is a VC."

"When we kill a pregnant woman, we count it as two VC - one soldier and one cadet" he said and everyone laughed loudly."

Een huis dat wordt gebombardeerd, wordt daarmee automatisch tot "enemy structure". Als men van een bepaald doel helemaal niks anders kan maken wordt het een VC "r and r" (rest en relaxation centre).

De bommen worden daarentegen van hun gruwelijkheid ontdaan. Schell (Jonathan Schell, *An account of destruction in Quang Ngai and*

Quang Tin, New York 1968) noteerde bij een voltreffer op een kerk: "Oh, that's nice, baby, real nice, Major Billings said, you are layin' those goodies right in there."

Een andere manier om het slachtoffer te ontmenselijken is er een abstractie van te maken, zoals met het woord "Vietcong-infrastructure," een woord dat suggereert dat het wetenschappelijk bewezen is en waaronder iedereen iets anders kan verstaan. Maar "to root out the Vietcong-infrastructure" komt altijd neer op het doden van mensen.'

John Roozen, destijds verbonden aan het Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau (ANP), vertelde mij in die jaren dat het ANP zo z'n vaste jargon had, als het ging om Vietnam, een taalgebruik overgenomen van Amerikaanse persbureaus. Een taalgebruik dat op voorhand het nieuws interpreteerde, taal als politiek instrument. Het ANP had het in die jaren stevast over 'de Vietcong', als het ging over Vietnamezen die zich (al dan niet gewapend) verzetten tegen de Amerikaanse militaire aanwezigheid in Vietnam. Vietcongs waren naar de naam per definitie communisten. Een Vietnamese boer, wiens oogst voor de zoveelste keer door de Amerikanen was platgebrand en die uiteindelijk daartegen maar eens in opstand kwam, de Boeddhist die de zoveelste schending van zijn religieuze belevingswereld met protest beantwoordde: aanvankelijk waren het ook voor het ANP allemaal per definitie communisten. Terwijl de verzetsbeweging in Vietnam zich Nationaal Bevrijdingsfront noemde (FNL), een naam die bij het ANP volstrekt taboe was. De jonge medewerker die het in zijn hoofd haalde de berichten in die termen te vertalen ('Nationaal Bevrijdings Front' in plaats van 'Vietcong'), kreeg er flink van langs en liep bij recidive gevaar van ontslag. Nederland een vrij land, zonder censuur? Slechts onwetendheid kan de gammele grondslag van zo'n mening zijn.

Vergelijkbare mechanismen werken overigens nog steeds. Want Afghanen die de wapens opnemen tegen de Russen heten stevast 'vrijheidsstrijders' en in het midden wordt gelaten of die 'vrijheid' wellicht niet de volle restauratie van een fundamentalistische moslimcultuur à la Khomeiny betekent.

Voor goed begrip: ook voor mij geen enkele reden de sovjettroepen in Afghanistan aanvaardbaar te vinden, integendeel, ik ben ervan overtuigd dat ze met hun aanwezigheid de fundamentalistische moslims de volle wind in de zeilen hebben gegeven.

Maar in relatie tot het African National Congress (ANC) is de notie 'vrijheidsstrijder' bij onze persbureaus en de meeste kranteredacties weer geheel taboe. De handelingen van Klaas de Jonge werden toch eerder rijp geacht voor de strafrechter dan voor een officiële onder-

scheiding als vrijheidsstrijder. De taal als politiek instrument, ons eigen ANP is het dagelijkse bewijs. Wat in het ene politieke denkkader een vrijheidsstrijder heet, is in het andere politieke denkkader een terrorist. Is objectiviteit dan onmogelijk?

Ik vind van niet. Objectiviteit is een onmisbare strategie in het verwerven van kennis. Een strategie, geen statisch feit. Juist de oorlog in Vietnam en de soms onontwarbaar lijkende verstrikking van leugen en waarheid, het moorden tot in de taal, hebben me ervan overtuigd dat objectiviteit niet alleen mogelijk maar ook noodzakelijk is. Het is mensonwaardig en een belediging van je eigen hersens de gevangene te zijn van de leugens van de je omringende dominante ideologie, om het even of die nou 'westers' of 'oosters' van karakter is.

Vietnam was voor mij, en vele anderen, in de eerste plaats de schokkende confrontatie met de leugens, de uit dogmatisme en militair blokhoofdig denken gegroeide leugens van de westerse ideologie. Dáár greep op krijgen was niet eenvoudig. Het vereiste veel inzet, denkkracht, moed om geen detail uit de weg te gaan. Juist de details die binnen een gevestigde mening, om het even van wie, ook van jezelf, niet pasten.

Je moest honderd keer meer lezen, honderd keer beter jezelf documenteren, nooit de makkelijke weg bewandelen, eerlijk blijven tegenover jezelf, demagogie vermijden. De Vietnamactivisten van het eerste uur waren in vele opzichten de dissidenten van toen in Nederland. Zoals het goede dissidenten betaamd, begonnen we dan ook met een opvallend klein krantje, met minimale middelen en in kleine oplage gedrukt: het *Vietnam Bulletin*.

Objectiviteit is niet zozeer een toestand, een feit, alswel een strategie. Die strategie was de grondslag voor het redactionele beleid van het *Vietnam Bulletin*: zoeken naar berichten in de westerse media (*Le Monde*, *New York Times*, *Newsweek* etc.) over concrete gebeurtenissen in Vietnam die niet helemaal of helemaal niet pasten in het geprefabriceerde kader van het Goede Amerika dat in Zuidoost-Azië optrad als de beschermengel voor de door communistische ondermijning (vanuit het Noorden) naar de afgrond gedreven lokale boerenbevolking.

Uren zoeken, vooral de kleine berichten die kaderloos als 'faits divers' ergens onderaan pagina 15 in zes of zeven regels vermeld stonden. Want de hoofdstroom van de berichtgeving bewoog zich binnen de bedding van een tamelijk zelfgenoegzaam westers wereldbeeld. Alsof wat de Amerikanen in Vietnam aanrichtten eigenlijk meer een

bijzondere vorm van ontwikkelingshulp was. Wat napalm kon bijdragen aan welke vorm van ontwikkeling ook vereiste wel enige salto's in het denken, maar het is vele westerse mediagoeroes uit die dagen toch het lange tijd gelukt onmogelijkheden met elkaar te rijmen. Zoals J. de Kadt, die in zijn op hol geslagen verdediging van het Westen zover ging dat hij de Hitlerverering van de pro-Amerikaanse Vietnamese maarschalk Nguyen Cao Ky met de mantel der liefde bedekte. Ky was volgens De Kadt in dat verband slechts 'een militair energieke maar politiek ongeschoolde vechtjas' (*Vietnam, aspecten van een tragedie: een publikatie van het Oost-West Instituut*, Den Haag 1967, pagina 165).

De kleine berichten, de berichten die eigenlijk niet pasten in de kaders die de commentatoren hanteerden, maar die omstreeks de middenjaren zestig incidenteel dóórdrongen in sommige kranten. De censuur was dus niet totaal, meer een censuur als gevolg van wat met een psychologische term 'cognitieve dissonantie' heet: wat niet te rijmen valt met het gekende beeld wordt weggelaten, verdrongen, vergeten. Dát was de kopij van het *Vietnam Bulletin*. In mijn herinnering een nieuwe manier van kranten lezen, de methode-Bosgra noem ik het nog steeds, naar Sietse Bosgra, een van de oprichters van het *Vietnam Bulletin*. Zo zaten we vele avonden in het ASVA-kantoor aan de Weesperstraat, snuffelend en lezend tot diep in de nacht. Het ASVA-bestuur had het *Bulletin* redactionele ruimte en archiefkasten aangeboden. Ik ben er in die jaren straatlengten 'cognitief sonanter' van geworden.

En als je dan op termijn van enkele maanden een keer of vijf, zes, zo'n los bericht, weggedrukt in de marge, was tegengekomen waarin sprake was van het bombarderen van een dorp, dan was het niet zo onbegrijpelijk je de vraag te gaan stellen of hier wellicht sprake was van een systeem, in plaats van een incident.

De Koopmansbeurs

De eerste frontale botsing over Vietnam binnen het circuit van de openbare mening werd in 1965 door de Algemene Studenten Vereniging Amsterdam (ASVA) in de Amsterdamse Koopmansbeurs georganiseerd. Daarbij was gekozen voor de vorm van de 'teach-in', een aan de Amerikaanse studentenbeweging ontleende werkwijze. Bij de 'teach-in' ging het erom voorstanders en tegenstanders rond een omstreden kwestie voluit aan het woord te laten, al hun argumenten de ruimte te geven, waarna de aanwezigen, liefst zelf ook zoveel mogelijk actief in het debat, hun eigen conclusies maar moesten trekken. De tijd was rijp voor een Nederlandse 'teach-in' over Vietnam. En de re-

hit mail: the coll-damage, 12-10'00

Albanian Daily News

October 12, 2000

Trans-Balkan Pitches Pipeline

BAKU, Azerbaijan - This month, the Albania-Macedonia-Bulgaria Oil pipeline consortium will start a series of presentations of its project for a pipeline between the Black Sea and the Adriatic to prospective customers.

The pipeline should run from the Bulgarian port of Burgas, through FYROM, to the Albanian port of Vlora.

The plan, which has the full backing of the US, the European Union and a number of banks and investment funds, should result in a pipeline with an initial capacity of 750,000 barrels a day. The costs of the pipeline's construction have been calculated at \$1.1bn.

At oil prices oscillating around \$19 per barrel (the oil companies' average benchmark in terms of investment planning), this would mean that four years of functioning at full capacity would be enough to recoup this initial investment.

Interest rates and operation costs would bring the transport and handling

costs of a barrel of crude to \$2 initially, to be brought down to \$1 gradually over time.

"If you take the shipping costs by tanker from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean sales points through the Bosphorus into account, the price looks quite high," AMBO's president and CEO Ted Ferguson, on a working visit in Baku, told CBN.

"But then these are the flat rates, and the loss of time caused by queuing up at the entry of the Bosphorus straits is not included in them. By saving time, AMBO in fact saves oil companies a lot of money as well. And remember, the more tankers that queue up, the longer they will have to wait."

Currently, oil transport prices through the Bosphorus to the Mediterranean oscillate around \$5 per ton, or \$0.80 per barrel. After most of the investments in the AMBO line have been written off, total transport costs are estimated to be about the same.

Other projects to relieve the Bosphorus include a pipeline from Odessa to Brody, meant to link up to the Druzhba pipeline leading from Siberia to Central Europe. Another one is to lead from Constanza to Trieste, and is financed by Italy's state energy group Eni. A last one is to go from Burgas to the nearby Greek port of Alexandropolis, but thus far only exists on paper in spite of

strong political support by the European Parliament. Together, the pipelines are expected to absorb the bulk of the surplus 2.7 million barrels a day of Caspian oil from Russia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.

The most burning question concerns the issue of a plan to build a new oil pipeline across the Turkish mainland to the port of Ceyhan on the Mediterranean near the border with Syria. Currently, a group of oil companies' representatives (known as the so-called sponsor group) is studying the costs and benefits of the plan against other options.

"I have no doubt that the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline is going to be built at some stage, provided proven oil reserves stand the price," Ferguson says. "Pipelines like ours have often been presented as alternatives to it, but I do think that if explorations in the Caspian produce oil volumes according to average expectations, there will be enough supplies for both, or even more. To my mind, the OKIOC's eventual output will be the key issue. As for the sea and rail-link from Aktau to Batumi, I do not think that they will be out of business either. Remember that onshore oil from Azerbaijan is also looking for outlets. In fact, the rail-link was put up at an early stage to export oil from the Muradkhanly field, now operated by Ramco."

4

The OKIOC, the consortium that holds the concession over the vast and presumably rich offshore field of Kashagan, is still at an early stage of its exploration plan. Only one test well out of six has been completed and the results of its analysis will be known by the end of October. Kazakh government

officials claimed this summer that reserves are supposed to be around 7 billion tons of crude, thus enabling it to yield peak volumes of up to 100 million tons per year or two million barrels a day by 2008.

According to Ted Ferguson, fears that a pipeline to Ceyhan would marginalize Georgia as a core oil outlet for the Caspian are equally unfounded.

"I think that the construction of a parallel pipeline to Supsa will be justified by supplies, even after Baku-Ceyhan comes into operation," he says. "Even Iran will be able to serve as an outlet for Caspian oil. But we have to bear a couple of things in mind when looking at the future oil map of the wider region."

"Oil companies insist on selling the oil they get in the Caspian at world market prices. The nearest point where they can do that is the southern European spot market in Augusta on the eastern coast of Sicily. What they

J
/

do not need is a Caspian oil glut in the Black Sea, meaning more supplies to it than they can get out. To the north, exports are virtually blocked by Transneft's lack of purchasing power to buy oil at acceptable prices. This is why Russia's swap deals fall through time and again. In Iran they work better, but only insofar as the country's domestic market can absorb them. Besides, generally speaking, Europe does not want to pump more oil towards the Persian Gulf; the area remains simply too explosive. This leaves routes across the Balkan as the key to oil trade solutions."

Global Reflexion - Amsterdam - The Netherlands

van holst en steijnen

From: Despotovic Ruza <despot@wishmail.net>
To: Nico /Neeltje Steijnen <n.h.van.holst@freeler.nl>; Globalreflexion <office@globalreflexion.org>
Sent: vrijdag 13 oktober 2000 14:12
Subject: Fw: - Ljudska prava - Former Air Atache: Avoidable War

----- Original Message -----

From: "Bob Petrovich" <bojanp@home.com>
 To: <ljudska_prava@egroups.com>
 Sent: Friday, October 13, 2000 1:40 PM
 Subject: - Ljudska prava - Former Air Atache: Avoidable War

> "Benjamin Franklin believed that there is no such thing as a good war, nor
 is
 > there a bad peace. Democratic forces brought about Milosevic's demise, not
 bombs
 > or bullets. Milosevic was widely hated before the war ever began.
 Advocates of
 > the Clinton doctrine might think on these dilemmas and well consider the
 old
 > sage's advice before launching any new moralistic adventures. War is at
 best
 > a necessary evil that should be invoked only in the most extreme of
 situations.
 > Getting rid of Milosevic was not one of them"
 >
 >
 > _____
 > The Colorado Springs Gazette
 > October 12 2000
 > <http://www.gazette.com/daily/opin2.html>
 >
 >
 > Alan J. Parrington: CLINTON HAD A CHANCE TO AVOID KOSOVO BOMBING
 >
 > Now that Slobodan Milosevic has been voted out of office, many in the
 Clinton
 > Administration will be celebrating the 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia as a
 completed
 > moral victory. We were told after all, that the war was fought for
 humanitarian
 > reasons - to stop genocide and ethnic cleansing - and that it was started
 only
 > after all diplomatic efforts had failed. With Kosovo free and Milosevic
 vanquished,
 > the war is finally won. It was a good war.
 >
 > As the U.S. Air Attaché in London at the time, I saw a different war, one
 not
 > so flattering or altruistic. I saw a war of underlying motives, missed
 diplomatic
 > opportunities, misguided military strategies and questionable outcomes.
 Worst
 > of all, the war never need happened: Milosevic conceded major U.S. demands
 two
 > weeks before the war began.
 >
 > On the evening of March 11, 1999, I was confronted by the Yugoslavian
 Defence
 > Attaché to the Court of St. James at a British diplomatic reception and
 told,
 > "Milosevic has decided to accept international, even NATO, troops in
 Kosovo,
 > but he must first have (a) letter from Clinton explaining the benefits
 Yugoslavia
 > will receive (in exchange)." I stood there silent, somewhat dumbfounded,
 as the

> deployment of foreign troops had been the sticking point in negotiations.
The
> Serb colonel repeated his statement verbatim, questioning if I had
understood
> the import of his message.
>
> "Yes," I assured him, "I understand perfectly, but what benefits are you
talking
> about?"
>
> "I myself do not know," he answered, "But Holbrooke knows!"
>
> Richard Holbrooke, author of the Dayton Accord on Bosnia, had been
shuttling
> back and forth to Belgrade trying to find a peaceful solution to the
Kosovo crisis.
> He had left Belgrade the day before to consult with Washington and was due
back
> in Yugoslavia that weekend. He apparently carried with him a detailed
brief of
> the Milosevic offer.
>
> The timing, place and presence of other diplomats cut short my discussion
with
> the Serb, but by coincidence I had dinner with him at the home of a fellow
attaché
> a few days later. I asked if he had learned any more about the benefits he
had
> spoken of during our last encounter. "I can only speak for myself," he
answered,
> "but there are only three things Yugoslavia must have: Yugoslavia must
keep sovereignty
> over Kosovo, the terrorists (i.e. the Kosovo Liberation Army) must be
disarmed,
> and the referendum (on independence for Kosovo) must be removed." It was
apparently
> too much for the Clinton Administration to accept as Holbrooke's shuttle
diplomacy
> failed and the bombing began March 24.
>
> The war that was supposed to last three days ran into weeks, then months,
and
> had all the appearances of lasting well into the future when, ironically,
Russia
> stepped in and brokered a peace. The war ended June 10 with the United
Nations
> accepting responsibility for Kosovo. When I read the agreement, I was not
surprised
> to see the three Yugoslavian demands had been met or that each side had
spun
> the agreement into a victory for their side. Such is the nature of
20th-century
> politics. But I began to wonder why it had taken so much blood to come
back
> to the same starting point as before the war began. There were lots of
explanations
> I reasoned, but none that fit the scenario comfortably, save one.
>
> I came to the conclusion - hypothesis really - that the war had not been
about
> humanitarian issues at all. Like most wars it had been about politics. In
this
> case, the objective all along had been to get rid of Milosevic, Europe's
last
> reigning communist, and whose virulent nationalism had set the region
ablaze,
> sending millions of refugees fleeing to the West where they were not
wanted or
> welcomed.
>
> It was difficult to gauge when Milosevic became the target of the
administration's

- > Balkan policy, perhaps as early as 1995 following the debacle in Bosnia. State
- > appointments and initiatives from that time seem to support that theory. In any
- > case, it all hinged on cornering the Serb leader in a war he could not win and
- > for whom capitulation or defeat would spell disaster. Milosevic's Waterloo was
- > thought to be Kosovo, his Achilles heel to be bombing. This is where the strategy
- > went awry.
- >
- > It is one of the enduring myths of the 20th century that strategic bombing will
- > compel a weak power to throw in the towel and dump an unpopular leader. In practice,
- > the opposite has always been true and even the most unpopular dictators have
- > been made into national heroes by the symbiotic logic that befalls strategic
- > bombardment. Most American administrations, captured by the omnipotence of their
- > own polls, have been slow to grasp this reality and have repeatedly reached for
- > the strategic bomber or missile as an easy way to avoid hard choices.
- >
- > The Clinton administration was no different. Three days at most, it was claimed,
- > and Milosevic will be history. But in Yugoslavia, as in Iraq and elsewhere, the
- > bombing backfired and rallied disparate Serbian political parties around a common
- > foreign enemy. After 11 weeks of bombing, the administration, running short of
- > precision weapons and faced with the prospect of a bloody ground war, abandoned
- > the bombing strategy and asked the Russians to broker a deal based upon Milosevic's
- > antebellum offer. The war achieved no more than was offered by Milosevic at the
- > beginning and only inflamed ethnic passions for generations to come.
- >
- > It is a Pyrrhic victory to now claim that the bombing served its purpose. Kosovo
- > remains a part of Yugoslavia, the independence referendum has been cancelled,
- > ethnic cleansing continues (albeit reversed in terms of nationalities), and NATO
- > has been stuck with the impossible task of disarming the KLA. As one KLA leader
- > told me, "One day the Serbs will be selling us guns to shoot at NATO!" Even now
- > Yugoslavian President Vojislav Kostunica has been quoted as saying, "We cannot
- > forget what some countries did to us last year during the NATO bombing."
- >
- > Benjamin Franklin believed that there is no such thing as a good war, nor is
- > there a bad peace. Democratic forces brought about Milosevic's demise, not bombs
- > or bullets. Milosevic was widely hated before the war ever began. Advocates of
- > the Clinton doctrine might think on these dilemmas and well consider the old
- > sage's advice before launching any new moralistic adventures. War is at best
- > a necessary evil that should be invoked only in the most extreme of situations.
- > Getting rid of Milosevic was not one of them
- >
- >

- > Alan J. Parrington,
- >
- > of Monument, served as U.S. air attaché to the Court of St. James in London during
- > the Kosovo campaign.
- > He retired from the Air Force with the rank of colonel at the beginning of this
- > year.

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Slobodna Dalmacija, Split, Croatia, September 12, 2000

Seve practiced by Shooting Civilians in Sarajevo

Interview: Edin Garaplija

interview by Ante SULJAK

Following orders of the AID director, Kemal Ademovic, Edin Garaplija, an agent of the Bosniak intelligence service [AID], arrested Nedžad Herenda, one of the most active members of Seve [seva means lark], a notorious paramilitary unit, with the goal of getting a confession about the activities of the unit from him. By the way, Seve were acting under the auspices of the top Bosniak political leadership.

SD: Several days after the arrest, Herenda was found alive. Did he managed to escape?

GARAPLIJA: At one moment Herenda managed to get away. The agents who were guarding him were overworked and tired. You see, Herenda had been watched for a month. Then after the arrest he was processed for three days, meaning that we were getting his statement. That was according to the law that was in force at the time. At one point Herenda used the agent's lack of attention and tried to get his weapon. He attacked the agent, they pushed each other and the gun held by the agent fired. The bullet hit Herenda in the leg.

Body on the Road

At that time I had a meeting with Ademovic. I got a coded message to urgently return to the base. When I returned they told me that Herenda had been lightly wounded in the leg and that they had given him first aid, bandaged his wound and stopped the bleeding. They asked me what to do next. I informed my superiors, Ademovic and Masic, who was in charge of coordination, and they suggested that Herenda be removed.

What do you mean "removed"? Were they saying that he should be killed? What did you do with him?

At one moment Herenda fainted, probably as a consequence of his wound, as well as psychosis and fear inherent in the situation. We sort of panicked. Some of us thought that he had died. Masic claimed that Herenda was dead and that we should dispose of his body, although I tried to convince him that Herenda was alive and that he should be urgently taken to a hospital.

What did you decide in the end?

Since Masic insisted that Herenda was dead, we left his body next to a road...

However, according to a different version of that event, Herenda was found tied up inside a bag, with bullet wounds on his head and leg, but still alive... It was claimed at the time that he survived an execution by chance?

Herenda did not have a bullet wound in his head, but only a scratch. Later he claimed that he had been thrown in a manhole. However, all facts from the field indicate that he could not have been thrown in a manhole because of its narrow opening. Therefore, many facts, that were later established by a court, indicate that Herenda was lying, that he fabricated his story. Even the court appointed expert concluded that his wounds were not life threatening. What is beyond doubt is that Herenda had been left next to a road where, according to the witnesses, he was also later found.

Disturbing Discoveries

Where is Herenda now?

There are three versions regarding his fate. According to one version, people who had issued orders for his crimes and the crimes of the Seva group moved him to Australia. The second version is that he was executed later in order to stop the further spreading of the whole case, and according to the third version Herenda is under watch of the investigators of the Hague Tribunal who are preparing an indictment for the committed crimes. The third option is the one closest to the truth.

How much did you manage to find out from Herenda? Were you satisfied with the information you got out of him?

It is difficult to talk about any satisfaction in this case. I was very disturbed by the information we got from Herenda... The facts and his testimony about them, it was outrageous.

Did he reveal the chain of command that controlled Sevas?

He said that the chain of command always went in the direction of Ugljen, Alispahic, Dautbasic, and all the way to the top political leadership including Izetbegovic. Since we are discussing these facts, not only did we find out everything we were looking for but in some cases Herenda provided so much detail that he said some horrific things.

What in particular?

For example, at one moment he talked about the training they received in Metkovic. Later they went to the Pogorelice camp [near Fojnica], after which, according to Herenda, they regularly practiced sharp shooting. "Herenda. How did you practice that?" I asked him and he replied that they would climb hilltops or building tops and then shoot at Serbs in Grbavica. "How did you pick your targets?" We would shoot at anyone, said Herenda. For example, they would pick out a woman, an elderly woman and then they would shoot at her. One of them would follow her movement and the other one shoot. When I asked him how he could be certain that the woman was not for example a Bosniak woman who by chance stayed in Grbavica, he replied that they watched for that. For example they made sure that their targets were wearing black [custom among elderly Christian women in rural areas of Bosnia and elsewhere in the Balkans]. That indicates Herenda's truly criminal character.

These sharp shooters... Were they professionals, people from abroad?

They had several trained sharp shooters from outside, while others went through training and practiced in the manner described by Herenda. Therefore they did not care whether they were shooting civilians, women, children, elderly... They did not care whether there would be a reaction to their activities.

Perhaps, that was their intention after all?

It must have been, but hopefully someone will ask Herenda about that too. Whether that was their goal or whether they were ordered to exact revenge...

Executed Prisoners

According to the information you obtained during the questioning, did Herenda and Seve perhaps participate in the massacre of twelve captured civilians and soldiers in 1992 in front of the Police headquarters in Sarajevo?

Not only was he there but he bloodied his hands. Namely, that group of civilians and prisoners of war had been brought in front of the Police Headquarters. The then commander of the special police unit Dragan Vikic recently testified about that event on TV OBN. Vikic claimed that at one moment he had heard several bursts of fire from a machine gun. When he went to check what was going on he was told that all the prisoners had been killed. Herenda confessed to us that he had killed the prisoners. He told us the details and said: "Yes, I shot at them. When they fell, I pulled out a handgun. With the handgun I 'confirmed' all of them one more time." Afterwards, he was given the task to remove and burn the bodies in order to hide the crime.

When we asked him why he had done that, his defense was that the victims were Chetniks [derogatory term for Serbs]. As if they were not human, as far as Herenda was concerned. As if he shot at twelve boxes, rather than twelve persons, tied up and unarmed. Herenda also said that Ugljen had ordered him to kill those prisoners. However, it is worrisome that no one in the judiciary has so far initiated an investigation in that war crime, although Vikic claims that immediately after the crime he informed the then Minister of Internal Affairs, Jusuf Pusina, and requested that Herenda be arrested and tried. However, no one has ever investigated Herenda and his superiors.

A French peace forces member was killed at the time with a sniper bullet. Are Seve behind that murder?

Yes, they are... The unofficial information was that an investigation of that murder had been opened. The murder took place in the center of Sarajevo, next to the building of the Executive Council, and there was a well founded suspicion that the murder had been carried out by Seve. Herenda confirmed that in a part of his statement. According to him, the French soldier was murdered in an attempt to accuse Serbs for the crime. However, investigators who worked on that crime immediately found out that the bullet could not have come from the Serb positions in Grbavica, as was claimed in the public. The whole case caused quite a stir but Delic, Dautbasic, Mujezinovic, and Ugljen tried to hush everything down and were largely successful in that.

Fake Autopsies

Who murdered the young couple, a Muslim woman and a Serb man, on one bridge in Sarajevo, on the line of separation? That crime outraged the whole world and Serbs were blamed for it.

That is not true. This was perfidious propaganda of the people who gave orders to Seve. Herenda was specific in connection with that crime in his statement and stated that the couple had been murdered by Dragan Bozic from a sniper rifle. Herenda even described the spot from which Bozic killed them.

You've said in the past that Sevas also used the method of quiet liquidation. What is that?

Herenda told us that Dautbasic, together with an engineer of chemistry, Faik Kulovic, had built a type of syringe which could inject almost instantaneously a big dose of cyanide into the victim's body causing instantaneous death. After that an autopsy would be conducted by Dr. Ilijas Dobraca. He would find out that the cause of death had been natural, a cardiac arrest or something of that sort. Herenda stated that they had killed in that manner SDS representative in the Bosnian Parliament Najdanic and one person in Zenica, whose name I do not recall, but the name was recorded in Herenda's statement.

Were Sevas used for actions on the front, for example in Kazani, the ravine under the Trebevic Mt.?

Seve had a criminal role during the operation "Trebevic", actually an attempt to arrest the commander of the Tenth Mountain Brigade, Musan Topalovic Caco, and his collaborators. That was not known to the public and was discovered only after Herenda's arrest. Seve were given by Ugljan and Alispahic on the one side and Mujezinovic, Muslimovic, and Jasarevic on the other, a special task, an order to kill as many members of the Tenth Mountain Brigade of the Army of BH as possible. They were divided in two groups, prepared to start shooting at the same time. One group had the task to shoot members of the Tenth Mountain Brigade and the other group was supposed to shoot at the attackers. That caused a bloodbath in which several people lost their lives, which caused a forceful reaction. Later everything was transformed into a wider conflict.

What was the final goal of the people who ordered that massacre?

Analysing all the information provided by Herenda, it is possible to come to a conclusion that the task of Sevas was to provoke an internal conflict in the Army of BH, probably in order to weaken the defense against the Serb aggressor.

Drugs Smuggling

Do you know whether Seve participated in the forced evictions of Serbs and Croats from their apartments in Sarajevo?

Yes, Herenda described several cases of transfer of certain Croats or Serbs. Their task was to take them to Stup [Croat positions] of towards Pale [Serb positions] and turn them over.

Turn them over to whom?

He was not specific in this case. Perhaps he was not sure. His task was to simply take those people and make sure they were delivered. He would take them to the previously agreed spot, but it is not known what happened with them afterwards.

What else did you find out from Herenda?

You see, Herenda gave his statement for three days, for seventy two hours. He said many horrific things. A lot has been said, and it would demand a lot of space... There were contacts in the Netherlands, transfer of drugs, transfer of money via diplomatic mail etc. There is a lot of that.

Who was given the material in connection with Herenda's statement?

New information was daily transferred to director Ademovic. We had meetings on two locations. One location was the Bare cemetery, on the outskirts of Sarajevo, and the other one the Big Park in the center.

Assassination Attempt on Halilovic

Who gave the order to assassinate General Halilovic?

This is a very interesting part of Herenda's statement. Why? Because it proves that Sevas were not only used against Serbs and Croats but also for the showdowns with the political opponents among Bosniaks. At that time General Halilovic had split up with the military and political Bosniak leadership and was simply fired. After that the people from the top Bosniak leadership ordered Herenda to assassinate Halilovic. Sevas placed an explosive device. The idea was to accuse the Serb side of a grenade attack. The assassination was carried out by a group of three agents. One of them was an expert for explosive devices, the other one was following Halilovic and the third one was Herenda as the chief of that group.

Who were the other two?

Their names are known and were passed along to the investigative bodies.

What happened next?

They got information from the usual points, from Mujezinovic and intelligence points that followed Halilovic and eavesdropped on his phone conversations. They provided information that Sefer Halilovic was on his way home. The previous night they had placed an explosive device by attaching it from below to the balcony of Halilovic's apartment. They decided to conduct the operation in that manner because Halilovic's apartment was on the second floor so that that was the easiest assassination method. They were monitoring the apartment from one of their usual stations directly across the street from the apartment. From there they watched and activated the explosive device. Fortunately for Sefer Halilovic he had stopped somewhere on his way home and in the meantime the brother of Halilovic's wife went out on the balcony with his sister, Halilovic's wife. Unfortunately, he was dressed in battle fatigues since he had been mobilized and was active in the Army. At that moment Herenda and the team mistakenly identified him as Halilovic and activated the bomb. Sefer Halilovic's wife and her brother died in that explosion. Fortunately, their two small kids were at the time in a different room and were not hurt. However, Herenda, at the moment he activated the explosive device did not know where the children were and whether they would also be killed. That again illustrates the criminal character of Herenda and Sevas, as well as the people who ordered them to carry out these attacks.

How is it then possible that the public was told that a Serb grenade had hit Halilovic's apartment?

You see, a sort of a disguise of the operation was immediately conducted. Namely, the Bosniak media close to the authorities published that a Serb, probably misfired grenade, had caused the explosion. Experts were sent to the scene. Only one of them, Dr. Neset Muminagic did not succumb to the pressure and concluded that the explosion was not caused by a Serb grenade but by an explosive device. His report has been hidden from the public for a long time. The other experts wrote that the explosion had been caused by a misfired Serb grenade. That clearly shows the way in which terrorists activities of Sevas were hidden. Herenda told us details about the assassination.

Thank You Note from Alija Izetbegovic's Office

The Hague investigators, to whom I testified for several days, have an important document. Namely, Alija's nephew Bakir Sadovic, also known as Zujan, who is at the same time his office chief of staff, sent a thank you letter to Nedžad Ugljen in which he thanked him for an action of killing of civilians, mostly women in Grbavica, carried out by Seve. The very name of the unit, Seve, was not mentioned in the public. The Bosniak authorities tried to hide their existence in all ways possible. However, after the murder of Nedžad Ugljen, one Sarajevo newspaper published an obituary with the text "Farewell to Nephew from Sevas"

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Matthias Küntzel

Germany and the Kosovo

How Germany 's independent line paved the way to the Kosovo War

Contribution to the 2nd International Hearing of the European Tribunal concerning Nato's war against Yugoslavia. Hamburg, April 16, 2000¹

In 1991, a delegation of the German Bundestag visited Kosovo for the first time in order to talk with Kosovo Albanian nationalist leaders. This prompted - as early as 1991! - the warning by a senior member of the Yugoslavian parliament that "the British and the Germans would create a common intervention force with 70,000 soldiers in order to intervene in Kosovo."²

Indeed an early and accurate prophecy! So what about Germany's role in preparing for the Kosovo war?

There were and there are strategic differences between German and the US policies about how to retain or enhance hegemony. "As a wealthy status quo power, the United States has an interest in maintaining international order", wrote Joseph S. Nye, Jr, a former US deputy secretary of defense. "In a world where there are some two hundred states but many thousands of often overlapping entities that might eventually make a claim to nationhood, blind promotion of self-determination would have highly problematic consequences."³

Berlin, however, in seeking to create conditions for an ongoing expansion of German influence (that means: changing the international order) does not share this priority. As Rupert Scholz, the former German secretary of defense, explained: "The aim of maintaining "stability" in Europe seems to be a most dangerous one. There will not be any real stability, which is able to maintain peace, if individual nations are held prisoner in unwanted and unnatural ("unnatürliche") state organizations, which have been imposed upon them." Since 1990, German foreign policy has "constantly persisted in actively advocating a universal right of self-determination."⁴

This policy has a particular bearing on Kosovo. The hidden war about Kosovo's future started in 1995 at the latest. In February 1995 in the presence of Roman Herzog, Germany's President at that time, Germany and Albania signed a common declaration of principle at Tirana. This declaration is rarely mentioned in the literature but nevertheless decisive because it promised to find a "solution to the Kosovo question" by advocating the right of self-determination for Kosovo's Albanians.⁵

¹ This contribution is a short description of a broader study: Matthias Küntzel, *Der Weg in den Krieg. Deutschland, die Nato und das Kosovo*, Elefant Press, Berlin 2000. The author's e-mail address: MatKuentzel@aol.com.

² This warning was published in the Yugoslavian journal *Polityka*; see the minutes of the Bundestag meeting June 16, 1991, pp. 2560-1.

³ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Redefining the National Interest*, *Foreign Affairs* Vol.78 No.4, July/August 1999 pp. 22-35.

⁴ See Rupert Scholz, *Das Festhalten an ungewollten Staaten schafft keine Stabilität*, in: *Die Welt*, December 12, 1991; Rupert Scholz, *Das Selbstbestimmungsrecht und die deutsche Politik*, in: *Internationale Politik* 4/1995, S.51.

⁵ "Deutschland und Albanien ... bekräftigen das Recht aller Völker, frei und ohne Einmischung von außen ihr Schicksal zu bestimmen und ihre politische, wirtschaftliche, soziale und kulturelle Entwicklung nach eigenem Wunsch zu gestalten." This declaration is published in the *Archiv der Gegenwart*, March 13, 1995, pp. 39819-20.

Advocating self-determination for Kosovo's Albanians, however, meant advocating their right to secede from Yugoslavia. This declaration was in so far a kind of advance notice to continue Germany's 1991 course (recognition of Croatia) in order to further split up Yugoslavia following a racist (völkisch) concept of self-determination.

In the period following, the German government did everything it could to spur on the separation of Albanians within Kosovo. Germany supported and financed those nationalists who sought to pursue the goal of full independence by creating alternative governing institutions as well as independent Albanian educational and medical systems in Kosovo which systematically separated the majority of the people in Kosovo from the other peoples of Yugoslavia. In addition, German secret diplomacy was instrumental in helping the "Kosovo Liberation Army" (KLA), as they call themselves, since its creation in February 1996. The daily newspaper "The European" stated that "German civil and military intelligence services have been involved in training and equipping the rebels with the aim of cementing German influence in the Balkan area."⁶

During those years, Germany unilaterally supported the secessionist movements. In 1997 editor Johann Georg Reißmüller of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (a German daily newspaper) wrote: "The US government is not at all happy with Germany's policy in Kosovo".

It was, however, exactly that year – 1997 – that the crisis in Kosovo began to escalate. After the destruction of the Albanian army arsenals the KLA armed itself in order to start a large-scale nationalist rebellion. This development and the following counter-attack by the Serbian police moved Kosovo into the headlines and into the focal point of NATO's considerations. How did Germany and the United States react?

"The Clinton administration is still uncertain about how to deal with this crisis", later wrote the weekly newspaper Die Zeit. A senior official from the German foreign office was sent to Washington to put pressure on the deputy secretary of state, Strobe Talbott. "We urgently need U.S. leadership now" claimed Germany's emissary.⁷

This pattern: Germany calls for the U.S. government - actually for a special wing of the U.S. government - to act against Yugoslavia were repeated between March 1998 and March 1999 over and over again. Let us now take a closer look at that pre-war diplomacy which paved the way to war.

The US government is responsible for most of the war crimes NATO committed against Yugoslavia. But even in 1998, the Clinton administration - split in several fractions on how to deal with Milosevic and the Kosovo Albanians' nationalism - hesitated, reacting uncertainly on a case-by-case basis, oscillating between supporting the KLA and letting Milosevic have a free hand in smashing them. Germany on the other hand knew what to do and how to act. The grand design of Germany's Kosovo policy had been in effect by March 1998. It was revealed by Germany's informal ambassador to the Balkans, Christian Schwarz-Schilling, who on March 16, 1998 said: "We should try to tell Milosevic the plain truth through pressure and even military interventions that he can retain control over Kosovo as a part of Yugoslavia only if certain fundamentals are met. And if this is not the case, the territory there will have to be transformed into a kind of protectorate until those fundamentals are provided for."⁸

This idea of pushing the Kosovo's Albanians towards a military confrontation with Milosevic in

⁶ Roger Fallgot, How Germany Backed KLA, in: The European, 21-27 September 1998. See for more details M. Küntzel, Der Weg in den Krieg pp. 59-64.

⁷ See Die Zeit, May 12, 1999.

⁸ Christian Schwarz-Schilling, March 16, 1999, Deutschlandradio, quoted in: Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, Stichworte zur Sicherheitspolitik, April 1998, p. 47.

order to create a Kosovo protectorate from now on became the central point of Germany's Kosovo policy - either by the Kohl/Kinkel CDU government or the Schröder/Fischer SPD-Green coalition. One condition was that international troops be stationed on Kosovo soil. As early as March 1998 Germany accordingly put this matter on the agenda at the London meeting of the international Contact Group on Yugoslavia.⁹

The other condition was that Nato would have to enter Kosovo against the will of the Yugoslav government. Accordingly, Germany sharpened its tone towards Belgrad. Milosevic became the main target and remained so whatever his policy looked like.

But France, the UK, Italy and the dominating voices within the US government still preferred to follow a less confrontational policy. In 1998, The European for example stated that "Washington realised that pushing the Kosovars towards a military confrontation with Milosevic, as the Germans wanted to do, would have a boomerang effect on the Balkans. The United States put maximum pressure on Germany to stop supporting the KLA behind the scenes, as did the other European countries such as Britain and France."¹⁰

They termed the KLA activities "terrorist" and supported indirectly a Serbian counteroffensive against the KLA during the summer of 1998 and appealed to Milosevic and the moderate Albanian leader Rugova to begin talks. The KLA, however, succeeded in provoking the Serbian police force and in escalating armed clashes time and again. The policy of de-escalation turned out to be a permanent failure as long as there was a continuity in the supply of KLA weapons and KLA mercenaries across the Albanian border.

It was therefore not at all surprising that in the summer of 1998 all the efforts of the United Nations and the majority of Nato countries (including the US) concentrated in the goal of cutting off the arms and soldiers supplies in favor of the KLA. The Albanian government headed by Fatos Nano who had disassociated himself from the KLA supported this plan. Inside NATO the idea of sending 7000 soldiers to cut off the traffic in weapons began to take shape.

During this crucial situation, however, Germany's covering up for the KLA became both public and evident: The German government vetoed the cutting-off of the supply of weapons for the KLA! Klaus Kinkel, then head of the German foreign office said: "Of course you have to consider whether you are permitted from a moral and ethnical point of view to prevent the Kosovo-Albanians from buying weapons for their self-defense."¹¹

Volker Rühle, then head of the ministry of defense answered to this consideration with an unequivocal No: "You cannot resolve the Kosovo conflict by sending troops to Albania to seal the border and thus be acting in favor of Milosevic."¹²

Rühle's message was quite clear: everyone who tries to seal the border in order to find a peaceful solution is taking sides with Milosevic. In order to disassociate yourself from Milosevic you have to escalate the war between the Kosovo Albanians and the Serbs by delivering more and more weapons to the KLA!

This open German solidarity with the KLA has been as much an isolated provocation as has the recognition of Tudjman's Croatia in 1991, 50 years after the formation of the first Croatian state under the rule of the fascist Ustashi regime.

Just like 1991 Germany again stood nearly alone against a huge majority of countries in Europe and the world. Just like 1991 Germany again supported a movement with a background rooted in

⁹ Russia, the USA, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Germany are members of this informal but influential group.

¹⁰ Roger Fallgot, *ibid*

¹¹ Interview with Klaus Kinkel, in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, July 30, 1998.

¹² Mr. Rühle is quoted in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, June 9, 1998.

the Nazi past, because the KLA is partly led by the sons and grandsons of extreme right-wing Albanian fighters, the heirs of those who fought during World War II in the fascist militias and the "Skanderbeg Volunteer SS Division" raised by the Nazis.¹³

The "National Front of Albania" (Balli Kombetar) which collaborated with Nazi leaders in 1943/44 today boasts about its influence within the KLA which has a program that seems to be a modified version of the 1943 Nazi utopia.

Thus the program of "ethnic cleansing" which Germany exported into the Balkans in 1941 remained alive within the movement of the Kosovo Albanian nationalists during the 80s. "The nationalists have a two-point platform" wrote the New York Times in 1982: "First to establish what they call an ethnically clean Albanian republic and then the merger with Albania to form a greater Albania."¹⁴

Whenever the KLA talks about "liberation" or "freeing" this has been up to now understood in the Nazi-sense of "free of something" i.e. "free of Jews" ("judenfrei"), "free of Gypsies" or "free of Serbs". Noone could be really surprised when, beginning with June 1999, the de facto rule of the KLA turned out to be a daily and a deadly trap for thousands of non-Albanians, especially defenceless Serbs.

In the summer of 1998 Germany and the USA took not only opposite but conflicting sides: While the USA - in the words of General Shelton, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff - has had "concerns about the techniques that are being used to put down, to squelch the uprising"¹⁵

Germany on the other hand acted as the protective power for the KLA. This confrontation includes a strategic conflict within NATO: Is the Atlantic Alliance supposed to help or to hinder the KLA? Should NATO as the KLA's airforce contribute to the revision of state borders and the further diminishing of Yugoslavia? Or is the alliance bound to clap down on such a type of militant secessionism?

It was Germany's insistence and the ignorance or thirst for adventure within the leadership of the other NATO powers that brought the world's biggest military alliance eventually in favor of the Albanian nationalists. Germany has "given evidence of its preparedness to lead" praised the influential Frankfurter Allgemeine.¹⁶

Now Germany once again took the lead in pressing for military intervention in Kosovo. The New York Times reported: "German officials seem increasingly inclined towards charting a military course to stop the violence in Kosovo."¹⁷

Indeed. "Mr. Kinkel threatens with a Nato intervention in Kosovo" proclaimed the headlines of German papers on June 5, 1998. "The United States, unlike Germany, rejects a snap decision about a military intervention", wrote Frankfurter Allgemeine the following day. Volker R uhe was the first government official in Europe who as early as June 15, 1998 spoke in favor of a strike against Yugoslavia even without a UN Security Council green light. This suggestion played havoc with not only the UN Charter but also with the German constitution and the Treaty of Moscow concerning German unification. This proposal was later taken up positively by the USA.

¹³ See Chris Hedges, Kosovo's Next Masters? in: Foreign Affairs, Vol.78, No.3, May/June 1999, pp.24-42.

"Although never much of a fighting force, the Skanderbeg Division took part in the shameful roundup and deportation of the province's few hundred Jews during the Holocaust. ... The decision by KLA commanders to dress their police in black fatigues and order their fighters to salute with a clenched fist to the forehead has led many to worry about these fascist antecedents." (ibid.)

¹⁴ See Marvin Howe, Exodus of Serbians Stirs Province in Yugoslavia, New York Times July 12, 1982.

¹⁵ See New York Times, June 16, 1998.

¹⁶ See Frankfurter Allgemeine, September 26, 1998.

¹⁷ See New York Times, June 10, 1998.

We have to conclude, therefore, that Germany is not only guilty of committing the crimes which are connected with the US-led bombing of Yugoslavia, but is responsible for ardently working towards triggering this war. The German concept for Kosovo includes the following:

- to make a stand against the Yugoslav government
- unlimited support for the Kosovo Albanian nationalists who demand independence and a lasting unification with Albania

to demand for air-strikes against Yugoslavia in order to achieve a NATO protectorate for Kosovo which is supposed to be only an interim step towards the independence of Kosovo.

Strategic differences between German and the US policies diminished considerably in 1999 when the Clinton administration decided to go to war in favor of the ultra-secessionist KLA. They seem to gain, however, new weight in the post-war debate about the final status of Kosovo. US Secretary of State Madelaine Albright recently rejected the idea of creating a greater Albania, whereas German policy seems to be pushing in the opposite direction.

Karl Lamers, the influential CDU foreign affairs spokesman for the opposition in the Bundestag said a

bout the transformation of Kosovo into a NATO protectorate that this is "only the first step towards the separation of Kosovo from Yugoslavia" and that an independent Kosovo will be "only an interim step to merging ("Anschluss") with Albania."¹⁸

Recently, Lamers mentioned with great satisfaction "that everything we are actually doing in Kosovo, e. g. the creation of a new currency zone, is aimed at creating an independent Kosovo..."¹⁹

Even Germany's red/green coalition government does not want to recognize Kosovo as being a province of Yugoslavia. That is the reason why in his last major statement Joschka Fischer - Germany's vice-chancellor and secretary of state - let the question of "the future status of the Kosovo" open claiming that it would be impossible to resolve this now. In an interview with a French newspaper, however, he made clear that he had no doubts about the Kosovo's future status: "The international community is present in Kosovo and the Balkans in order to show that - according to the example of resolving the 'German question' in 1990 - the 'Albanian question' could be resolved only with the agreement of the neighbouring states."²⁰

US government circles are quite aware of those ambitions of their rival, Germany. Zbigniew Brzezinski called the Berlin republic a "geostrategic main actor" and a "subversive big power inspired by an ambitious vision". Strobe Talbott, the deputy secretary of state, characterized Germany as the seismic focal point of the current geopolitical earthquakes which are disrupting the Atlantic Alliance as well as the Balkans. He emphasized that Germany is "the epicentre of thoses processes - enlargement and expansion, extension and deepening."²¹

Within the context of the war against Yugoslavia the other great powers, however, not only reacted to aggressive German moves but pursued their own special interests as well. The United States wanted to retain its influence in Europe, to strengthen a worldwide role for NATO and to weaken Russias influence within the new world order. Great Britain und France were eager to demonstrate their military superiority over Germany and wanted to give a starting signal for the establishing of an independent European intervention force (together with Germany) vis-a-vis the

¹⁸ See the minutes of the Bundestag parliamentary session of April 15, 1999.

¹⁹ See the minutes of the Bundestag parliamentary session of April 5, 2000.

²⁰ See *Le Monde* March 25, 2000, emphasis by the author.

²¹ See *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, February 5, 1999

USA. Each of these nations is a rival to the others and is trying to retain or achieve as much influence and power as possible. The war against Yugoslavia has been the first, however, to be spurred on by Germany as an attempt to redesign current world order after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It has put the irrational elements and the destructive roots of capitalistic societies into a new light.

van holst en steijnen

From: Despotovic Ruza <despot@wishmail.net>
To: DOLF Loth <dolfloth@hotmail.com>; Ksenija Sigulinski <sigu@worldonline.nl>; Nico /Neeltje Steijnen <n.h.van.holst@freeler.nl>
Sent: woensdag 17 januari 2001 14:02
Subject: Fw: The Media's War Against the Serbs

----- Original Message -----

From: "St.Servisch Inf.- & Cult.Centrum" <ssicc@planet.nl>
To: <office@globalreflexion.org>; <michel.colton@skynet.be>; <arthurjk@EUronet.nl>; <106057.1021@compuserve.com>; <Joveljic.Nebojsa.N@bhp.com>; <belininkovic@ptt.yu>; <despot@wishmail.net>; <yuambanl@bart.nl>; <vaskoa@cunet.yu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 16, 2001 10:46 PM
Subject: The Media's War Against the Serbs

The Media's War Against the Serbs by Stella L. Jatras on Antiwar
 1/15/01

<http://antiwar.com/orig/jatras6.html>

----- The Media's War Against the Serbs by Stella L. Jatras

The media's biased war against the Serbs has been a major factor in the dismemberment of the former Yugoslavia and the demonizing of an entire nation. One of the best examples of such bias can be found in The Washington Times, both in its reporting of events in the Balkans and its editorial policy. I single out The Washington Times because it is supposedly the "conservative" newspaper, the counter to the liberal news that is published in The Washington Post, The New York Times, and the rest of the liberal media. Unfortunately, The Washington Times has become part of the liberal propaganda machine that helped to bring death and suffering to tens of thousands of innocent people.

One explanation for The Times' slanted reporting which agrees with the liberal media may be the fact that it depends on "stringers," (reporters) to cover much of its foreign news, specifically in the Balkans. This may also explain why its editorial staff has been consistently anti-Serb.

In his "World Review" section on 5 March, 2000, The Washington Times' Foreign Desk Editor David Jones wrote, "But the stringers quickly lose interest in filing to us if we are not buying their stories and putting them in the paper." What this tells me is that the bottom line in formulating stories has little to do with the truth, or even accuracy, but has everything to do with what makes the biggest headlines and brings in the most financial rewards for both the "stringer" and The Washington Times. How often are these goals achieved by embellishing the "facts" to add a little sensationalism?

Case in point. On 6 August 1998, The Washington Times featured "stringer" Philip Smucker's exclusive front page headline read: "Kosovar bodies bulldozed to dump; Serbs deny massacre, but evidence [not "alleged," or "thought-to-be], but "evidence impossible to avoid of mass graves containing the bodies of 567." He also claimed that at least half of the bodies were those of women and children although, to

at point, the alleged bodies had not been exhumed. To further embellish his story, Smucker went on to say, "Stark evidence in the form of freshly turned earth and the overwhelming stench of death has exposed the presence of scores of bodies that were bulldozed into a garbage dump after a Serbian attack against ethnic Albanian rebels who tried to seize this town." Even a photograph accompanied Smucker's article with the caption, "A news photographer shoots a picture of fresh graves - some identified with ethnic Albanian names - in the Kosovar town of Orahovac," (Kosova is the Albanian name given to Kosovo).

However, on the very same day, The Guardian [UK] of 6 August 1998, reported, "European Union (EU) observers found no evidence of mass graves reported in the town of Orahovac, the teams' Austrian leader, Walter Ebenberger, said." In contrast to the front page coverage given to Mr. Smucker's intended shock-attention report on Serb atrocities, the following day The Washington Times carried a small, barely noticeable item hidden on page A15 (World Scene, 7 August 1998), which stated, "NATO Chief [Secretary-General Javier Solana] dismissed mass graves in Kosovo."

In all honesty, does it not bother the editors at The Washington Times that "stringer" Smucker's report of 6 August was a vicious lie? There

were no mass graves containing the bodies of 567 ethnic Albanian victims; but there it was, on the front page. I stand in awe of the fact that truth in journalism is what they want it to be, what sells, and that articles by Mr. Smucker required, in TWT's judgment, no documentation, no verification, no responsibility, and apparently were accepted without question. Smucker's was the kind of reporting that played right into Clinton's New World Order scheme and at the same time, helped to prepare the minds of Americans to accept whatever punishment we dished out against the Serbian people, including NATO's 78 days of bombing in an unmerciful, unjust and immoral air war led by the United States. It was this kind of vile reporting that caused so many people to say, "After all, they [the Serbs] deserve it!"

Mr. Jones now informs us that the new "stringer" for The Washington Times to replace Philip Smucker, for whom Mr. Jones has only high praise, is Joshua Kucera. Of Mr. Kucera, Jones writes: "The interest [in the elections throughout Serbia held on 24 December 2000] is so light, in fact that our free-lance correspondent in the Balkans, Joshua Kucera, did not even file on the vote. He left that to the wire services and instead spent the day driving through a region held by ethnic-Albanian rebels in southern Serbia where he interviewed a rebel commander."

Does anyone seriously believe that, unless Mr. Kucera was sympathetic to the Albanian "rebels," he would have been given an interview? No way. The "rebels" demand complete loyalty to their cause. In his 31 December article in TWT titled "A guerrilla seeks to coexist," Mr. Kucera leaves no doubt where his pro-Albanian biases lie when he interviewed the Albanian guerrilla leader, Cmdr. Lleshi, "a Fidel Castro look-alike," in the southern border of Serbia. "Coexist" my foot! What's an Albanian doing in Serbia anyway, other than to wage war against the Serbs? Mr. Kucera's article was accompanied by a photo of an Albanian house that had been sacked by Serbs, another ploy by The Washington Times to gain sympathy for the Albanian rebels' cause, rather than show photos of dead Serbian police officers who were murdered by Lleshi's thugs or any photos of the destruction of Serbian homes.

Where is the coverage of the continued violence in Kosovo where recently two elderly Serbs were dragged from their homes and their throats slashed, killing the husband while the wife remained in critical condition in a hospital? (AFP, 29 Dec 2000). Why were there

photos of this Serbian woman's suffering? Probably because she was not an Albanian. But again, The Washington Times lives up to its own anti-Serb bias by giving Mr. Kucera extensive coverage of what the Albanians want; yet in his article, he did not interview one Serb.

It seems that TWT reporters have learned that it doesn't pay to be impartial in the Balkans. Remember Canadian Major General Lewis MacKenzie? General MacKenzie was the first UNPROFOR commander in Bosnia who made the mistake of saying that all sides were doing terrible things. For this, the Bosnian Muslim government demanded that General MacKenzie be removed as UNPROFOR commander. Furthermore, he was falsely accused of having raped and murdered four Muslim women (from his book, "Peacekeepers, the Road to Sarajevo," page 327). The point is, Mr. Kucera would never have gotten his exclusive interview with the Albanian guerrilla commander unless they were sure they would get favorable coverage for their Albanian jihad.

Virtually nothing is being reported today of the barbarity being committed against the Serbs, Romanians and non-Albanians by the former Kosovo Liberation Army, who are engaged in sex slavery (Albanian Daily News, October 5, 2000), prostitution, kidnaping, murder, and rape, "Kosovo Rebels Raped Serb Nun, Say French Officials," New York Post, 19 June 1999. "When they saw us they stopped a while, shouted 'NATO, NATO,' and then beat a hasty retreat, the officer said." Over 40% of heroin going into Europe comes from Kosovo (The Guardian [UK]). Over one-hundred Serbian Orthodox Churches were destroyed during the first two months after KFOR entered Kosovo, more than under 500 years of Ottoman rule.

Scant attention is being paid to what is happening across the southern border in Serbia from Kosovo which threatens to become another Balkan war. Where is the coverage by CNN and the other networks that gave us a blow-by-blow description that never failed to support their slanted anti-Serb view of the war in Kosovo? Where's the outcry from all those politicians who were so quick to denounce the Serbs for protecting what belonged to them? The Albanian guerrillas known as the Liberation Army of Presevo, Bujanovac and Medvedja (UCPMB) and who have fashioned themselves after the KLA cutthroats, invited "stringer" Kucera into their camp after having invaded Serbia and murdered Serbian police officers, something that no sovereign nation can be expected to tolerate. In one of the few reports to emerge, an AFP report of 6 January stated that Albanians now "enjoy new lease of life in border zone as an endless column of battered taxis streams along the recently repaired dirt road winding through the rebel-held hills of southern Serbia, linking ethnic Albanian communities on both sides of the Kosovo boundary," as Serb neighbors incredulously watch them "exploiting a NATO-enforced demilitarized zone to thumb their noses at government forces." "This is unbelievable! The terrorists are at our doorstep, getting further with no reaction at all. What is the international community doing?" raged a Serb in Bujanovac, just over a mile (two kilometres) away from the first rebel road block."

The Serbs have two choices. Unless NATO takes steps to crush the Albanian guerrilla insurgents which thus far appears unlikely, the Serb paramilitary will be forced to stop Albanian provocations by all means necessary for which they will undoubtedly be condemned by the West, just as they were condemned in Kosovo for protecting what was theirs. Or they will have to resign themselves to the possibility that the West will never give them permission to defend themselves by

denying them the heavy weapons they need to clean house, in which case, the southern region of Serbia will go the way of Kosovo. The Albanian guerrillas are using the same tactics used by the KLA that won them their successes in Kosovo, aided by papers such as The Washington Times whose anti-Serb reports routinely include photos of suffering ethnic Albanian women and/or children, often on the front page, but never a photo of even one suffering Serbian woman or child.

With the new democratic president in Serbia, the former Kosovo Liberation Army see their chances for an independent Islamic state and a Greater Albania slipping through their fingers. Where once KFOR was seen as liberators by ethnic Albanians, they are now seen by the KLA as their oppressors and are poised to turn their guns on them. "Albanians threaten to kill UK peacekeepers" reports The Guardian on 24 December. The Daily Telegraph [UK] reported on 22 December, "We'll fight NATO troops, warn Albanian rebels," (Is this anyway to treat a friend?). "Kosovo Attacks Stir U.S. Concern; Official Says NATO May have to Fight Ethnic Albanians," writes The Washington Post on 15 March. Tod Lindberg formerly of The Washington Times wrote in his column of 23 May, 2000, "Keep peace in Kosovo - Don't bring the boys home yet." He stated in his opinion piece, "I explained in this space last week why I thought Byrd-Warner was a bad idea." The defeated Byrd-Warner amendment would have simply required the president to go before Congress last July to justify why our troops should remain in Kosovo. Considering our kids are today's target of ethnic Albanians and the KLA, whom they were sent there to protect, I ask Mr. Lindberg, "Is NOW the right time to bring our boys home?" And does he intend to leave the "girls" there when the "boys" do get to come home?

The outrage is that we have handed over Serbia's Jerusalem, the seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church, to a bunch of KLA narco-terrorists who have been turned into heroes by commentators such as Helle Bering, editorial page editor of The Washington Times, who, on 18 August 1999, glowingly wrote of "My dinner with the KLA, somewhere outside Budapest." Perhaps Ms. Bering should be judged by the company she keeps. But the blame game continues. In TWT of 2 January, 2001, an editorial once again lays all the blame for the tragic events in the Balkans solely on one man, "Put Milosevic on trial," without laying any of the blame on Franjo Tudjman, former president of Croatia, who would have been indicted by the UN war crimes tribunal in The Hague if he were still alive, according to an AFP report of 8 November, 2000. Nor does it mention the role of Bosnian Muslim president, Alija Izetbegovic, about whom a Deutsche Presse Agentur dispatch of June 6, 1996 wrote, "For the first time, a senior U.N. official has admitted the existence of a secret U.N. report that blames the Bosnian Moslems for the February 1994 massacre of Moslems at a Sarajevo [Markale] market, the excuse the US used to bomb the Bosnian Serbs." The report continues that the Moslems fired on their own people "in order to create international sympathy and get the West to fight on their side against the Serbs." Sounds like a war crime to me.

The Washington Times does not stand alone guilty in the dismembering of a sovereign nation. We can go back as far as 1992 when James Baker, former Secretary of State wrote in his book, The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, war and peace, 1889-1992, "...After the meeting, I had Larry Eagleburger take Silajdzic [Bosnian Foreign Minister] to see the EC troika political directors (who happened to be visiting the Department) and asked Margaret Tutwiler to talk to the

Foreign Minister about the importance of using Western mass media to build support in Europe and North America for the Bosnian cause. I also had her talk to her contacts at the four television networks, the 'Washington Post,' and the 'New York Times' to try to get more attention focused on the story (pg. 643-644)." In other words, we had already taken sides and the Serbs never had a chance.

In many ways I regret the extensive criticisms I have of The Washington Times regarding its Balkan policy. On many other issues, The Washington Times is the only major newspaper that counters the liberal slant of the major print and broadcast media. However, I cannot remain silent to the fact that this misrepresentation has done a disservice not only to innocent victims, but a disservice to its readers. But even more curious is the question of what motivates so many journalists to side with such gangsters? If I know the truth, surely, they must know it also. However, as Adolf Hitler said in 1939, "The great masses of people will more easily fall victims to a big lie than to a smaller one."

As a career military officer's wife, Stella Jatras has traveled widely and has lived in many foreign countries where she not only learned about other cultures but became very knowledgeable regarding world affairs and world politics. Stella Jatras lived in Moscow for two years where her husband, George, was the Senior Air Attaché, and while there, worked in the Political Section of the US Embassy. Stella has also lived in Germany, Greece and Saudi Arabia. Her travels took her to over twenty countries. She is the author of the "Open Letter to General Michael Short," which antiwar.com carried on 11/3/99, and "From Camp Swampy to Camp Bondsteel!" on 4/6/00, "Srebrenica - Code word to Silence Critics of US Policy in the Balkans, on 1/8/00, and "If It's Good Enough for Serbia's Goose, Why Not for Croatia's Gander?" on 12/7/00

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Complete Analysis of the Incident at Racak on Jan. 15, 1999

by Chris Soda

The "Moral High Ground;" Introduction

This is the beginning of a series on the so-called Racak atrocities. Predrag Tosic and myself are introducing new features to our ever-growing list of readers at Yugoslavia Info, including special reports such as this and as well interviews with key players/commentators whose expertise will help all of us better understand the nature of NATO's aggression in the Balkans.

For anyone who has read the forwards/commentary on the Yugoslavia Info site, it is apparent that both Predrag and myself question both the legality of the NATO aggression in the Balkans as well as its "humanitarian" agenda. In particular, many Western news agencies are selectively distributing both false and misleading "coverage" on the Balkans to their respective markets; while not commenting on the reasons for such actions, it is nonetheless apparent that much of this type of "coverage" is based in countries with NATO membership.

For most readers of Western news services, Racak has become synonymous with "atrocities"; so has "Serb", so has "Milosevic"; Albanians are portrayed as "victims" of the "Serbs", etc. I had heard all of this, as well as the opinions of those who thought the incident at Racak on Jan 15/99 was not a "crime against humanity"; but there were a few things I was sure of before embarking on this particular study: (a) The incident at Racak on Jan 15/99 is the only specific, dated charge in the ICTY indictment of Milosevic and four of his aides that is listed as occurring before the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia, and (b) The incident at Racak is the most specifically-mentioned example quoted by both Western politicians and by the Western news agencies of NATO countries, as the "prime example" of Yugoslavian "atrocities" against Albanians which necessitated the NATO bombing campaign.

There is nothing I have found anywhere to justify the NATO bombing campaign on legal grounds; even many quoted supporters of the aggression against Yugoslavia acknowledge the illegality of the strikes (or say nothing at all in this regard - for instance, read: most Canadian parliamentarians) but insist that intervention was necessary on "humanitarian" grounds. And the incident at Racak is apparently the "ace" up the sleeve of the ICTY as well - despite all the much-touted acts of "ethnic cleansing," "atrocities," "crimes against humanity" etc supposedly perpetrated by the Yugoslav government before Mar. 24/99, this particular charge must be seen by the international court as being the most "iron-clad" and easiest to prosecute. It is the first specifically-dated charge in the indictment handed down and is crucial to the NATO-justification school of necessity in initiating these attacks.

Everything stated in this report has been corroborated at least once over, and usually more than once. There are some problems which I'll state at the outset: although I have the comments and positions of many of the actual forensic experts who performed studies on the bodies, I cannot lay my hands on the actual forensic reports. No copies were to be found at the OSCE, University of Pristina, University of Helsinki, University of Nis, NATO, UN, EU or Government of Yugoslavia websites - or anywhere else that I've looked. This absence precludes a vital cross-reference to any definitive Racak study; however, as I say the input of the actual medical staff involved is a matter of public record and was heavily used in segments of this upcoming report. Secondly, I have received no answer from my e-mails to various institutions requesting contact with the medical staff studying the bodies found at Racak. If I ever do hear back in regards to this, I would like to give any or all of them equal time on this site to comment.

Sources used in this report were all taken from the Internet; they are numerous and will be listed at the end of the report.

As I say, the incidents at Racak on Jan 15/99 are crucial to both the whole NATO-justification for bombing, and the whole ICTY indictment. If the incidents which occurred at Racak really were atrocities perpetrated by the Yugoslav government, then NATO will continue to use this to claim the "moral high ground" in past, present, and future actions in the Balkans; as well, the legitimacy of internationally - judging the leaders and actions of sovereign states will be seen as progress in the pursuit of "justice".

If, on the other hand, the incidents at Racak were not atrocities perpetrated by the Yugoslav government, the NATO-bombers' "house of cards" claiming moral legitimacy falls apart; as well, any past, present, and future actions by NATO in the region will be severely scrutinized for hidden agendas. And if the incidents at Racak on Jan 15/99 are shown not to be atrocities, then the whole question of self-claimed objective international legalities will be shown to be just another link in the chain of selective, biased judgment fueling the same hidden agendas.

The I.C.T.Y. Indictment

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) is an entity established by the UN Security Council in 1993 (Resolution # 827); under the ICTY mandate from the UN, four major types of offences can be prosecuted against individuals for the following acts within the territory of the former Yugoslavia:

- (1) Grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions (Article 2)
- (2) Violations of the laws or customs of war (Article 3)
- (3) Genocide (Article 4)
- (4) Crimes against humanity (Article 5)

I share the opinion of many that the UN has no legal or moral authority to selectively pass judgment on anyone, nor to establish institutions of the same. As long as a so-called "world body" is in fact ruled by a veto-wielding minority, it cannot claim that any of its pronouncements are democratic, representative, or capable of justice. Having said that, the ICTY nonetheless is a vital part of the war waged against Yugoslavia since 1991 (and possibly even earlier) and the beginning of UN sanctions; with an ever-increasing budget, from \$276,000 (all figures US) in 1993 to over \$94,000,000 as of June 1999, this "legal" weapon wields considerable power and respect (unfortunately). The incidents which occurred at Racak as detailed in the ICTY indictment should be analyzed not only in an objective international court of law (still waiting for this one) but in the court of public opinion as well; as I said in Part 1, the legitimacy of the ICTY as a capable and fair arbiter of right and wrong rests with the successful prosecution of those which the ICTY prosecutor (up until recently this was Louise Arbour of Canada) has deemed responsible for what she terms as a Yugoslav-government directed "atrocities" in this village; as well, the constant stream of propaganda against Serbs in general and Milosevic in particular leading up to the so-called "justification" of the NATO air strikes rests with this particular charge.

The full text of the indictment can be found at various Internet sources; I have used parts of the copy from the Jurist Network at <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/indict.htm>

The ICTY indictment is dated May 22 1999 and charges Slobodan Milosevic, Milan Milutinovic, Nikola Sainovic, Dragoljub Ojdanic and Vlatko Stojiljkovic with, amongst others, the following:

Under "Charges": Crimes Against Humanity and Violations of the Laws or Customs of War;

(90) Beginning in Jan 1999.... [the five accused]planned, instigated, ordered, committed, or otherwise aided and abetted in a campaign of terror and violence directed at Kosovo Albanian citizens living in Kosovo in the FRY. [Federal Republic of Yugoslavia]

(98)a On or about 15 January 1999 in the early morning hours the village of Racak... was attacked by forces of the FRY and Serbia. After shelling by... [Yugoslavian gov't forces] ...the Serb police entered the village later in the morning and began conducting house-to-house searches. Villagers, who attempted to flee from the Serb police, were shot throughout [Racak]. A group of approximately 25 men attempted to hide in a building, but were discovered by the Serb police. They were beaten and then were removed to a nearby hill, where the policemen shot and killed them...

The ICTY indictment also refers to Racak in (28): In one such incident on Jan 15, 1999, 45 unarmed Kosovo Albanians were murdered in the village of Racak....

Under the ICTY indictment, under General Allegations(82): All acts and omissions charged as crimes against humanity were part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against the Kosovo Albanian civilian population of Kosovo in the FRY.

General Analysis of the I.C.T.Y. Indictment

General Analysis: The Numbers Game.

This is a general analysis of the ICTY indictment of May 22 1999 charging Milosevic and four others with crimes against humanity, violations of the laws and customs of war, etc.

Before moving directly to the Racak charges, there are other points in the ICTY indictment worth showing as a reference to the cynical nature of these allegations.

In the preamble to the specific charges, there are constant references to the "Autonomous Province of Kosovo"; right away, when I read this, I was suspicious: how could a so-called legal body refer to Kosovo as an "autonomous province" on May 22/99, the date of the ICTY indictment? Autonomy for Kosovo was the main topic at Rambouillet, but there was never any final agreement on the status of Kosovo. There was no legal establishment of autonomy for Kosovo; that the ICTY would refer to Kosovo as such is wrong and casts doubt on its' subsequent statements.

Under (90) in the ICTY indictment, we have this: "Beginning in January 1999... [the 5 accused] .. planned, instigated, ordered, committed, or otherwise aided and abetted in a campaign of terror and violence directed at Kosovo Albanian civilians living in Kosovo in the FRY..."

Again, without offering proof, the ICTY indictment alleges "ethnic cleansing"; the two problems I have with this statement are: (a) the UN states approximately 700,000 Albanians fled Kosovo during the 11 weeks of NATO bombing, but how did these same 700,000 avoid the so-called "ethnic cleansers" for the 11 weeks leading up to the bombing? These 700,000 lived in their homes, not in hiding, in Kosovo and were untouched by the Yugoslav government before March 24/99- hardly victims of any government-sponsored "ethnic cleansing", as the indictment alleges. (b) The obvious point is that if this "ethnic cleansing" was done to "...ensure continued Serbian control over ...[Kosovo]..." (in #91 of the indictment), then surely Milosevic and the other accused would have moved the approximately 1.5 million Serbian refugees from Croatia, Bosnia, etc, currently in Yugoslavia into permanent residence in Kosovo as some sort of resettlement program. With 700,000 Albanians still able to flee their homes in Kosovo, it is very likely that "continued Serbian control by means of ethnic cleansing" was not an issue - at least not on May 22/99, the date of this indictment.

I'm sure readers will find many such "facts" in this indictment; I've only listed a few to show the political nature of this ICTY document. This UN-sponsored attack on Yugoslav leaders is neither factual nor credible with even the most perfunctory glance at its contents - including the Racak incident:

(98)a "On or about 15 January 1999 in the early morning hours the village of Racak... was attacked by forces of the FRY and Serbia. After shelling by... [gov't/Yugo] units, the Serb police entered the village later in the morning and began conducting house-to-house searches. Villagers, who attempted to flee from the Serb police, were shot throughout the village. A group of approximately 25 men attempted to hide in a building, but were discovered by the Serb police. They were beaten and then removed to a nearby hill, where the policemen shot and killed them..."

"...a group of 25 men...": A group of 25 men attempted to flee the Serb police, leaving their wives, children, family relatives, etc behind? And all 25 attempted to hide in the same building? And the building wasn't the mosque in Racak, the one place you would surely take yourself and your family if you really were looking for security. Shells falling all around you, police going door-to- door, and all 25 of you run to the same place and leave all your loved ones behind?

Depending on the source, I've read that the population of Racak in Jan 1999 was anywhere from 400 to 1400 inhabitants. Even using the minimum number of 400, there were surely more than 43 males in Racak on Jan 15, 1999. Why were only these 43 males "singled out", as the ICTY indictment alleges? (ICTY indictment lists 43 males and 2 females as victims of Yugoslav gov't atrocities at Racak in the specific charges against Milosevic, et al).

The ICTY charges allege the village of Racak was attacked by Yugoslav government shelling; and yet, as you will see in future sections of this analysis, there is not one civilian casualty listed as dying in their home. Rather odd that "indiscriminate" shelling against a surprised, unwarned population should produce not even one death.....

If you will notice, in the details of the ICTY charges re: Racak, there is not the "customary" allegation that the "Serbs" separated the women and children from the males; apparently, they had already separated themselves.....

One last point in this section of the report: if you check the list of alleged civilian "victims" in the ICTY indictment, you will notice a curious fact: the list of 45 is categorized by name, approximate age, and sex. This indictment was made public on May 22/99, more than 4 months after the alleged atrocities occurred; and after this much time for Louise Arbour to investigate, her team could only come up with half of the approximate ages - 23 of the 45 listed in the indictment have no approximate age, which seems inconceivable given that all 45 have names and supposedly were ordinary residents of the village. The ICTY could find no one in Racak to give an approximation of age for over half of the alleged victims? Surely, someone must have known the roundabout ages of these people. For instance, in the ICTY listing of the next four charges, all having dates of occurrence after March 24, the start of NATO bombing, (alleging atrocities at Bela Crkva, Velika Krusa, Dakovica, and Crkolez), we find a list of about 185 alleged victims, with approximately 176 with full names, approximate ages, and sex. Obviously, a full ICTY investigation could not have occurred during the NATO bombs, and yet only 9 of 185 post-NATO bombing "atrocious" victims could not be positively recorded with approximate ages.

The Forensic Reports - Helena Ranta Part A:

In this section, we'll see the nature of the EU forensic evidence along with the public comments of the lead pathologist involved in this report, Dr. Helena Ranta. As always, read the information carefully and see if you feel that the forensic evidence detailed in the EU report justifies a claim of an atrocity at Racak.

Subsequent reports on this site will detail witness reports, other forensic-evidence comments by those involved in the autopsies, etc: this edition will only focus on the comments of the nature of the forensic evidence presented to the EU by the pathologists themselves. As I stated in the introduction a few days ago, there was no record of either the actual Ranta forensic results, nor a record of the Yugoslav/Belarus forensic results, that I could find on the Internet.

Dr. Helena Ranta and her team of pathologists were already in Yugoslavia when the incident occurred at Racak; she was there to investigate the alleged atrocity scenes at six other locales, three of which were supposed to contain the remains of slaughtered Serb civilians, and three other sites which supposedly contained the remains of non-Serb civilians. When she finally did arrive in Pristina to join two other teams of pathologists headed by Dr. Sasa Dobricanin (Yugoslavia) and Dr. Vladimir Kuzmicov (Belarus), 16 bodies had already been autopsied by the Dobricanin/Kuzmicov teams. In her written statement presented at a press conference on March 17/99 (one week before NATO bombing began and one week after the release of the Dobricanin/Kuzmicov forensic report by Serbian State Prosecutor Dragisa Krsmanovic) coinciding with the release of her forensic report, Ranta agreed that "...with respect to these [16] corpses, the EU experts... [could] ...verify that the work [by Dobricanin/Kuzmicov et al.] had been done properly..."

In her statement, Ranta also comments on the fact that 40 bodies were investigated by the various teams in Pristina. (not 45 as detailed in the subsequent ICTY indictment of Milosevic and four of his aides) - again, the numbers tossed around in regards the incident at Racak Jan 15/99 vary wildly from source to source: one full week after this so-called "atrocity", OSCE was quoted as claiming 37 non-combatants were found dead, the US 45 non-combatants, and some Albanian sources 51 non-combatants. So we have numbers of 37, 40, 45, and 51; I don't think the variations are a question of mathematical ability. This is one of many indications of tampering at the scene before the securing of the site by Yugoslav investigators, one of many examples of an ongoing theme in the so-called "investigations" of Yugoslav gov't "atrocities"; some recent examples of this include the massacre of 14 Serbs in Kosovo which were "investigated" by a team of experts which did not include even one Yugoslav gov't pathologist. As well, in July/99 KFOR had information on a mass grave containing Serb civilians at Gnjilane, which they waited one month to disclose publicly.

Ranta also claimed in her statement that the circumstances of death of the 40 bodies had to be relied upon from OSCE and EU observers, as well as the media; this comment baffles me for two reasons. First, Ranta apparently made no attempt to consult with the Yugoslavian government as to their version of events- either with the Yugoslav army and/or with the Yugoslav police, both of which took part in the operation. Secondly, ALL observers at the scene during the incident at Racak describe a battle between the KLA and the Yugoslav forces; this includes the written press, TV journalists who filmed the operation, and OSCE observers as well. NO ONE from this group is on record as describing a "massacre" as having taken place.

Dr. Ranta's observation in her written statement that "...there were no indications that the people... [autopsied were] ...other than unarmed civilians..." is all the more puzzling given the fact that TV cameras (from AP news services), OSCE, print media, etc. at Racak on the day and times in question, all detail the operation of a police encirclement of KLA positions and a subsequent gunfight initiated by the KLA themselves, who fired first. More on this in later in the report; for now, I'm raising these facts to show that if Ranta did indeed rely on all these witnesses, why is her conclusion that the dead were "unarmed civilians" the exact opposite conclusion of all the filmed, written, and publicly proclaimed records/comments of all the neutral witnesses? (and other pathologists as well)

Not once in her statement does Ranta make a reference to the fact that OSCE observers were witnessing the events at Racak, as were television cameras and print media. Also not mentioned in the Ranta report is the fact that these observers were at Racak because they all had been INVITED BY THE YUGOSLAV POLICE THEMSELVES a few hours before the operation began.

I mention all this because the point is that any "moral high ground" claimed by NATO countries and their bombers would have been sorely tested had Western media chose to report with authority just this one fact of an invitation by the Yugoslav police forces- who would have believed in a government atrocity at Racak had this fact of an invitation-originally denied by OSCE - been publicized by most of the Western press? (some French media and Yugoslav media ran reports of this; I could find not even one mention of this invite in any mainstream North American newspaper before the NATO bombing). Ranta was aware of the invitation, but chose not to mention this in her statement. Do you think NATO would have bombed on March 24 had they been confronted with embarrassing questions regarding an invitation to a massacre by the killers themselves?

There are other points in the Ranta statement that are puzzling as well. For instance, she writes that to search for gunshot residue (GSR) on the 40 bodies, the best method available is to use a Scanning Electron Microscope with an Energy Dispersive X-Ray analyzer (SEM/EDX); test samples on the bodies Ranta claims she investigated with this method proved negative, which weighed heavily in her estimation leaning towards the dead bodies found at Racak being non-combatants.

When I checked SEM/EDX under a simple Netscape search, I found the following:

DETECTION OF GUNSHOT RESIDUE, FORENSIC PATHOLOGY INDEX, NETSCAPE

"For these methods [SEM/EDX], samples must be obtained from the skin surfaces of a victim AT THE SCENE [capitals/brackets mine]. Delay in obtaining residues, movement [of bodies], or washing ...will diminish or DESTROY gunshot residues..."

The test samples by Ranta were not obtained from the bodies at the scene in Racak; Ranta did not start analyzing the bodies until 6 days after they had died; the bodies, as Ranta herself points out in her statement, were both moved and turned over; also, the shoes of some of the bodies had been removed and all 40 bodies were only recovered by the Yugoslavs after others had assembled and subsequently displayed the dead in the mosque at Racak. There is every likelihood that the bodies were washed before public display as well.

How could the method used by Ranta to detect gunshot residue have any validity? Every necessary precondition for the successful usage of the SEM/EDX on the bodies was violated before the tests could even be conducted by this method. And Ranta was aware of this; in fact she mentions all of them in her statement!

This is "evidence" for the ICTY?

There are also these simple comments from the same Netscape page:

"A rifle or shotgun may not deposit GSR on hands". "Determination of the range [distance between killer and victim] may be particularly difficult [to

ascertain]."

Ranta also states that "...medicolegal investigations [such as scientific analysis of bodies] cannot give a conclusive answer to the question whether there was [in fact] a battle [between the police and insurgents]...", but she leans towards the victims being non-combatants in part because "...no ammunition was found in the pockets" of the bodies she investigated. However, she leaves out the fact that, in front of TV cameras, OSCE observers, and the press, the Yugoslav police found, after just a few hours of searching, the following items in Racak on Jan 15/99:

Le Figaro, Jan 23/99: 1 12.7mm heavy artillery gun, 2 hand-held artillery pieces, 2 sniper rifles, and about 30 Chinese-made Kalashnikov rifles.

Srpska Mreza site: 1 12.7mm Browning heavy artillery piece, 2 hand-held artillery pieces, 36 automatic rifles, 2 sniper rifles, ammunition, hand grenades, radio transmitters etc.

Most other press detailings approximate the same numbers as the two sources I've given for examples.

Also absent from Ranta's reported statement is any indication that Racak was indeed a KLA stronghold, with this terrorist group having a base near the power plant in Racak. If Ranta really used "the media", as she says, to make some of her determinations, then why was "no ammunition in the pockets" used by her in determining that the victims were probably non-combatants, but that AP film footage, OSCE observers at the scene at during the fighting, police reports, Racak as a KLA center, and the confiscation of huge amounts of artillery at such a small village in just a few short hours, not used?

Note that the EU, and the University of Helsinki, have both labeled Ms. Ranta's comments made public Mar 17/99 comments as her personal opinion; Ms. Ranta herself states in the report that she cannot conclusively show a "massacre" had in fact occurred.

My question is this: what did NATO find out about Racak after March 17 (the date of the EU release of the Ranta report) and before March 19 (the day OSCE withdrew its observers from Yugoslavia) to prepare for its bombing of 2000 civilians starting on March 24?

Part B:

One of the more obvious points in the Ranta report is that there is no mention of a return to the "crime" scene by the Ranta team. I find this perplexing because Ms. Ranta made much of the fact that there was no evidence she could find to support the theory, and the comments of many of the interviewed neutral witnesses, that most of these 40 dead could have been KLA fighters deployed against government forces on Jan 15/99 in Racak.

Also, the EU commissioned Dr. Ranta and her team to do the study on the bodies found at Racak; OSCE itself, which had asked the EU for assistance in the forensics study of the bodies, stated that there were only 37 bodies. Numbers of bodies ranged from 22 to 51 depending on who was doing the public commenting; this alone should have been a warning to Ranta that something about this so-called "crime" scene was not right, and that at least one exploratory trip to Racak was necessary.

Dr. Ranta herself comments in her report on "body count" discrepancies, yet somehow did not feel the necessity for a visit to the area in which the bodies she autopsied were supposedly found.

As well, Ms. Ranta in her March 17/99 statement on her findings laments the fact that there was no "chain of custody" from the site of the bodies to EU hands; this, coupled with Ms. Ranta's observations that many of the bodies had been moved and/or turned over should have lead her and the rest of her team to at least acknowledge that gunshot powder residue may have been removed from the bodies autopsied by the simple fact that these bodies were repeatedly handled before she and her team could analyze them. In her statement one week before NATO attacks on Yugoslavia, there is no mention of this possibility - a possibility at least as likely as her conclusion that these 40 dead appeared to be non-combatants, and a possibility which would fit the known circumstances at Racak on the day in question.

The Ranta statement of her teams' forensic findings also mentions that the "victims" (her words - again contradictory; how could Ms. Ranta not be sure, as she says in her statement, that there was a massacre at Racak and yet call these people victims?) wore several warm jackets and pullovers - entirely consistent with people who have been living/operating in outdoor conditions, but hardly consistent with "victims" having just been pulled from their homes and summarily executed. The Ranta statement also points out that no ammunition was found in the pockets of the dead, and that in her opinion it would have been very unlikely that clothing could have been switched (i.e. from KLA uniforms to civilian clothing to fabricate an atrocity site) because of the way in which the entry holes of the bullets lined up as well as her study of the coagulated blood of the bodies.

Again, this is very strange because she does not consider the possibility that any KLA uniforms worn over these several layers of clothing could have been removed - even though she found that most if not all of the bodies had been moved and their positions after death altered in some way. This is entirely possible given the known circumstances of both the bodies and the events at Racak on Jan 15/99; the bullet holes between the clothing and the bodies would still line up, and the results of her teams' study of the coagulated blood would just as easily be consistent with uniformed bodies as without.

Another not-mentioned in her report, but well-known fact, about gunshot residue, is that even repeated firing of a weapon does not always produce any traces on the hands of the shooter; according to "Firearms Investigation Identification and Evidence" (Hatcher, Jury, and Weller):

"...the fact that in a great many instances one may fire a revolver or pistol without leaving any trace of gunpowder on the hand which may be detected by this test." (for nitrates, a component in gunpowder).

Again, no mention of this in her report that leans towards "non-combatants" as the probable status of the dead bodies she and her team analyzed.

As stated, Ms. Ranta decries the use of the paraffin test in gunshot residue tracing in her report, instead relying on the SEM/EDX method for determining "metallic content", as she puts it. This is simply a misleading statement for at least three reasons; first, the Dobricanin/Kuzmicov analysis did not include a paraffin test, as Dr. Dobricanin himself has stated. Secondly, "metallic content", as Ranta puts it, should include tests not only for nitrates, but for barium and antimony as well - unlike nitrates, two other components found often in gunpowder but rarely found otherwise in the environment. No mention of the fact that the paraffin method of testing for gunshot residue is almost universally used, when applied, for the detection of nitrates only, but not for either barium or antimony. And thirdly, Ranta states that when SEM/EDX test results were finalized by her team, the determination of metallic content proved "negative" for the collection of nitrates from the hands of the dead bodies at Racak.

THIS IS ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE; nitrates are a very common compound found in laundry products, cigarettes, fertilizer, some food, etc etc - and in a rural community such as Racak, all of these were in abundance and should have been detected. Given that nitrates are a common component of gunpowder, if Ranta did in fact find nitrates on the bodies, how could she exclude the possibility that the dead were fighters? And how is it possible not to find nitrates in your collection of "metallic content" given the known circumstances and way of life for those living in Racak?

Another telling point is that from the first moment that the bodies were being autopsied in Pristina, at least 2 OSCE observers were present at all times, even before the arrival of the Ranta team. At no time did any of the Belorussian or Yugoslav or subsequent EU pathologists have access to the bodies in question alone; besides the OSCE observers, all of the pathological procedures were filmed and photographed; Ranta herself took 3000 photographs and ten hours of video footage. If all procedures and methods were agreed upon, as Ranta states, and if the entire autopsy scene was constantly secured and recorded, then all parties must have found the same things together using the same methods. There would be no chance for anyone to add or subtract any physical evidence. How do 40 bodies NOT show traces of nitrates, at the very least, when they have been exposed to them their entire lives? And how do 37 of these same bodies show gunshot residue in the reports of two other forensic teams?

Also not mentioned in the Ranta statement are numerous other telling signs of a non-massacre:

(a) The 40 bodies analyzed were killed by gunshots FROM DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS; hardly the kind of thing one would expect from the rounding up of males and their subsequent "executions". Ranta claims in her report that the bodies were "most likely" shot where found. More than 20 were "found" in a ditch on the outskirts of Racak nearby KLA entrenchments and positions on the day of the Yugoslav police operation. How do you round up and execute 20+ people in a ditch near enemy positions and under constant mortar/rifle fire? From different directions? These determinations were made by both the Dobricanin and Kuzmicov teams in conjunction with Helena Ranta and her experts as well.

(b) All the dead bodies analyzed were killed by firearms shot from various distances, including the group of approx. 20 bodies found near a ditch (hardly a sign of an execution). This conclusion was reached by both Dobricanin and Kuzmicov and their respective teams of pathologists - and the methods used by them to determine this was in fact stated by Ranta in her statement Mar 17/99. To quote:

"After a demonstration autopsy, all agreed upon common methods and procedures."

Again, hardly a sign that 20+ bodies were "massacred" (a term much used by many Western governments and NATO to describe the events at Racak) - does anyone believe that more than 20 men just happened to leave their wives and children and relatives behind during an eight-hour battle, with mortars and gunfire exploding practically nonstop, to seek refuge, unarmed, in one building, (as the ICTY indictment of Milosevic and four others stipulates) only to be lined up in a ditch under heavy enemy fire and executed at a distance from different directions?

(c) Many KLA fighters do not wear identifiable uniforms and in fact wear civilian clothing during their "operations"; Ms. Ranta knew this, but instead chose in her report only to state that the bodies bore no identifying badges or insignias. I find that comment most disturbing because in her statement Ranta claims that this also led to her conclusion that the bodies autopsied from Racak were "most likely" unarmed civilians; while Dr. Ranta states that she and her team relied exclusively on reports from both OSCE and the EU in determining the circumstances of death for those bodies. She has somehow left out of her report any knowledge or information on non-uniformed fighters the head of OSCE in Yugoslavia at the time, William Walker, made previously to Representative Joseph Moakley, D/Mass.

"Anyone can get uniforms. The fact that they [the killers] were dressed in military uniforms was not proof that they are military." (Wash Post Mar 21/93)

Or that if they are not dressed in uniforms... they might still be armed combatants.

(d) Lastly, not mentioned in the Ranta statement on her findings is that despite the fact that she was hired by the EU to do an objective pathological report in conjunction with Dr. Dobricanin and Dr. Kuzmicov, and despite the fact that Jan 22/99 was THE FIRST DAY RANTA BEGAN HER WORK IN RELATION TO RACAK, we have the following: both of which Ranta was aware of and both of which are missing from her statement one week before NATO bombing:

From the EU website: Statement by EU Presidency, Brussels, JANUARY 20, 1999

"The political committee reviewed recent developments on Kosovo. It concluded: The EU condemns the recent massacre in Racak in the strongest possible terms. Belgrade's response to the massacre is totally inadequate...."

Belgrade's "response" of course, was to try and recover the bodies for forensic examination.

Here we have the conclusion-massacre- being forwarded before Ranta even looked at one body.

Also from the EU website, a report dated barely 3 days into the EU pathologists' analysis also mentions a discussion on Kosovo with EU Special Envoy Ambassador Petritsch (yes, this is the same Petritsch of Rambouillet "fame") and the outrage the European Union expresses concerning the "massacre" at Racak. In this 2158th Council Meeting, General Affairs, Brussels, the discussion related the EU "position" on Racak et al., put forth to Slobodan Milosevic in a letter from the President of the Council, along with a list of demands... (a mini-Rambouillet).

In conclusion, we have the EU which has already stated its conclusions on Racak as a "massacre" scene, deploying Helena Ranta and her team of pathologists to conduct an impartial forensic report. Despite stating that all pathologists involved, including those headed by both Dr Dobricanin and Dr Kuzmicov, agreed on all methods and procedures used in the autopsies, Dr Ranta concludes results opposite of findings from both Dobricanin and Kuzmicov teams. Dr. Ranta, despite the contradictory body counts which she acknowledges, and the contradictory claims as to the positions and locations of these bodies, makes no attempt to return to the so-called "crime" scene to advance further investigations. (ie blood on the ground, footprints, and their direction, etc). Dr. Ranta, despite claiming in her statement many instances in which a SEM/EDX test would not have validity, concludes that the bodies autopsied appeared to be "non-combatants", based largely on these tests. Dr. Ranta, in her statement, decries the validity of paraffin testing for gunshot residue despite the fact that paraffin testing was not even used by ANY of the pathologists involved. Dr. Ranta, in her statement on her findings, fails to mention one week before NATO bombs fell on Yugoslavia, that film crews, print media, and OSCE observers all reported a battle between the KLA and Yugoslav gov't forces, and that not one of this group present at Racak on Jan 15/99 saw anything remotely approaching what many, including her own employers at the time, have called a "massacre" or an "atrocious" - despite the fact that Dr. Ranta claims to have exclusively relied on OSCE, EU, and media reports as to the place and circumstances of death of these bodies. Dr. Ranta in her statement Mar. 17/99 also opines that "massacre" as a forensic conclusion is not possible, yet concludes that the 40 bodies found at Racak were victims, "probably" non-combatants, mentioning their lack of insignias and badges, despite having in her possession knowledge of a long gunbattle between the KLA and Yugoslav security forces, in which, from a very small town, Dr. Ranta found it unnecessary in her comments to acknowledge the huge amounts of weaponry that was confiscated, all or a part of which could have been used by any of the subsequently killed villagers against these security forces.

Finally, Dr. Ranta makes no mention of the fact that the bodies were shot dead from different directions near KLA positions and offers no explanation as to how many other pathologists using the same methods and procedures for evidence-collecting as she and her team used, and approved of, could in fact declare most of those autopsied were armed combatants, recently firing their weapons, and subsequently killed in battle.

The EU report comments of pathologist Helena Ranta is located at:
<http://www.usia.gov/regional/eur/balkans/kosovo/texts/racak.htm>

<http://www.balkanpeacc.org/racak/rck01.shtml>

Other Forensic Studies

So far, these editions on the Racak charges by the ICTY against Milosevic et al have dealt with the nature of both the indictment and the forensic report comments by Dr. Helena Ranta who led the EU team in the study of the bodies recovered from Racak; a week after the Mar 17 disclosure of Ranta's findings, NATO began bombing Yugoslavia.

Dr. Dobricanin from the Institute for Forensic Medicine in Pristina was also part of the medical team commissioned by Yugoslav investigating judge Danica Marinkovic, as was Dr. Kuzmicov from Belarus; together they led a team of experts examining the Racak bodies; the first 16 bodies were studied by the Dobricanin/Kuzmicov examiners, while the last 24 bodies were studied by all the pathologists including those headed by Dr. Ranta.

Dr. Dobricanin has made the point in various interviews that OSCE observers were always present during the autopsies, constantly videotaping, even before the arrival of the Ranta team on Jan 22/99. Dr. Ranta herself has confirmed that the forensic work of the teams doing the study of the first 16 bodies analyzed was done properly. Drs. Dobricanin, Kuzmicov, and Ranta have all confirmed in various statements that all pathologists agreed to common methods and procedures for their forensic studies.

The findings of the Dobricanin/Kuzmicov teams re the bodies recovered from Racak were made public March 10/99 by Serbian State Prosecutor Ms. Dragisa Krstanovic. According to this report, the Dobricanin/Kuzmicov teams detected nitrates (one of the components of gunpowder, but also one of the components of many everyday items such as tobacco, laundry soap, etc) on 37 out of the 40 bodies they analyzed. The report found no mutilation of the bodies either before or after their deaths; all injuries were from weapons fired from various distances, and no injuries were discerned from weapons discharged at close range. The Yugoslav forces at Racak on Jan 15/99, were responding to fire from KLA positions.

This is at great variance to the Ranta team comments as to their findings. Before we go any further, it should be noted that some may feel that the Dr. Dobricanin and Dr. Kuzmicov-led teams had intentionally set out to "find" evidence in support of the dead bodies being either combatants and/or caught between either KLA-or-Yugoslav gunfire; tensions at the time were heightened in lieu of the forensic findings- just days after the discovery of the bodies at Racak, we have these comments:

From Louise Arbour: "Now is the time for action." From Javier Solana: "A devastating massacre of Albanian civilians..." From William Walker (head of OSCE): "I can describe what I saw as a massacre."

In addition, 400 NATO aircraft were put on alert. Despite this, the credentials of both the Dobricanin and Kuzmicov teams, comprised of experts from Nis, Novi Sad, and Belgrade amongst others, cannot be questioned. Dr. Ranta herself confirms this by noting the level of co-operation and professionalism she and her team experienced in Pristina while helping to study the Racak bodies; as well Dobricanin is not intimidated by his employers nor his president. It was Dr. Dobricanin who signed a death certificate released April 21 1995 by the Institute for Forensic Medicine in Pristina, confirming that Sabit Islam Vlahia (born 1940) had died a violent death while in Yugoslav police custody (Mors Violente), confirming what ethnic Albanian doctors, Vlahia's relatives, and others had suspected. Mr. Vlahia had been arrested December 18 1994 in regards to arms possession.

It does not appear that Dr. Dobricanin would include anyone in his team of pathologists that would fabricate information for anyone, and is obviously not afraid of doing his job and publishing his findings.

Dr. Dobricanin has been adamant in his public statements and in his findings; no massacre, no "execution-style" wounds (made from a killer while their victim is on his/her knees), no blindfolding, no binding of the bodies at the wrist at the times of death, all injuries from a distance and resulting from firearms, no pattern in the bodies of entry/exit wounds (i.e. all died from gunshots from different directions as well), no mutilation of the bodies before or after death (many of the pathologists and/or their respective governments had, before full examinations of the bodies, speculated that some tampering with the bodies had occurred before analysis; both Ranta, Dobricanin, and Kuzmicov concur that other than the wounds which caused death, only biting and tearing from small animals were discovered on the bodies), no torturing of the found bodies at Racak had occurred before death, etc etc.

A typical quote from Dr. Dobricanin (during the first stage of analysis): "Not a single body bears any sign of execution....the bodies were not massacred..." (BBC, Fri Jan 22/99)

Earlier in the report I have mentioned that I have not been able to use the actual forensic reports of any of the pathologists (where are they?); however, Dr. Dobricanin has seen the final Ranta report and comments that Ranta's opinion that the dead bodies were probably non-combatants WAS NOT FOUND IN HIS COPY OF HER REPORT.

As to the method of testing, Dr. Dobricanin has been quoted more than once as saying that his team, nor the team of Dr. Kuzmicov (nor the team of Ranta, as she herself confirms in her comments on the forensic analysis done by her team), removed powder particles with the "paraffin" method; rather they used a foil followed by a chemical analysis of the contents on the foil - a method that has been used all over the world for a number of years, according to Dobricanin. Because of this, Dr. Dobricanin has been at a loss to explain why Ranta has derided the paraffin method, which was not used, in her comments of her report made public by the EU.

Dr. Dobricanin states that he recovered gunpowder traces from the fingers, palms, and above-palm areas, of the hands of 37 out of 40 bodies studied. This has helped him to conclude that almost all of the bodies found were recently armed and had fired their weapons shortly before death.

In an interview with Politika on Mar 19, Dr. Dobricanin was also quoted as saying that the Ranta team DID NOT EVEN TAKE SAMPLES FROM THE HANDS OF ANY OF THE BODIES.

Dr. Vujadin Otasevic, part of the forensic teams analyzing the bodies recovered from Racak, also asserts that none of the pathologists found any sign of torture; only mutilation wounds from small animals after death were found. Dr. Otasevic also comments on the fact that various types of drugs and amphetamines were found in some of the bodies; he states that the Ranta team did not sign the common report of Dobricanin/Kuzmicov because they told him they wanted to run final blood checks at the University of Helsinki. Dr. Otasevic also concurs that there was no massacre.

Finally, Dr. Kuzmicov from Belarus also has been heavily quoted in relation to the forensic results. Dr. Kuzmicov and his team found results including no slitting of throats, no signs of torture, and no signs of a massacre. Dr. Kuzmicov states that his team determined causes of death, how they died, (i.e. from weapons fired), distance from the weapons fired to the bodies, directions from which the weapons causing death were fired, types of arms used to cause death, etc.

Dr. Kuzmicov also comments on the fact that practically all bodies found were dressed in several pairs of pants, shirts, and other warm clothing; he states that many packets of cigarettes were found nearby, as well as other items suggesting life in cold, hard, outdoor conditions. Dr. Kuzmicov also states that his team and the Dobricanin team, together, signed the final report (with English translations as well), but that Ranta's team did not sign because they told

him they wanted more time.

This concludes the forensic study re bodies found at Racak. Again, the events of Jan 15/99 are the basis for the only specifically-dated charge against Milosevic and four others by the ICTY, before the bombing attacks by NATO. As we shall see in future editions, nothing in the EU-released forensic report mentions the KLA by name, nor the fact that Racak was a KLA-stronghold on Jan 15/99; nor is there any mention of the fact that the bodies were killed by firearms shot over various distances and from different directions- nor is the fact that the print media and TV cameramen were both invited by the Yugoslavs themselves hours before the police operation at Racak.

Nor is their any mention of this in the ICTY indictment.

What Really Happened Jan. 15, 1999 at Racak: The ICTY Version

According to the ICTY indictment against Slobodan Milosevic and four others, dated May 22nd, 1999:

(28) "In one such incident on Jan 15, 1999, 45 unarmed Kosovo Albanians were murdered in the village of Racak...."

(98)a "On or about 15 January 1999 in the early morning hours the village of Racak ...was attacked by forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.... After shelling by [gov't/Yugoslavia] units, the Serb Police entered the village later in the morning and began conducting house-to-house searches. Villagers who attempted to flee from the Serb [M.U.P.] Police, were shot throughout [Racak]. A group of approximately 25 men attempted to hide in a building, but were discovered by the Serb Police. They [the men found in the building] were beaten and then were removed to a nearby hill, where the policemen shot and killed them...."

I have discussed the "merits" of this version of events in previous Racak editions: to elaborate on the most obvious discrepancies.

(a) "Group of 25 men" apparently left their wives, children, and other relatives behind to hide- all together- in one building, unarmed civilians running from their families when they are needed most.

(b) "The village of Racak... was attacked by... shelling from... [gov't/Yugoslavia] units...", makes no mention that Racak was a KLA-stronghold and the sight of many previous- and- post police operations; for instance, in the charge cited in the ICTY indictment, nothing is said concerning the huge amounts of firepower confiscated from these "villagers" nor does the charge refer to the established KLA base near the Racak power plant. All witnesses to these events at Racak on Jan 15/99 refer to the KLA attacking the Government of Yugoslavia forces (who had surrounded the village of Racak looking for the murderers of numerous policemen and civilians in and near Racak starting in the summer of 1998), from trenches, barricades, and other fortifications, using automatic weapons, hand-held missile launchers, hand-held grenade launchers, etc. All this firepower from "villagers" available on very short notice and who were suddenly surprised by an unannounced police operation . With so many people moving in and out of Racak, it would be difficult to pinpoint an approximate population count, which is why we have estimates recorded of between 400 and 1400 inhabitants. Obviously, Racak on Jan 15, 1999 was not a quaint little village with a fixed or nearly fixed number of full-time residents. As well, I find it unusual that the ICTY indictment pertaining to Racak does not mention that ALL residents were not running from the shelling; only the males were. I'm sure homes in Racak consisted of men, women, and children - and yet during this so-called indiscriminate "shelling of the village of Racak" we find not even one casualty listed as dying in their home from Yugoslav government bombs; nor is their any mention of women and children running from the shelling. The Yugoslav government operation went on for approximately 8 hours; all accounts record vicious cross-firing and shelling of military positions, but none record civilian homes as being the targets. Again, curious that this is "missing" from the ICTY statement of facts.....

(c) As mentioned in previous editions, the Yugoslav government forces actually invited OSCE itself, TV crews (from Associated Press) and print media to attend Racak on the day in question; curiously, this fact is also missing from the version of events in the ICTY indictment.

(d) The ICTY indictment does not list the fact that the KLA fired first, nor the fact that numerous heavy arms were confiscated after the Yugoslav forces moved into Racak; in fact, the KLA is not mentioned at all in the indictment as being stationed in and near Racak on the day in question. A typical report I found lists as confiscated by Yugoslav police: one 12.7 mm Browning heavy artillery piece, two other hand-held artillery pieces, 36 automatic rifles, two sniper rifles, numerous rounds of ammunition, numerous hand grenades, radio transmitters, etc- not your standard fare in a quaint little village.

(e) No mention is made in the ICTY indictment of the fact that the area in and around Racak was the scene, as mentioned earlier, of numerous attacks against both civilians, policemen, and army personnel. The list of attacks makes it apparent that they were organized and called for some sort of response by the Yugoslav government. One of the KLA victims was Enver Maloku, head of the Kosovo Information Center, and a prominent advisor to Ibrahim Rugova. Some of the others killed included civilians Enver Gasi (on Jan2/99), Miftar Reseni (Dec 31/98), as well as policemen Sasa Jankovic (Aug 2/98), Sinisa Mihajlovic (Sept 10/98), Ranko Djordjevic (Oct 12/98), Nazmija Aluri (Oct 29/98), and Svetislav Przic (Jan 10/99); on Nov 18/98, the home of Djemalj Batici was burned to the ground by the KLA As well, there were numerous kidnappings of Albanian and Roma civilians which were reported in the districts of Urosevac and Stimlje. And on Dec 14/98 in Pec, one month before the police operation at Racak, six youths were shot and killed, along with many others wounded, in a cafe. Earlier, in Kosovo, 22 Serb civilians were massacred by the KLA who dismembered the bodies and burned them in ovens.

Again, this backdrop is curiously "missing" from the ICTY indictment list of the relevant information relating to the charges, but this same indictment finds the time to list many general (but no specific) allegations directed at Milosevic and four of his aides which purportedly occurred before NATO began bombing. Again, Racak was not your typical rural village. I have only listed some of the attacks against civilians and police forces in that part of Kosovo; other reports, such as the one by Milovan Mitrovic from the University of Belgrade (Dec 15/98), also lists hundreds of Serb civilians alone being kidnapped by the KLA, including farmers, women, children, health workers, media personnel, etc.

(f) The police operation at Racak on Jan 15/99 was part of a larger operation including the villages of Belince and Malopoljce, which were the areas of police presence later that day. Again, no mention in the ICTY indictment that the operation at Racak was designed to arrest not only KLA members in Racak (that is why the Racak was surrounded in the first place), but in the other two areas as well. No "atrocities" were reported from either Belince nor Malopoljce- of course, these two areas on the day in question were not the scenes of a protracted battle between the KLA and government forces, either. For the ICTY to accuse the Yugoslavs of targeting unarmed civilians only in Racak, but not in any of the other towns, should have an objective person question why the only reports of "atrocities" during this multi-town police operation were given by the "residents" of a town with a base for armed separatists who fired first, and why, apparently, the Yugoslavs were not interested in killing "civilians" in any of the other villages.

(g) No where in the ICTY indictment is there a reference to the fact that OSCE originally denied being invited to watch this police operation; only after Briton Neal Strachan claimed in an interview in the London Guardian that he was one of the OSCE members officially invited to witness the Jan 15/99 police operation at Racak, did OSCE itself concede this.

(h) No mention in the ICTY indictment that 3 different forensic teams who analyzed the bodies found no evidence to verify that the dead had been massacred; 2 of those teams positively concluded that in fact 37 out of the 40 bodies analyzed had recently discharged weapons. The ICTY quotes no forensic report to show that the vast majority of bodies recovered from Racak were none other than KLA members/supporters killed during combat.

(i) No mention in the ICTY indictment of the vast discrepancies in numbers of "civilians" killed at Racak on this day; the indictment itself lists 45 - a Yugoslav police communiqué reached the International Press Center in Pristina about 3pm Jan 15/99 and lists that 15 KLA members had been killed in combat; the Albanian Information Center mentions 7 killed. The Serbian Information Center lists 15 KLA killed; another Albanian source states 8 KLA killed, while OSCE, at that time with William Walker as the #1 observer in Kosovo, says 37 bodies were found, and that 2/3 of about 20 bodies that were in a ravine, later found to be near one of the KLA positions, contained victims aged 50 and older. Since the ICTY itself only lists two, out of which it says were 45 bodies found, over the age of 50, that in itself should be evidence of something amiss with the truthfulness of the detail of this indictment, notwithstanding the fact that somehow Yugoslav forces managed to execute civilians near KLA positions during a heated battle in the first place. The Americans claim 45 bodies were found (surprised?) while other Albanian sources list up to 51 bodies found.

The next day, Jan 16/99, the KLA itself claimed to have lost 8 combatants during the previous fighting, and that the Yugoslavs had locked the women and children in basements while taking away many male civilians; many villagers on the day in question claimed that the Yugoslavs had arrested 24 men and OSCE observers IN ANOTHER LOCALE OTHER THAN RACAK were called to verify this! (why would you not call the OSCE office nearest you?) The OSCE observers present during the fighting went into Racak and left soon after, taking with them a couple of elderly people slightly injured during the battle; the OSCE observers from another locale arrived soon after in Racak, found no evidence of arrests of males (or anyone else) by the Yugoslavs, found no evidence of any "massacre", were not told by villagers of any "massacre", and went home later that night. French observers in OSCE have stated in interviews that they had no idea other observers from OSCE were called. In other words, two sets of OSCE teams went into Racak within hours of the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces, completely unaware that the other was there. And neither team reported anything untoward. And this is also missing from the "background" detailed in the ICTY indictment.

This concludes the study of the ICTY version of events, as it relates to its indictment against Milosevic and four others, specifically regarding the events at Racak Jan 15/99.

The whole ICTY indictment lacks any perspective or details as to the nature and truthfulness of its version of events; and, as we shall see in subsequent editions on the events at Racak, nothing in the indictments' version of events matches the versions given by all the witnesses to the entire operation by the Yugoslav forces on Jan 15/99 at Racak.

What Really Happened on Jan. 15, 1999 at Racak: Evidence and Witness Accounts

This report will focus on the corroborated accounts of witnesses to the events at Racak on Jan 15/99.

As mentioned in earlier reports, the Yugoslav police operation at Racak on Jan 15/99 was one part of an overall crackdown on KLA positions the same day at Belince and Malopoljce as well; Racak itself was the site of a heavily-armed KLA stronghold near its power plant.

The KLA had been active in and around Racak, committing civilian killings, house-burnings, and kidnappings prior to the Yugoslav police operation of Jan 15/99; in fact, since the Oct/98 agreement between President Milosevic and Richard Holbrooke in Belgrade, and Jan 14/99 - the day before the police operation at Racak - the KLA engaged in attacks involving 186 civilians and 413 Yugoslavian government forces, in Kosovo/Metohina alone. As mentioned earlier, one of those was murder victim Enver Maloku, at the time head of the Kosovo Information Center and a close advisor to Ibrahim Rugova.

The Yugoslav police and army forces surrounded Racak Jan 15/99 as the first phase in the attempted arrest of KLA members suspected of being in the area. When the KLA fired on the government troops from fortified positions, the Yugoslav forces responded. Most reports state the KLA using automatic weapons, hand-held rocket launchers, and mortars from trenches, bunkers, and other fortifications in and immediately outside Racak; the government response was by automatic weapon fire, tanks, and anti-aircraft guns. The exchanges were steady, intense, and from many directions; most reports I found mention a 6-to-8 hour battle.

As is well known and corroborated from many sources, TV cameramen from AP news services, print media, and OSCE were all invited by the government to witness this particular "takedown" at Racak; Neil Strechan, a British observer, was one of those present at Racak during the Jan 15/99 operation. Other reports give Gabriel Keller, a former ambassador to Yugoslavia and at the time the #2 man in OSCE behind William Walker, as also being present. Some reports also mention two OSCE vehicles as being present at all times during the fighting, while other reports specifically mention two OSCE vehicles with US diplomatic plates.

By 8:30am the fighting was already under way, the film crew had been invited to watch, and OSCE had been notified as well. By 11:30am that morning the first reports of casualties were being received from sources on both sides of the battle. Albanian sources were confirming deaths and damages on both sides, as were government sources. Figures range wildly on this topic as well; during the day reports of KLA killed run from "several" to seven to eight to fifteen; the Yugoslav government later reported at least fifteen killed, among them Mujota Sadik (born 1943) from Malopolje, who is reported to have headed a KLA faction near Racak along with his daughter (who was also reported killed), three sons, and his brothers.

As well, Goran Vucicevic from the Serbian Police Forces was reported injured, and these same reports mention various damage to Ministry of Internal Affairs vehicles that were taking part in the operation at Racak. It should be noted that several reports mention that most, but not all, of the KLA killed were in uniform; fighters in civilian clothes were seen fighting alongside the KLA. This would seem to be a logical result of a surprise police operation; once the fighting started, many of those who were fighting with the KLA probably did not have time to don uniforms.

The government forces eventually made their way into Racak, shortly before noon. According to every report I could find concerning the contents of the actual film of the event by AP, Racak was almost totally empty of civilians by the time these government forces actually entered the village. But because the KLA was still firing on them, the Yugoslav forces had to move slowly, from wall to wall, in order to avoid the shooting. The AP film records no separating in Racak that day of males from women and children (as the KLA and its supporters claim) by the government forces; the film records no killing of civilians attempting to flee from the government forces (as claimed in the ICTY indictment against Milosevic, et al); the film records no "discovery" of 25 unarmed males in a building who were beaten, removed to a nearby hill, and shot (also as charged in the ICTY indictment).

Nor does the AP film show anything, according to all reports of those who have seen it, other than KLA fighters attempting to kill government forces followed by the confiscation of huge amounts of artillery and firearms belonging to the KLA.

As mentioned, OSCE observers were present throughout the operation, watching along with the press from a safe position overlooking the area. At shortly after 3pm that day, most reports give an account of an OSCE verifier (some reports claim it was Gabriel Keller) contacting the leader of these Yugo government forces to request a cessation of the operation. Shortly after 3:30pm (some reports say the last policemen left just before 5pm), OSCE observers move into Racak to assess the damage and take reports. Some journalists see two OSCE vehicles, some see three.

At any rate, the only injured removed by OSCE are two elderly men and two elderly women, around 6pm that day. OSCE is quoted from various sources as saying that they were unable to evaluate the battle toll at that time. This is in direct contradiction to the ICTY charge which in the indictment claims that Serb police shot civilians throughout the village. Obviously, if there are dead civilians "throughout the village", then OSCE would have found at least some of them after two and a half hours of "observing". Not even residents of Racak are reported to have said this - although in interviews, some of these residents claimed that the Serbian police went into their homes (during a pitched battle!), separated the males, locked the women and children in basements, and removed those males to nearby hilltops where they were executed.

So none of the residents of Racak are reporting fellow villagers being gunned down in the streets of Racak- an integral part of the ICTY indictment. As to the claim by these witnesses that they were locked in basements, how is it then possible to see where "the males" have been taken to, or that they have been "executed"?

Also note that the print media present throughout the police operation at Racak and afterwards also give radically different witness accounts as compared with the ICTY indictment list of facts.....

Probably the most telling fact about these Racak residents "witness accounts" is that not one of them could either direct OSCE on Jan 15 to the site of these "executions" immediately after the cessation of hostilities, nor later that day when A 2nd TEAM OF OSCE OBSERVERS WERE SENT TO RACAK. Believe it or not, this 2nd team was dispatched because of phone calls to an OSCE detachment IN ANOTHER LOCALE- not the nearest OSCE post! This second team responded to claims that 24 male arrests by the Serbian police had been made earlier in the day at Racak.

This second team of OSCE verifiers, independent of the first (as some of the French members of OSCE, unaware of a second team, confirmed during interviews with the newspaper Liberation), found no evidence of arrests, were not directed to any "atrocities" site, saw no gunned down or locked-up villagers, and in fact saw nothing untoward and went home later that night.

Strange that the first OSCE team into Racak, there since the early morning, could not "evaluate the battle toll" with, supposedly, bodies strewn everywhere; equally strange is the evaluation of the second OSCE team, independent of the first, and from another locale, that nothing worth recording had happened and subsequently left.

Strange that on Jan 15/99, no one in Racak, population 400-1400 (depending on which source you check), could bring anyone from OSCE or from the press to the site of what William Walker later termed, an "atrocities" - and for those of you familiar, William Walker is the man to ask when it comes to "atrocities" expertise. (see his dismal record in Central America available on many internet sites)

Strange that these same villagers had two different opportunities the same day to show OSCE the various bodies massacred throughout the village (according to the ICTY) as well, and yet did not.

Another puzzling fact is that OSCE contacted government forces around 3:00pm asking for a cessation of hostilities; this would give so-called "executioners" of these government forces half an hour to confiscate all the weapons they found, lock all the women and children in basements, round up all the remaining men, beat them, move them to a nearby hill, shoot them, then leave before OSCE arrived at 3:30pm. And, they would have to do this out of sight of cameramen as well. All reports I saw have OSCE coming in at 3:30pm, with the government forces leaving by no later than 5pm; certainly such a "crime against humanity" could not have been conducted while OSCE was there between 3:30pm and 5pm.

And between the late morning, when the first government forces went into Racak, and 3pm, hostilities were raging so severely that OSCE had to request a ceasefire - obviously a roundup of males complete with beatings and executions could not have been conducted during a crossfire.

Another "forgotten" point in the ICTY indictment regarding Racak is the fact that there were no reported civilian casualties from indiscriminate government "shelling of the villagers of Racak"; again it is apparent that the Yugoslav government was not shelling the homes of civilians, but the positions of the KLA, who had fired first during this attempted arrest operation.

The obvious question: what is the ICTY using to justify their charges against Milosevic and four others in their indictment regarding Racak?

Certainly not evidence from AP, print journalists, the Yugoslav government, or even OSCE verifiers at the scene that day.

And certainly not the forensic reports, none of which concluded that a massacre had taken place on that day at Racak.

The Discovery and Recovery of the Bodies

Two different teams of OSCE personnel were at Racak the day of the fighting; the first team went in about a half hour after the shooting had stopped, while the second team, at that time unbeknownst to the first, went in later on that night. Both teams of OSCE observers failed to find even one civilian killed at Racak. Both OSCE teams left without being directed to any so-called "atrocities" site by even one of the residents of Racak.

But by the next morning, journalists were directed by KLA members to a dry bed of a stream on Bebus Hill overlooking Racak; there these journalists found a number of dead bodies in civilian dress. Other bodies were scattered nearby. Many of the journalists present have remarked upon the absence of shell casings and blood near these bodies. Some reporters have questioned why most of these bodies could not be identified by the residents of Racak. For instance, B92 Daily News for Feb 4/99 remarks that 29 out of the 40 bodies autopsied could not be returned to residents of Racak because those residents trying to claim the bodies could not prove their identities as relatives of the dead.

Curiously, one OSCE investigator the morning after the fighting at Racak claims to have seen 38 dead bodies; OSCE head William Walker, who arrived shortly after, claims he counted 45 bodies. The French newspaper Liberation reports 20 bodies in a ditch, with other bodies scattered about. AP news in the New York Times, Jan 16/99, reports 15 bodies in one ravine and 8 more in another location.

Once again, we have a "numbers" problem; the number of dead bodies that the ICTY (which alleges 40) have listed in their indictment runs contrary to many of the numbers claimed to have been seen by reporters, OSCE (which claimed, for instance, that 2/3 of the bodies in one area were aged 50 or more; in the ICTY indictment, only 2 out of 40 are listed as being 50 years or older), the KLA, etc etc. John Fantini, at that time head of the Kosovo Verification Mission in Urosevac, claims that members of his team counted 39 bodies; other editions of this analysis have reported claims of 37 bodies, 45 bodies, 51 bodies, etc etc.

One thing is certain: if these bodies were execution victims of the Yugoslav government, they would have had to have been rounded up and marched to the outskirts of Racak, and killed, in at most 30 minutes, after which the first OSCE team went into Racak to investigate the outcome of the fighting. As well, these executions of civilians would have had to have been done away from the AP film crew which followed and recorded the Yugoslav government forces as they moved into Racak while still under fire from the KLA.

Danica Marinkovic, investigating judge with the District Court of Pristina, made her first attempt to arrive in Racak along with Ismet Sufto, Deputy District Public Prosecutor; this followed the public pronouncements of OSCE head William Walker that unarmed civilians had been massacred there. Ms. Marinkovic could not begin her investigation when she arrived at Racak because the KLA fired at her from their positions in the area. OSCE told the judge and prosecutor that they would have to investigate without an armed guard, as this security was seen as a provocation by the KLA.

At this time, the Yugoslavs notified Walker that their first investigations into the incidents at Racak would begin Jan 17/99, starting at 8:00am and would continue that day until 1:00 pm, with an armed guard being sent along for everyone's protection. The Yugoslav government, as they had done before their police operation on the 15th, invited OSCE to attend.

During this Yugoslav investigation, the KLA again fired on OSCE, Ms. Marinkovic and her team, with mortars and other artillery, from various positions including nearby Petrovo. One of the missiles hit the judges' car, while others narrowly missed the judge herself. Some reports record a total of three attempts by the Yugoslav government to recover the bodies and investigate the "crime" scene, other reports indicate four attempts. The EU pathologist, Helena Ranta, never did go to Racak.

By Monday, Jan 18/99, the last of the preliminary investigations by the Yugoslavs had been completed and the bodies, which had been moved into a mosque in Racak, were loaded into government vehicles for transportation to Pristina where the initial autopsy studies would begin.

By Jan 20th/99, the EU had officially condemned the events at Racak as a massacre- despite the fact that the pathologist they asked to do their forensic study of the bodies (to determine whether or not the dead had been KLA combatants in civilian clothing) would not begin her work until Jan 21st/99.

This would not be the first or last time that the Yugoslavs government would be accused of "atrocities" or "massacres"- which is all the more reason that they acted with expediency and tenacity in recovering the bodies at Racak for investigation. And I can recall some recent attempts by Western authorities to prevent the Yugoslav authorities from access to civilian bodies found murdered; AIM news for Sept 3 this year reports complaints from the Yugoslav government in this regard at Ugljare. As well, the 14 Serb farmers found murdered under KFOR auspices recently were autopsied without any government pathologists present. And at Gnjilane, a mass grave of 15 Serb civilians was found July 24th this year, while public notification of this took about 30 more days.

Other reports have questioned the authenticity of "massacre" claims at Racak by pointing to film purportedly showing the mourning relatives of these executed civilians, relatives wearing black clothing and/or black mourning beads which these reports say are not a traditional Muslim expression of grief.

Interestingly enough, the 40 autopsied bodies found at Racak eventually were returned to the Pristina Institute of Forensic Medicine because despite Ms. Marinkovic's efforts to turn over the dead to the relatives, no one would claim the bodies. According to an interview reprinted Feb 5/99 in Serbia-Info, the judge had notified OSCE, Muslim priests in Racak, and representatives from the Democratic League of Kosovo as to a time and place for the Yugoslav government to return the bodies. When Marinkovic arrived, it was dark and a large crowd had gathered outside of the arranged meeting place; OSCE, the Muslim priests, and reps from the Democratic League all agreed that the transfer of bodies to the families should take place at the Stimlje Health Center instead. When it became obvious that no one was coming to the health center to claim the bodies, once more Marinkovic returned with the entire entourage, and the bodies, to the original agreed meeting place, a Stimlje mosque, to again try and return the dead for burial. However, none of the crowd was to be seen; Marinkovic felt she had no choice but to return the bodies to Pristina.

The next day, according to Marinkovic, in front of the Institute for Medicine at Pristina, a large crowd again appeared. This time, "relatives" of the "victims" staged fainting scenes and rolled around in the snow in front of reporters and foreign TV film crews, bemoaning their inability to claim the bodies to anyone who would listen- or watch.

The ICTY has apparently not considered any of these facts in their formulation of the Racak segment of the indictment against Milosevic and four aides. As well, the discovery of these bodies, the number of which remains in dispute, coupled with the removal of these bodies away from their places of death and into a mosque, should have alerted any objective pathologist, or anyone studying the forensic results, to the exclusion of conditions that would have made the SEM/EDX test for gunpowder residue not applicable- a test which the EU team used anyway, under the employ of officials who declared the Yugoslav government guilty of an atrocity at Racak even before their own pathology team could begin investigating.

Conclusions

This edition will conclude the analysis of the Racak charge in the May22/99 ICTY indictment against Slobodan Milosevic, Milan Milutinovic, Nikola Sainovic, Dragoljub Ojdanic, and Vlatko Stojiljkovic. For previous editions of this analysis.

The ICTY charges that the five above-listed individuals committed both crimes against humanity and violations of the laws or customs of war on January 15, 1999 at the village of Racak, Yugoslavia.

Based on the known facts and circumstances, the indictment as specified by the ICTY fails to provide even a bare minimum of corroborated details to justify such serious allegations. For instance, the alleged "crime scenes" at Racak were not controlled by a chain of custody. There were no attempts made by those who allegedly "stumbled" across the bodies found at Racak, nor by so-called "independent" international observers who arrived shortly afterwards, to secure the scene for the proper authorities; this has led many to conclude that this "crime site" was in fact a staged event, in which the KLA definitely disarmed their dead combatants, possibly removed their uniforms, and then presented these fighters as "massacred" civilians.

This lack of control between the times of death and the eventual recovery of these bodies for analysis by the proper authorities does in fact open the possibility of tampering by those, specifically the KLA, who would hope to provoke other aggressors to action against the Yugoslav government.

This possibility was rejected by the ICTY outright; no where in the indictment does it mention that what are being claimed as "massacred civilians" were found by armed insurrectionists.

In an objective court of law, where the accused is presumed innocent, an unsecured "crime scene", coupled with the fact that those who allegedly discovered an "atrocity" at Racak, the KLA, were themselves subjects of numerous national and international arrest warrants regarding drug trafficking and systematic murders of civilians, should have rendered this case as frivolous and therefore unprosecutable. For instance, missing from the ICTY indictment (and most Western news services on this case, even today) is the fact that those who have claimed to "discover" this "crime against humanity", also (a) massacred civilians on a regular basis (b) used both regularly dressed, and uniformed fighters, on a regular basis, (c) were, in the hours immediately previous to the alleged massacre themselves engaged in a heated firefight with the authorities (d) instigated this firefight by shooting first (e) had a major operating base near the power plant in Racak (f) engaged Yugoslav forces at Racak on numerous occasions before Jan 15/99, and since that date; within three days of the so-called "massacre" at Racak, those that "found" the bodies again engaged the police with automatic weapons and mortar fire - this time targeting, but narrowly missing, those authorities who were involved in the recovery of the bodies for analysis.

Many Western-court prosecution attempts do not even make it past the preliminary stage if there is even a hint of tainted evidence and/or an unsecured crime scene, especially when the potential is present for known criminals to infiltrate and arrange the scene to embarrass the authorities. The ICTY knew this yet went ahead with their indictments anyway, as much acknowledging that the frivolous nature of these charges being exposed in the long term would be counterbalanced by scoring short-term publicity points that would "take the edge" off repeated media reports of numerous civilian casualties of the NATO "smart" bombings.

Besides the criminal nature of those who called the international press to announce the discovery of "massacred" civilians, we have to consider the nature and circumstances of most of the dead themselves. Two teams of forensic pathologists have stated in the report of their analysis that 37 out of 40 bodies autopsied had recently fired weapons; furthermore, many of the bodies showed signs of exposure to an environment of cold, outdoor, living conditions immediately prior to their deaths. This is in direct contradiction to the ICTY details in their indictment, which claims that more than half the dead were civilians of Racak who were hiding in a building in the village, only to be discovered by the Yugoslav authorities, and that none of the deceased were armed.

Furthermore, according to these forensic reports from two teams of pathologists, most of the bodies autopsied wore several warm jackets, pullovers, and pants, and were killed from many different directions and from many distances, which is consistent with a pitched battle between surrounding forces and trapped insurgents who are normally dressed for outdoor living conditions. Again, these facts are not consistent with the ICTY-stated conclusion that most of the dead were simply innocent villagers rounded up, beaten, then shot.

A third forensic report was independently filed by Helena Ranta at the behest of the EU; this report also does not conclude that a "massacre" at Racak had taken place. But her conclusion that most of the dead were unarmed at their times of death was largely based on the SEM/EDX testing method for gunshot residue recovery, a type of analysis whose preconditions for accuracy were non-existent- preconditions that were a matter of the public record Ranta also states she "relied upon" in her determinations.

All forensic analysis done on these bodies, and the conclusions of the heads of three different medical teams, has been omitted in the ICTY detailing of the charges in the indictment. Furthermore, also missing from the ICTY indictment is the fact that the EU had already publicly stated its conclusions before the pathologist they hired, Dr. Ranta, had even begun her testing. On two separate occasions the EU denounced the "massacre" at Racak, months before any forensic reports had finalized.

In any Western-style courtroom, a revelation that the prosecution was not only relying on murderers and drug dealers to boost their case, but that the judge worked in conjunction with those who had already publicly stated the defendant's guilt before trial, would result in outcries of unfairness by the public; no doubt any of those involved would never be able to work in that field again.

But at the Hague, in respect to this indictment against Milosevic and four aides, the lead prosecutor is rewarded with a Supreme Court appointment back home, even before the case goes to trial- while none of the judges involved have the moral fibre to remove themselves from ruling, based on the obvious conflicts of interest they themselves publicly admit to.

Also missing from the details of Racak charges in the ICTY indictment is the fact that any claims of legitimacy by the court willing to rule on this case emanate from an organization with a built-in select veto, the UN, itself designed to thwart any democratic or objective renderings by its members.

The objectivity of a court that owes its existence to an organization engaged in the implementation of ten years' worth of economic sanctions against the defendants and their co-citizens also must be called into question; how can an honest verdict be reached when the judge's employer has publicly called for the dismissal of the defendants from their elected positions?

The legitimacy of these charges can also find little solace in the fact that two separate teams of OSCE observers, one immediately after the cessation of hostilities between the KLA and Yugoslav forces at Racak on Jan 15/99, the second again later that same evening, one unbeknownst to, and independent of the other, failed to find even one civilian casualty, despite the fact that both had unimpeded, unrestricted access to the citizens of Racak and more than enough opportunity to be shown the location and other details of this so-called "massacre".

It wasn't until the next day, after the observers had left convinced that there were no civilian casualties, that the bodies of "massacred civilians" appeared. William Walker, OSCE head at the time in Yugoslavia, personally condemned the site of the bodies as an "atrocious" scene, despite basing his conclusions on the word of KLA members who had committed a minimum of 599 documented acts of terrorism against both Yugoslav forces and civilians in just 3 months.

Both of these details are curiously missing from what is purported to be an even-handed attempt at justice by the ICTY. Also missing from this indictment is the invitation extended by the Yugoslavs to both OSCE (which denied at first, but then admitted), and the press, to report and film what has been corroborated as a crackdown at Racak on the KLA that day - part one of a three-part police/army venture against the armed separatists which also included raids by the government the same day at two other known KLA strongholds in different locales.

The ICTY indictment fails to list the fact that all reports on what the film crew from AP news services recorded detail a practically empty village with Yugoslav forces moving carefully between buildings to avoid KLA mortars and gunfire. Not one civilian is filmed being arrested, beaten, tortured, or shot- but the film does show a large confiscation of KLA military hardware by the Yugoslavs; reports generally indicate 30+ automatic rifles, 2 sniper rifles, a 12.7mm Browning heavy artillery piece, thousands of rounds of ammunition, numerous hand grenades, radio transmitters, etc etc.

All of this found in a village with a population of perhaps as low as 400 people. Does the ICTY think that any Western court - the principles of which are purported to be in the model currently in use at the Hague - would believe that most of those who died with traces of gunpowder on their hands in a village with an insurgent base, and such a documented haul of weaponry from that village, were "massacred"?

That is the problem with this indictment and with these international courts - the standards applied against Milosevic and his co-accused are radically different from the standards afforded an accused in any of the home countries of the judges and prosecutors now in league at the Hague.

The ICTY indictment is so poorly documented that half the "victims" alleged at Racak cannot be identified by age - this despite the fact that the ICTY had more than 4 months to discern this. For example, the next list of specific charges in the same indictment against Milosevic and four of his aides list a total of 185 "massacred" civilians, 176 of which are listed with names, ages, etc- but those charges were supposedly investigated during the NATO bombings in Yugoslavia, where interviewing witnesses, collecting forensic evidence, etc would have been far more difficult. But this fact of unknown particulars of the dead would tally with the Yugoslav government's claim that most of those killed were KLA fighters from many areas engaged in military units; apparently many of the dead were unknown to the residents of Racak. The indictment is also riddled with examples of ignorance of the facts, even referring to "an autonomous" Kosovo - knowing full well that the meetings between the parties at Rambouillet did not conclude any agreements in this regard. The indictment also refers to the shelling and bombing of the civilians at Racak on Jan 15/99, despite OSCE claims, press reports, the Yugoslav government, and film records to the contrary. Not one civilian was reported killed at Racak by this so-called "indiscriminate" shelling of the Yugoslavs.

The minimum pre-conditions necessary for the Yugoslavs to have carried out a "massacre" of unarmed civilians in Racak were non-existent. For one thing, OSCE observers watched continuously from safe positions overlooking the village - at no time did they, or the press, report the parading of beaten, tortured civilians to the outskirts of Racak for summary execution. For another, the area where many of the bodies were found was near one of the KLA positions that day; the alleged Yugoslav gov't-ordered executioners would have had to expose themselves to gunfire in that area in order to commit these acts of which they are accused. No doubt any "massacre" would have been conducted behind the safety of, or inside of, a building in Racak, not in open fields near a ditch, as the ICTY alleges. The time factor - barely at most a few hours to find, round up, question, beat, march, then execute forty males - also lends criticism to the purported series of events detailed in the indictment.

And all of this finding, arresting, beating, torturing, marching, and killing of 40 men would have had to have been done in such a way as to defy the forensic results which positively indicated no wounds of torture, beatings, handcuffing, etc were inflicted - and, the automatic gunfire alleged to have killed these people would have had to come from many different directions, from many different angles, from many different distances, and with little or no shell casings and with little or no blood at the site of this "execution".

The number of found bodies has also been a sad example of the disreputable nature of this indictment by the ICTY. Publicly, OSCE has at times claimed 37 dead; the Americans, 45; Albanian sources, 51. In addition, OSCE claims that 2/3 of approximately 20 bodies found massacred outside Racak in a ditch were over 50 years of age, while the ICTY indictment regarding Racak lists 2 out of 40 in the same age category. William Walker claims he counted 45 bodies, while earlier-arriving OSCE members only claim to have found 38. This only supports the "staging" claims, not the ICTY indictment - it is quite possible that at the time the first OSCE arrived the day after the battle to investigate a discovery of a massacre, only 38 bodies had been sufficiently "arranged" by the KLA; by the time Walker arrived, 7 more had been "arranged" as well.

The ICTY indictment regarding Racak also fails to mention any of this; nor does it mention the faked transcripts of fake telephone conversations supposedly intercepted by satellites and spy equipment which purportedly showed orders being given to a Yugoslav policeman to "come down hard" on the villagers in Racak on the day in question.

I wonder also, for instance, how many British-based judges, investigators, and prosecutors at the Hague would dismiss themselves from this case as a result of British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook's claim that, "Our observers saw absolutely no evidence of fighting" between the KLA and the Yugoslav forces - this despite the fact that Briton Neal Strechan of OSCE has publicly acknowledged that he was one of the observers invited by the Yugoslavs to Racak to watch on the day in question.

This sequence of events seems all too familiar and predictable:

Feb 5th, 1994: 68 die in bombing of marketplace; Serbs accused, UN condemns, independent reports say no Serbian involvement, soon after NATO supplies air support to those fighting Serbs

Aug 28, 1995: 37 die in bombing of another marketplace; Serbs accused, UN condemns, 4 independent military reports say no Serbian involvement, soon after NATO supplies air support, and heavier bombing, to assist those fighting Serbs.

Jan 15, 1999: 40(?) die at Racak, Yugoslavia; Serbs accused of atrocities, UN condemns, 3 teams of pathologists do not conclude any atrocities took place, soon after NATO supplies air support, and "smart" bombing, in a campaign claiming 2000 civilian lives in 78 days (and 13 tanks) - to assist drug-trafficking armed separatists fighting Yugoslav forces.

This concludes the analysis of the Racak segment of the ICTY indictment against Milosevic and four aides. The patterns and agendas evident in this specific charge against Milosevic and four aides regarding Racak are not unique, as has been seen. In case anyone thinks this is simply an aberration and not consistent with ICTY methods and motives, take care to note that the president of Yugoslavia and four of his aides are also charged with crimes against humanity and violations of the laws and customs of war with regards to events which are alleged to have occurred Mar 25, Mar 26, Mar 27/99 - immediately after the beginning of the bombing aggression by NATO, when no investigation was possible. Again, that is the point - it is not the truthfulness of the charges, it is the airing of them publicly as a coincided effort with cynical Western agendas that determines the purpose of this ICTY fiasco. And why hasn't this obvious pattern of propaganda-warfare been exposed by the so-called independent media? Or the opposition members of the home legislatures of the bombers themselves? It seems they are all on the same team.

Sources

This completes the study of the ICTY indictment charges against Slobodan Milosevic, Milan Milutinovic, Nikola Sainovic, Dragoljub Ojdanic, and Vajko Stojiljkovic, regarding the events at Racak, Yugoslavia, Jan 15/99.

Regrettably, the actual forensic reports by the teams headed by Drs Ranta, Kuzmicov, and Dobricanin are unavailable through my searches for them on the Internet, and my repeated requests to OSCE, University of Pristina, and the University of Helsinki, for these reports. However, we do have as a matter of public record the statements of the Racak analysis by these forensic pathologists as well as public statements from individual members of the teams.

The UN and the ICTY also have been accorded the opportunity to read and contribute to these reports; so far, they have declined. As well, over 300 Canadian Members of Parliament have had the opportunity to contribute information and/or rebuttals concerning this analysis of the Yugoslav police operation at Racak - they have all remained silent thus far.

Thanks to my wife, Danielle Fairlie, for her research, technical and moral support. Also thanks to Predrag Tosic for his co-operation and direction. Rade Kuzmanovic and his fellow staff at A.I.M. were also very helpful and supportive.

Remember, Racak is the ONLY DATED CHARGE in the entire ICTY indictment against Milosevic, et al, before NATO bombings, and this particular allegation is cited as the major plank in the "moral high ground" argument used for justification by the bombers.

All information used in these reports has been corroborated.

The following is a list of links citing the internet sources used in this Racak analysis:

The Jurist - The ICTY Indictment
<http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/indict.htm>
 O.S.C.E. Homepage
<http://www.osce.org/>

<http://www.balkanpeace.org/racak/rck01.shtml>

McAdams - Paraffin Testing
Firearms Forensic Tutorial - Examination of Gunshot Residue (SEM/EDX)
<http://telpath2.med.utah.edu/WebPath/TUTORIAL/GUNS/GUNGSR.html>
Serbia-Info - Racak search results
<http://www.serbia-info.com/>
The Strategic Issues Research Institute - The Racak killings, A massacre?
http://www.siri-us.com/backgrounders/Archives_Kosovo/KLA-Racak.html
Kosovo Forum - The Racak massacre, A brief for the defense
<http://www.kosovoforum.net/racakD.htm>
International Action Centre - The "Racak massacre" questioned by French media
<http://www.iacenter.org/racak.htm>
BBC News - Racak killings: Who says what?
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/europe/newsid_259000/259835.stm
BBC News - Pathologist: 'No Kosovo massacre'
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/europe/newsid_258000/258529.stm
Report of the EU Forensic Expert Team on the Racak Incident
<http://www.usia.gov/regional/eur/balkans/kosovo/texts/racak.htm>
Media Focus - Racak in headlines
TFF Features - NATO's war of aggression against Yugoslavia: An Overview
<http://www.transnational.org/features/Yuoverview.html>
TFF Features - President Milosevic and 4 other FRY...
<http://www.transnational.org/features/indicted.html>
Srpska Mreza - The Racak File: Truths and manipulation
<http://www.srpska-mreza.com/ddj/Racak/Tiker/RacakFile.html>
Workers World - Kosovo massacre was faked
Liberation 21 - Nine questions concerning the Racak dead
http://www.srpska-mreza.com/ddj/Racak/Articles/Liberation990121_Eng.html
Compuserb - Liar, Liar! - Bill Dorich on Madeleine Albright
<http://compuserb.com/liarliar.htm>
SMIP - Facts Re: Racak Police Operation 1/15/99
http://www.smip.sv.gov.yu/bilteni/Engleski/si180199_1_e.html
Kosova Daily Report - Serb Forensic Experts say Albanian was Tortured to Death
<http://www.hri.org/news/agencies/kosovo/95-04-21.ksv.html#05>
One World Search Engine - Various Links
Human Satto - Various Links

The following links thanks to Rade Kuzmanovic and staff from A.I.M. (www.aim.ac.yu): <http://www.newsroom.co.nz/stories/GE9901/S00082.htm>
<http://www.euronews.net/en/news/january/19990121/ennews0121e.htm>
<http://www.mfa.gov.lv/ENG/NEWS/PRESREL/Pr990118-1.htm>
<http://www.bergenrecord.com/morenews/yugo23199901236.htm>
<http://www.uk-us-trade.org/BIStext/FORDOM/Balkans/Kosovo/17jan99.stm>
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/europe/newsid_260000/260211.stm
http://www.hoosiertimes.com/stories/1999/02/11/news.990211_A6_JFM06074.sto
<http://netmarket.fairfax.com.au/news/9901/19/pageone/pageone3.html>
<http://www.msnbc.com/news/233809.asp>
http://www.state.gov/www/policy_remarks/1999/990118_djohnson_racak.html
<http://usa.grmbl.com/s19990204g.html>
<http://www.balkanunity.demon.co.uk/serbia/indexen.htm>
<http://www.usia.gov/regional/eur/balkans/kosovo/kbkgrrnd.htm>
<http://www.workers.org/ww/1999/kosovo0204.html>
<http://www.javanet.com/~gbozovic/info.html>
<http://compuserb.com/walkoute.htm>
<http://www.srpska-mreza.com/library/facts/albanian-solution.html>
<http://www.stophthear.freeuk.com/comments.html>
<http://www.kauhajoki.fi/~herantam/>
<http://cnn.vg.no/VERDEN/9903/17/4405.html>
<http://www.mtv3.fi/uutiset/arkisto/9901/990119/9901190111.html>
http://www.iwpr.net/focus/focus07_eng.htm
<http://www.srpska-mreza.com/library/facts/albanian-solution.html>

Any readers with new information concerning the Racak charges in the ICTY indictment are welcome to forward them to Predrag at p-tosic@cs.uiuc.edu or Chris at atnibiru@mnsi.net

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MPs listen in awe to story of battle: The Vancouver Sun

OTTAWA -Tue Apr 28, 1998

OTTAWA – MPs listened in awed silence Monday as a colonel recounted the story of the Canadian army's biggest firefight since Korea, the 1993 Battle of the Medak pocket, that left troops picking up corpses of murdered civilians and nursing their own wounds.

And Colonel Jim Calvin, who commanded the 2nd battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry during the clash in the former Yugoslavia, also used his time to remind the politicians that the privates they send into harm's way get \$1,714 a month in take-home pay.

"I'm sure that you will agree that the Canadian Forces is one of the arms that has borne the brunt of the burden of our foreign affairs policy over the last six or seven years," Calvin said. "I'm not certain that we're treating the front-line soldiers that are actually going out to do it in the proper fashion."

The committee is studying quality of life issues in the military. A private with a family could end the month with \$50 in his pocket after the bills are paid, MPs heard.

Calvin, flanked by some of the officers and men who fought with him during the 1993 battle, kept the Commons defence committee spellbound for 90 minutes. He described how his battalion, reinforced with a pair of French army companies, fought a Croatian force to a standstill.

The Croatian army lost 27 killed or wounded, the Canadians had four men lightly wounded by shrapnel. The clash came when a Croat general reneged on a pullback agreement worked out by political leaders back in Zagreb and tried to face down the Canadians and the United Nations.

Calvin and his soldiers, almost half of whom were reservists, fought a 16-hour battle, exchanging rifle and heavy machine-gun fire at ranges down to 150 metres. They endured heavy shelling and mortar fire and threaded their way through minefields.

When the Croats finally withdrew, they left scorched earth behind them. Houses and barns were torched and all of the livestock was killed and every well poisoned.

The Canadians picked up the bodies of 16 murdered civilians. Calvin urged the MPs to ensure that when they send soldiers to risk their lives, they think things through before making the commitment.

"If you say it's in the nation's interest to go, we say, 'Yes sir,'" the colonel said.

Defence Minister Art Eggleton, who sat in on the committee out of interest, said that's a good reminder. "We have to take very seriously all of these missions. One of the underlying messages is to treat these troops with respect," Eggleton said.

"To understand the courage they provide, to make sure they have a life with dignity, to make sure they get the kind of support they need from us here in the political world.

"There's an underlying message about the way we treat our Forces personnel and their families; everything from questions of pay to the stressful conditions they find themselves in."

MPs learn of Medak horrors

By The Canadian Press, The Calgary Herald

OTTAWA -Tue Apr 28, 1998

MPs listened in silence Monday as a colonel recounted the story of the Canadian army's biggest firefight since Korea, the 1993 Battle of the Medak pocket, that left troops picking up 16 corpses of murdered civilians and nursing their own wounds.

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The clash came when a Croat general reneged on a pullback agreement by political leaders back in Zagreb. The soldiers fought a 16-hour battle, endured heavy shelling and mortar fire and threaded their way through minefields.

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Defence Minister Art Eggleton agreed. "We have to take very seriously all of these missions. One of the underlying messages is to treat these troops with respect."

Eggleton has been lobbying his cabinet colleagues for more money for pay and benefits for his troops.

MPs finally told of peacekeepers' 'finest hour': Canadian valour in former Yugoslavia unheralded as nation focused on scandals

By Andrew Duffy, The Ottawa Citizen

-Tue Apr 28, 1998

Almost five years after it happened, a House of Commons committee has heard details of Canada's finest hour during its peacekeeping mission to the former Yugoslavia.

Col. Jim Calvin told politicians yesterday the story of the operation at Medak Pocket, where Canadian soldiers were involved in a 15-hour firefight, and, later, a tense standoff with heavily-armed Croatian troops.

The operation forced 875 soldiers of the 2nd Battalion of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry to impose a ceasefire with might — even though more than 40 per cent of its members were little-trained reservists.

"It's a story we haven't heard (for) quite some time in Canada," Col. Calvin, the unit's commanding officer, told a joint meeting of the defence and foreign affairs committees.

"In my mind, it's a story of bravery and determination and considerable valour by the young men and women with me in the former Yugoslavia in 1993 ... What they achieved was truly remarkable."

At the time, Canada's military brass was knee-deep in the Somalia scandal, in which peacekeepers killed unarmed Somalis. The military, fearful that more criticism might rain on the heads of its peacekeepers, decided not to call attention to the Medak Pocket operation.

Canadians knew nothing about the battle until Citizen reporter David Pugliese wrote a detailed account of it in October 1996. One of the soldiers involved in the operation told MPs yesterday that the peacekeepers deserved better.

"When things go wrong in the military, things are corrected swiftly and justly," said Chief Warrant Officer Mike McCarthy.

"I would like to see that same sense of urgency applied when things go right. That wasn't applied here. Five years. A little bit of balance would be nice."

Col. Calvin used the platform to plead for better pay and training for Canadian soldiers. He also told MPs they have to equip peacekeepers with the confidence to make bold decisions in the field. "We can't send them over to be hesitant, believing they'll be second-guessed all the time."

Defence Minister Art Eggleton attended the presentation and told reporters he understood its "underlying message."

"I think the bottom line is that however we do this, we make sure these people have a decent living, have their social and economic needs met," Mr. Eggleton said.

What would become the biggest battle since the Korean War for Canadian soldiers began Sept. 9, 1993, as Croat forces launched an artillery barrage on the Serb town of Medak, in the south.

The Serbs and Croats moved troops and tanks into the area. The battle raged for three days, with the Croats making small advances and establishing a new front line.

A United Nations-brokered ceasefire was arranged by political leaders in Zagreb. The Croats agreed at that meeting to withdraw to their original lines.

Col. Calvin received orders on Sept. 14 to enforce the arrangement by occupying the so-called "killing zone" — the thin stretch of unprotected land between the two warring factions.

Col. Calvin conferred with the commander of the UN forces, French Gen. Jean Cot, who told him the UN was losing face by continually withdrawing when one side opened fire. This peace had to be enforced.

Gen. Cot also told Col. Calvin some disquieting news: The Croat forces around Medak were probably unaware of the political deal reached in Zagreb.

"You can imagine what that felt like for us," Col. Calvin said. "We were now going to move from behind the Serb front lines, pass through the Serbs and toward a warring faction that didn't know they were being ordered by their high command to give up the positions they had just earned in a hard-fought battle."

The Canadians moved into the buffer zone early on the afternoon of Sept. 15, 1993. A few shots sounded from the Croat lines.

"Initially, we honestly thought it was a mistake," said Col. Calvin. "We gave direction to put bigger UN flags on our antennae and make sure the white vehicles were prevalent to make sure they know who was moving into the no-man's land."

But when the blue-helmeted Canadians, supported by French troops, moved forward this time, machine-gun fire rattled from the Croat lines. The rules of engagement for UN troops in the former Yugoslavia provided that they could return fire if fired upon.

The Canadians took cover and responded with machine guns and assault rifles. The two sides traded fire for the next 15 hours at a distance of less

an one kilometre. Sometimes the firefights lasted five minutes, sometimes they lasted an hour.

That evening, Col. Calvin was summoned to a meeting with Croat military leaders and walked across the no-man's land in the dark to confer with them. After a long, heated meeting, they agreed on a ceasefire. The Croats said they would withdraw from the disputed territory at noon.

At first light, however, the Canadians were sickened by what they saw. "We knew we had made a tragic error in allowing them until noon to prepare to move," Col. Calvin said. "Because as we looked out over the kilometre that separated us from the Croats, we could see nothing but billowing smoke starting to go up from every one of the villages that we could plot on our maps."

They could hear explosions and small arms fire. Although he knew the Croats were engaged in "ethnic cleansing" in mostly Serbian towns, Col. Calvin felt compelled to live by the deal and wait four more hours. "It was an extremely frustrating time," he said. "You didn't have anything that you could use as proof of what was going on, but you knew in your heart what was going on because you'd lived it for the last five months. It was very demoralizing."

At the stroke of noon, the Canadians advanced toward the Croatian line, where they were met by a heavily armed company of Croat soldiers. The road was mined and the soldiers backed by tanks.

Col. Calvin argued with the Croatian general, who refused to budge. The Canadians threatened to use force. Both sides manned their weapons, locked and loaded.

For the next 90 minutes, Col. Calvin said, "we were in what can only be described as a Mexican standoff... It was an extraordinarily tense situation."

The standoff was defused when Col. Calvin called a press conference. The Canadians had with them 20 international reporters, and Col. Calvin called them front and centre. He proceeded to denounce the Croat military leaders as war criminals responsible for what was going on behind their lines.

Disturbed, the Croatian general relented and called a press conference of his own to defend what had happened. The Canadians were allowed to pass. They found the Serb village of Licki Citluk in flames. They came upon the bodies of a 70-year-old woman, shot four times, and two teenage girls, shot and set on fire.

There was evidence of more killing: surgical gloves littered the area. "We couldn't figure any other reason that the Croats would leave surgical gloves all over the ground other than the fact they have a systematic method of collecting the bodies," said Col. Calvin. "It might have been the reason for delaying us at the roadblock."

In all, 16 bodies would be recovered. The Canadians counted 160 homes destroyed, 190 barns burned to the ground. Wells were poisoned with oil or dead animals.

The Croatian general who was in charge of the area is now being investigated by the international war crimes tribunal.

When the operation was over, the Canadian side tallied four wounded soldiers; the French troops suffered seven casualties, mostly from land-mines. (One Canadian soldier was killed and two others injured in a vehicle collision.) The Croats reported 27 soldiers killed or wounded in the firefights at Medak. Col. Calvin received the meritorious service cross for his role in the Medak Pocket operation; the Princess Pats were handed the force commander's unit commendation by Gen. Cot, one of only three awarded during the long peacekeeping mission to the former Yugoslavia.

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Drie keer zette ik donderdag de radio aan en drie keer hoorde ik gratis reclame voor een nieuw boek van soapschrijfster Lulu Wang. Hoe werkt zo iets nou?

Hoe krijg je als uitgever de presentator van een nieuwsrubriek zo gek om (ik wed zonder dat hij het boek gelezen had) te zeggen: 'U moet hem hebben, de nieuwe Lulu Wang, want heel Nederland gaat hem kopen.' Eerder deze week namen vrijwel alle kranten een persbericht van uitgever Vassallucci op met het nieuws dat het boek niet bij Albert Heijn, maar in boekwinkels verkocht zal worden, niet f 39,90 maar f 42,50 gaat kosten en gedrukt is in een recordoplage van 160.000 exemplaren. *Vrij Nederland* wijdt deze week een omslagverhaal aan de schrijfster. RTL4, de NCRV, iedereen doet mee. *De Volkskrant* bracht een groot verslag van Wangs aanwezigheid bij de presentatie van een 'New Age-bijbel' getiteld *Een Cursus in Wonderen*. Op deze hocus-pocus waren 1.500 spirituele zoekers afgekomen.

Hoe het werkt? De manier is zo oud als de wereld, die bedrogen wil worden. *Mundus vult decipi*, ergo decipiatur: dus worde zij bedrogen, de stupide, goedgelovige wereld.

2017-10 VAN DE WEEK

Elsbeth Etty

Lulu's luierseks

In 1997 tuinde ik er net zo hard in als iedereen. Uitgeverij Vassallucci had de krant een 'exclusief interview' aangeboden met Lulu Wang wegens de verschijning van haar debuut, *Het lelietheater*. *NRC Handelsblad* zou de eerste zijn die het nieuwe schrijfwonder te zien en te spreken kreeg. Een collega die het interview zou maken werd ziek en zo kreeg ik de drukproe-

ven toegeschoven. Met de infantiele verzinsels waaruit het in belabberd Nederlands gestelde proza bestond, wist ik me geen raad, maar afspraak is afspraak en dus toog ik naar Wangs toenmalige woonplaats Maastricht. Daar was inmiddels ook de *Libelle* langs geweest, waarmee de uitgever blijkbaar een nog exclusievere ontmoeting had geregeld. Trots toonde de debutante me het damesblad waarin haar foto prijkte bij een kritiekloos, aan-

prijzend vraaggesprek. De geur van bedrog die al uit de drukproeven was opgestegen, vulde de kamer.

Glimlachend voorspelde ze mij dat ze tonnen ging verdienen met *Het lelietheater*, dat haar bovendien grote literaire roem zou bezorgen. Gedurende ons hele gesprek hield ze krampachtig een jampotje met water in haar handen geklemd waarop ze een briefje geplakt had met de woorden: Debutantenprijs, AKO-literatuurprijs, Nobelprijs. Die prijzen zijn niet binnengekomen, de tonnen wel. Van het slutverhaal over een meisje in een Chinees strafkamp tijdens de Culturele Revolutie zijn 400.000 exemplaren verkocht.

Deze week verscheen dus haar tweede roman, *Het tedere kind*, opnieuw voorafgegaan door allerhande 'exclusieve' interviews. De inhoud van dit boek is echter al twee jaar bekend en zorgvuldig afgestemd op de lezersmarkt. Voor *Het lelietheater* leverde Jung Changs *Wilde Zwanen* het format en de vraag was indertijd of er een nog groter kassucces kon worden nagevolgd. Natuurlijk *De Celestijnse belofte*, maar

dan vermengd met het leed dat kindermisbruik heet. 'Mijn volgende boek', vertelde Lulu me in 1997, 'wordt een emotionele, erotische versie van *De Celestijnse belofte* een zoektocht naar waarheid, naar menselijke vrijheid, naar menselijk bewustzijn. Mijn tweede boek krijgt als thema incest in China (...) en ik weet dat het een nog groter succes gaat worden dan mijn eerste boek. Ik kan dat zo diep, zo intens en emotioneel op papier zetten.'

P.F. Thomése schreef vorig jaar in *de Revisor* dat volgens hem uitgeverijen met succesformats werken, waarop publiektrekken- de kwalificaties als 'fascinerende zoektocht', 'schrijnend geschreven', 'moedig', en 'openhartig' van toepassing zijn. In *de Volkskrant* gaven Lex Spaans en Oscar van Gelderen van uitgeverij Vassallucci dat donderdag min of meer toe. Tot hun marketingstrategie hoort regie over de publiciteit die niet over het boek maar over de auteur moet gaan. Die moet consequent 'één verhaal' over zichzelf naar buiten brengen. Ik vermoed dat om die reden het vorige boek van Wang als 'au-

tobiografisch' werd voorgesteld. Nu wil iedereen weten of *Het tedere kind*, waarvan de hoofdperson precies lijkt op die van *Het lelietheater* en op Lulu Wang, ook 'waar gebeurd is' en of de schrijfster zelf ook als kind is misbruikt.

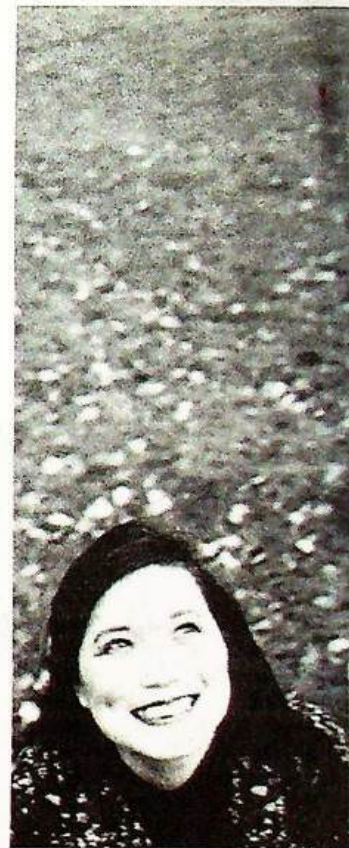
Tot nu toe noteerde ik niet een, maar drie (regiefoutje?) verhalen. Het eerste vertelde ze aan mij. Haar vader, zei ze, had zich aan haar vergrepen, daar zou ze over gaan schrijven. Versie twee stond in *Vrij Nederland* en komt er op neer dat ze niet weet of ze misbruikt is: 'Het kan net zo goed wel als niet gebeurd zijn.' De derde variant hoorde ik in een radio-interview: 'Nee', zei ze, 'ik ben niet misbruikt.'

Het incestthema lijkt in de publieke belangstelling enigszins te zijn verdrongen door griezelverhalen over sekskelders en soortgelijke Dutroux-achtige nachtmerries, waarin vanuit het niets anonieme pedofielen opduiken, die verslaafd zijn aan luierseks. In Lulu's nieuwe boek, opgedragen aan haar 'dierbare vader en moeder', loopt dan ook zo iemand rond, Man Zonder Hoofd genaamd. Deze penetreert bij

voortdurend een baby die bereidwilling haar beentjes spreidt of haar mondje opent en zich met zijn 'zeepsop' laat besproeien. Fijn om te lezen? Nee, maar daar hebben Lulu en haar uitgever iets op gevonden. Nu brengen ze naar buiten dat *Het tedere kind* 'een heel erotisch boek' is, waarvan de lezer opgewonden raakt.

Ook dat is bedrog. In het verhaal, dat afwisselend vanuit het perspectief van het misbruikte kind en het volwassen slachtoffer wordt verteld, komen weliswaar veel seksscènes voor, maar die zijn zo abominabel opgeschreven dat ze op hun best lachwekkend zijn. 'Hij stond voor haar wieg, verwijderde het dekentje van haar lijf en uit zijn open nek ontsnapte een serie zuchten met de strekking van een startende stoomlocomotief. Toen zijn gulp tegen de spijlen van haar wieg wreef, bevroor ze.'

Exclusief voor u heb ik dit boek gelezen: slaapverwekkende namaak, calculerend misbruik van kindermisbruik, erger nog dan de concentratiekampkitsch in *Het lelietheater*. Koop het niet, tenzij u graag wilt worden opge-



Lulu Wang Foto Thom Hoffman

HET BELANG VAN GEVAARLIJK DENKEN

14-4-94

Het begon allemaal op een zomers congres in het Noord-Beierse Schloss Elmau. Vervolgens nagelden Frankfurter Rundschau, Süddeutsche Zeitung, der Spiegel en Die Zeit de filosoof Peter Sloterdijk aan de schandpaal. En het woord 'fascistisch' viel. Sloterdijk reageerde met een aanval op de pers en op Jürgen Habermas: 'De Frankfurter Schule is dood'. Het Duitse denken staat op zijn kop.

door Wim Beving

Als het denken zou kunnen beven, zouden we het dan kunnen registreren? In Duitsland heeft deze zomer in elk geval een denkschool plaatsgevonden, die nu nog natrilt in de feulletons van de kranten. En met nog onafznbare gevolgen.

De seismografische medewerker van de Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Lorenz Jäger, registreerde deze week niets minder dan 'de metafysische grondlegging van de Berlijnse republiek': het oude denken dat verbonden was met Bonn en Frankfurt, heeft afgedaan. „De theorieën van Horkheimer, Adorno en Habermas hebben hun tijd gehad”, zegt Jäger, want: „Voor een niet normale democratie zijn ze ... precies het goede”. Dat laatste citaat is niet van Jäger; daar citeert hij de filosoof Peter Sloterdijk, het epicentrum van de beving.

Sloterdijk besloot instant geschiedenis te schrijven (dat kan in de mediatiidperk) door vorige week een open brief aan Jürgen Habermas (het linksliberale geweten van de oude bondsrepubliek) te publiceren in het weekblad Die Zeit. De brief was als een aanval op de oude koning en de proclamatie van het einde van zijn heerschappij. De brief was een grafrede. De internationaal befaamde kritische theorie van de Frankfurter Schule werd doodverklaard en de schok ervan was tot in het buitenland voelbaar. Het Franse tijdschrift Magazine littéraire schrijft op het onslag van zijn septembernummer: 'Peter Sloterdijk. Un nouvel espace philosophique'.

Het woord 'espace' lijkt hier goed gekozen; waar de kritische theorie, steunend op het marxisme, de wereld op een zij van de tijd afbeelde, van onbewuste verblindende naar inzicht en bewustzijn, daar denkt Sloterdijk ruimtelijk en in 'Sferen' - zo luidt de titel van zijn laatste boek.

Maar voor we hier verder ingaan op Sloterdijks afrekening met de Frankfurter Schule waarvan hij zelf ook eens leerling was, moeten we proberen de aanloop naar dit historische ogenblik te reconstrueren.

Een zomervertelling. Het begon allemaal op een vierdaags congres in het Noord-Beierse Schloss Elmau, dat eindigde op 20 juli. Of nog preciezer, het begon eigenlijk met een verslag van dat congres dat op 24 juli in de Frankfurter Rundschau verscheen en dat op 29 juli in de Süddeutsche Zeitung zijn voortzetting kreeg. We moeten even bij deze verslagen stilstaan, omdat de rol van de media een integraal onderdeel uitmaakt van de aanval die Sloterdijk op Habermas inzette.

Op dat Beierse slot was een aantal eminente filosofen (en twee theologen) uitgenodigd hun gedachten te laten gaan over de filosofie van Martin

sche ideologie manifest geworden consequenties van deze filosofische perversie wegwimpelt (de Übermensch is iets veel grootsers dan 'de gelaarsde slechte Nietzsche-lezers uit de jaren dertig zich konden voorstellen') doet hij er met de andere hand nog een schep bovenop: filosofen zouden jegens de nieuwe mogelijkheden van de 'antropotechnieken' (Sloterdijks voor bio-genetica) niet kunnen vluchten in de onschuld van de weigering zich met zoiets bezig te willen houden. Wie niet selecteert, wordt geselecteerd; dus moeten het de filosofen zijn - althans de kennishebende elite onder hen - die de concepten van een gentechnologische mensenkweek controleren."

Deze uitvoerige weergave van de verslaggeving is van belang om te begrijpen met welke toonzetting de publieke sloop van de filosoof Sloterdijk werd ingezet. Een waardering van Heidegger ('Ik beoordeel Heidegger naar zijn geschriften en U beoordeelt hem naar zijn handelen' zou Sloterdijk volgens de FR ook nog hebben gezegd), een belediging van de joden, een pleidooi voor het kwelen van een betere mensensoort: ziehier de ingrediënten voor een explosief mengsel dat de reputatie van een vooraanstaand denker voorgoed zou kunnen opblazen.

Sloterdijk besloot zich te verweren. In een kort artikel voor de Frankfurter Rundschau van 31 juli laat hij weten dat hij heeft getracht duidelijk te maken dat de 'ongeevenaard duistere jaren na 1945' voor een generatie als de zijne (Sloterdijk werd in '47 geboren) psychologisch nog als een deel van de oorlogstijd ervaren kunnen worden. Verder heeft hij met het oog op Heidegger het gebod van de intellectuele sportiviteit willen volgen door de positie van de tegenstander zo sterk mogelijk weer te geven, in plaats van hem van tevoren moraliserend te veroordelen. In de kern echter leverde hij „een scherpe, zij het door hoogachting gekenmerkte kritiek". Voor de verslaggever heeft hij weinig goede woorden over: „Hoorde u ook niet dit bijna verrukte mondgemak in zijn fantasie dat ik mijn Israëlische collega's als 'vijanden' zou hebben betiteld?"

Sloterdijks verweer mocht niet baten, de critici verzamelden nieuwe munitie. In het weekblad Der Spiegel van 6 september wordt Sloterdijk opnieuw aangewreven een intellectueel schandaal te hebben veroorzaakt. In het artikel is sprake van een oproep tot een 'doelbewuste genetische selectie onder leiding van een culturele elite' en het woord 'fascistisch' valt. Der Spiegel ziet een gevaarlijke tendens: „Het is geen toeval dat het voormalige vlaggenschip van de linkse intelligentia, uitgeverij Suhrkamp met haar zijn huisleraar Siegfried Unseld, nu twee prominente auteurs onderdak verleent die met verve anti-democratische, anti-westerse, ja totalitaire fascistoïde denkbeelden verkondigen: Peter Sloterdijk en Jürgen Habermas."

gripen: de dood van de kritiek en haar transformatie in prikkel-producten op de krimpende markt van de aandacht-quota." Maar de werkelijke aanstichter van de bezoedelingen in Der Spiegel en Die Zeit zoekt Sloterdijk elders. Die aanstichter is Jürgen Habermas.

Habermas heeft zich vorig jaar in een artikel fel gekeerd tegen de ontwikkelingen in de genetica: klonen is zijns inziens ethisch volkomen verwerpelijk. Niettemin heeft hij in deze kwestie niet het discours gezocht met Sloterdijk, wel, aldus Sloterdijk in de aan Habermas gerichte brief, journalisten bestookt met 'roofkopieën' van zijn rede, compleet met een handleiding tot verkeerd lezen en een oproep in de pen te klimmen. De criticus van Die Zeit is zo'n bestookte leerling van Habermas.

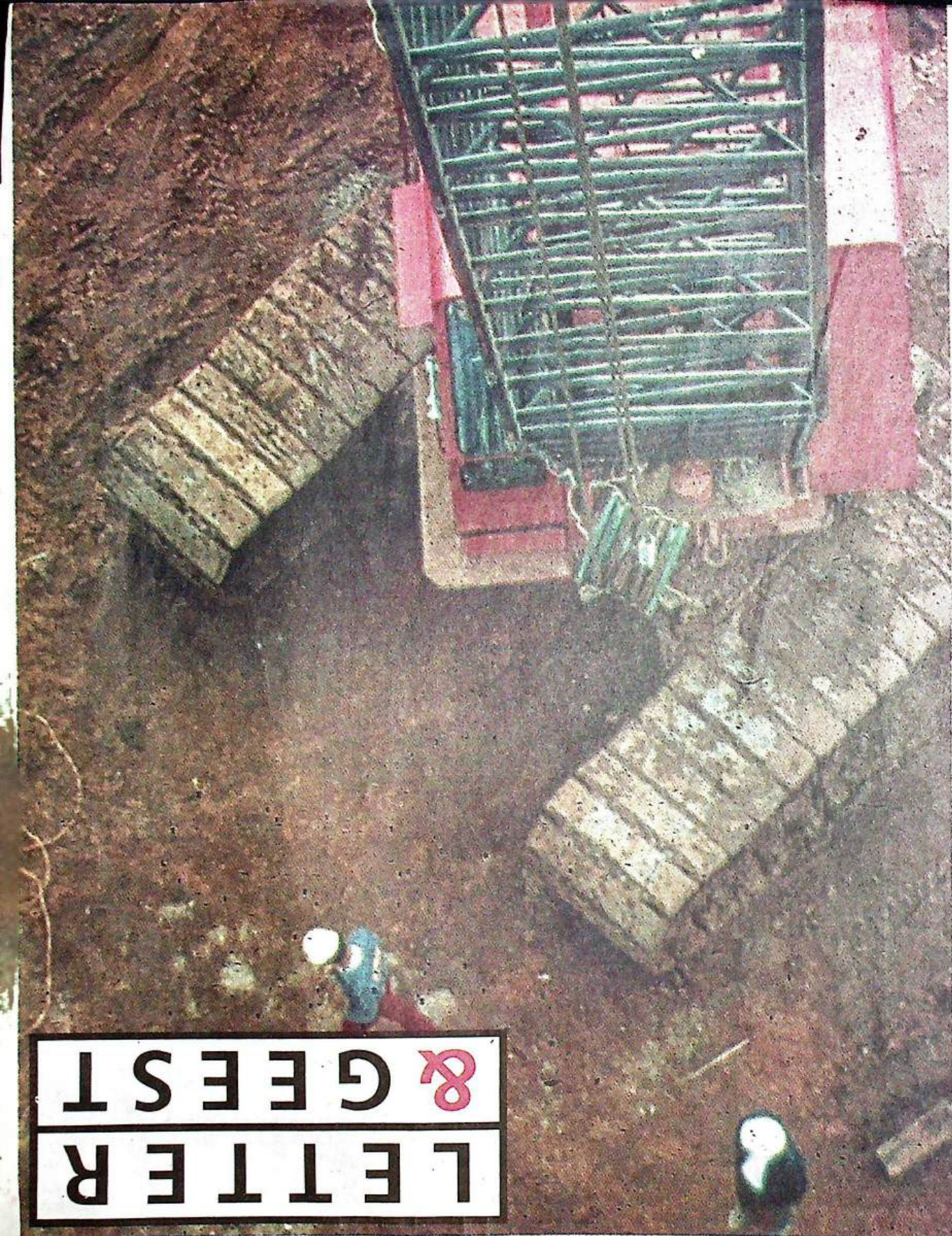
Voor Sloterdijk is de Frankfurter Schule van Habermas verworpen tot 'een sociaal-liberale versie van de deugden-dictatuur' met Jakobijnse trekken. (De Jakobijnen vormden tijdens de Franse revolutie een radicale beweging die een extreem egalitaire samenleving voorstond). Sloterdijk citeert Hegel die het wezen van terreur daarin zag dat er een directe overgang is van verdachtmaking naar veroordeling.

In elk Jakobinisme, schrijft Sloterdijk, staat aanklagen gelijk aan liquideren. En in deze tijd van uiterst efficiënte massa-media kan men opruïningen in een oogwenk organiseren: „Zelfs het nazi-regime was technisch langzamer."

Belaster je tegenstander, ook bij volledige weerlegging blijft er altijd iets van hangen. Dit oud-Romeinse principe is ook al gebruikt door Amerikaanse presidenten. Zo liet een van hen een politieke tegenstander besmeuren met leugens onder het motto 'I don't care if it is true or not; let the son of a bitch deny it'.

'Schandaalstatistisch gesproken' ziet de zaak er voor Sloterdijk ook niet best uit, maar hij wanhoopt niet. Het tijdperk van de hypermorele zonen van nationaal-socialistische vaders loopt ten einde, schrijft hij. Een iets vrijere generatie dient zich aan. Voor haar betekent de achterhaalde cultuur van verdachtmaking en betichting niet veel meer. Sloterdijk spreekt van de 'oude mentaliteitsmachthebbers' die zich nog één keer oprichten om een monument neer te zetten voor hun eigen hypermoraal. „Nog één keer willen ze, net als toen, toen geen enkele dode dictator voor ons verzet veilig was, oproepen tot een fascistenjacht."

Met bijtende spot draagt de getergde Sloterdijk de oude leermeester Habermas ten grave. „De kritische theorie is in deze septemberdagen gestorven. Ze was al lange tijd een bedlegerige, mopperige oude dame, nu is ze van ons gegaan. We zullen ons verzamelen aan het graf van een tijdperk, om de



LETTER & GEEST

luitde het thema oftewel 'De ethisch-religieuze ommekeer van de filosofie na Heideggers destructie van de ontotheologie'. Alleen al het thema zou voldoende moeten zijn om buitenstaanders te verjagen, maar zij die bleven werden voor hun moeite beloond. Want op de tweede dag las Sloterdijk zijn 'Antwoord op Heideggers humanisme-brief' voor, dat zo prikkelend was dat men er dankbaar aanstoot aan kon nemen. Niet onvermeld in de verslagen bleef het gegeven dat aan het congres menig denker uit Israël deelnam: gezien Heideggers nationaal-socialistische verwickelingen nog altijd goed voor wat dynamiet met korte lonten.

Maar wat nu bracht Sloterdijk aan ongehoords te berde? We zijn zo vrij hier de verslaggeving te parafaseren. Het begon er volgens de *Frankfurter Rundschau* al mee dat Sloterdijk Heideggers verdiensten aanvankelijk uitvoerig prees: diens in 1946 geformuleerde afkeer van de Verlichting en het humanisme die in al hun zwakte niet in staat waren gebleken om verderfelijke politieke ideologieën af te weren, kon op Sloterdijks instemming rekenen: want „wie temt nog de mens, als het humanisme als school van de mensen-temming faalt?" Maar werkelijk verontwaardigd raakt de verslaggever als hij de volgende uitspraak van Sloterdijk aldus optekent: „Uitgerekend aan het schrille einde van het nationaal-humanistische tijdperk, in de ongeëvenaard duistere jaren na (sic!) 1945, zou het humanistische model nog eenmaal opbloeien." Die laatste zin, aldus de *Frankfurter Rundschau*, was een belediging van de collega's uit Israël, onder wie de historicus Saul Friedländer. Want was niet de tijd vóór 1945 ongeëvenaard duister? De stemming op het congres was danig aangetast en Friedländer zou er bij de organisatie op aangedrongen hebben het 'misverstand' door Sloterdijk te laten wegnemen. Die maakte er vervolgens in een podiumdiscussie weinig woorden aan vuil: „Men moet verschillende kalenders van terrorisme accepteren."

En als om de provocatie verder op de spits te drijven verklaarde Sloterdijk een 'sportieve opvatting' van de filosofie te hebben en er groot genoeg aan te beleven zich te meten met 'sterke vijanden'. Op dit punt, aldus nog steeds de *Rundschau*, zag men Friedländer verstenen. Want wie zou Sloterdijk met die vijanden op het oog hebben gehad? Maar Friedländer vroeg er niet naar, hij stond op, naar eigen zeggen om te telefoneren, en verliet vroegtijdig de zaal. Nee, hij was niet geïrriteerd geweest. „Ik was sprakeloos."

Ook in het verslag in de *Süddeutsche Zeitung* keert dit 'schandalig' voorval op slot Elmau terug, maar hier neemt de verslaggever een zo mogelijk nog grotere *Ungeist* waar. Met een verwijzing naar Nietzsche zou Sloterdijk een pleidooi gehouden hebben voor het scheppen van *Übermenschen*. De mens 'tem' je niet met de (toch al ondeugdelijke) middelen van de Verlichting. Het komt er niet op aan de mens te temmen, het komt erop aan hem te kweken, aldus de Sloterdijkse wending in het verslag van de *Süddeutsche*. We citeren nu letterlijk: „Terwijl Sloterdijk met de ene hand de in de nationaal-socialistische

dijk en Peter Handke." Hier maakt Sloterdijk, akkrus het blad, als gedesillusioneerde linkse intellectueel de sprong van humanist naar superhumanist, van mensenvriend naar Übermenschenvriend. 'Gentechnologie in plaats van maatschappijkritiek: de uterus vervangt de utopie.'

In diezelfde week heeft ook *Die Zeit* toegeslagen: ook hier moet Sloterdijk het verwijt verduren dat hij zich een arbeidsgemeenschap zonder democratie voorstelt van echte filosofen en gen-technici die zich niet langer met ethische vraagstukken bezighouden, maar praktische maatregelen treffen. Ook hier bevindt zich Sloterdijk op de grens van het totalitaire met zijn verlangen de lessen van de Verlichting ('Lektionen der Aufklärung') te vervangen door de selectie van de genetica ('Se-Lektionen der Gentechnik').

Frankfurter Rundschau, Süddeutsche Zeitung, der Spiegel, Die Zeit: de complete links-liberale pers heeft inmiddels de filosoof aan de schandpaal genageld. Sloterdijk besluit andermaal te reageren, dit keer met een verrassend verweer. Aanvankelijk gaat hij in zijn twee open brieven in *Die Zeit* (de een zoals gezegd gericht aan Habermas, de ander aan zijn criticus in dat weekblad) in op het element van het opzettelijk misverstaan. In zijn rede in slot Elmau staat niets anders dan dat met het oog op de actuele doorbraken in de biotechnologie een morele codex geformuleerd moet worden. En in die codex, schrijft hij ter verduidelijking, „moet de grens getrokken worden tussen de legitieme door gentechnologie aangebrachte levensverbetering voor het individu en de niet legitieme biopolitiek voor groepen".

Sloterdijk vraagt zich af van welke surrealistische versie van zijn rede de criticus in *Die Zeit* zich bedient. Een elitaire nieuwe kweek van de mensensoort? „In mijn oren klinkt dat naar sciencefiction, gecombineerd met biologische gothiek en sociologische gruwel-romantiek." En dan hanteert Sloterdijk het verwijt van het journalistieke alarmisme. Eerst nog quasi-vriendelijk; tenslotte hebben de 'Capitolijnse gansen Rome ook voor de ondergang behoeft, dus heeft het alarmisme in de pers oud-europese wortels'. Bovendien kan men beter een keer te veel snateren dan een keer te weinig, ook daarmee heeft Sloterdijk geen moeite. Maar moet men niet af en toe waarschuwen voor de waarschuwer? De criticus van *Die Zeit* is hard op weg een probleemgans te worden. „Of bepaalt de gans wie de Galliër is?" Want waarom, vraagt Sloterdijk zich af, had hij niet kunnen volstaan met de vaststelling dat 'de filosoof X een voordracht heeft gehouden over een van de meest explosieve thema's van onze tijd, een tamelijk esoterische, literair hoogstaande rede, een filosofisch nachtstuk dat de auteur zelf niet zonder zorg voor de afgronden van zijn probleemstelling voordroeg voor een groep eminente filosofen?'

Sloterdijk denkt te weten waarom de gans zo snaterde. Hij ziet een ontwikkeling van het alarmisme naar het schandalisme. „Menig journalist, en dat geldt ook voor u, heeft de tekenen van de tijd be-

hypoocrisie te herdenken."

Men moet nu uit het voorafgaande niet de conclusie trekken dat Sloterdijk met zijn aanval op Habermas impulsief handelde. Al in 1996 problematiseerde hij de links-liberale consensus. In een gesprek met de Spaanse filosoof Carlos Oliveira drong hij aan op 'een psychogram van een verloren generatie', doelend op de linkse en links-liberale '68-ers, wier idealen overdekt zijn geraakt door 'karikaturen en carriërismen'. Sloterdijk zag verbittering, stagnatie, aanmatiging. Links is uiteengevallen. „Maar", zei hij toen, „merkwaardig genoeg zijn de oude aversies nog aanwezig, hebben de oude onhebbelijkheden overleefd en ook de oude ondeugden. Dit oud-linksliberale onfatsoen kruipt overal uit holen tevoorschijn, zonder enig utopisch excuus."



Dat onfatsoen uitte zich ook toen al in de aanvallen die gericht waren op intellectuelen als Botho Strauss, Peter Handke, Wim Wenders en Sloterdijk. 'Het gnostische kwartet' werden ze destijds spottend door een criticus (dezelfde als die uit *Die Zeit*) genoemd. De vier zeiden dingen die niet gezegd mochten worden, dachten dingen die niet gedacht mochten worden. Maar dat, zei Sloterdijk, is juist een kwaliteit van groot schrijverschap. „Er bestaat een directe relatie tussen de grootte van een auteur en de gevaarlijkheid van de stoffen waarmee hij omgaat. Het is niet de opgave van een schrijver om onschadelijk te zijn. Uit onschadelijkheid komt uitsluitend onschadelijkheid voort, maar uit het gevaarlijke ontstaat het denken en als het denken het punt van de vorm vindt, komt het ogenblik van de kunst. Een schrijver die iets voorstelt, besmet zichzelf met de stof waarmee hij werkt – het gaat nu eenmaal niet anders. Thomas Mann heeft dat zo gedaan, Kafka, Benn, Musil, Broch, alle groten van deze eeuw. Ze zijn allen meesters van het gevaarlijke denken geweest."

BOEKEN

Deze week verscheen het eerste deel van een biografie over de president Soekarno. Volgens de historicus Lambert Giebels was Soekarno „de enige Indonesiër die het gezag bezat dat nodig was om zijn land onafhankelijk te verklaren".



De nieuwe bundel 'Geleende tijd' van Jean Pierre Rawie, heeft zeven jaar op zich laten wachten. Rawie komt in 'Geleende tijd' ouderwets goed voor de dag. Toegegeven, hij is geen vernieuwer, maar so what?

Trouw

ZATERDAG 18 SEPTEMBER 1999

Visuele zeggingskracht

Terugdenkend aan mijn sprookjesjaren meende ik toch zeker te weten dat een prinses haar visuele zeggingskracht niet alleen ontleent aan haar schoonheid, maar ook aan een zekere stijl, gratie en ingetogenheid. Een prinses heeft iets engel- of elfjesachtigs, wist ik. Zij heeft iets zo bijzonders, dat ik dat beeld vermoedelijk alleen daarom al veilig achter slot en grendel had opgeborgen. Zo iets bestaat niet in dit ondermaanse.

Tot ik de afgelopen dagen in hoog tempo met de neus gedrukt werd op wat men tegenwoordig onder visuele zeggingskracht verstaat. Op de deur-



mat plofte het nieuwe magazine van *de Volkskrant* waarin hoofdredacteur Pieter Broertjes met gepaste trots opmerkt: „We treden hiermee in de voetsporen van diverse grote Europese en Amerikaanse dagbladen. Van hen hebben we ge-

BREEDVELD

leerd dat reportages en interviews een aanzienlijke meerwaarde krijgen door visuele zeggingskracht van een fraai uitgevoerd magazine.” En jawel hoor, een blote meid op de voorpagina. Op dit 'zacht glanzende papier' (ik verzin het niet, hij schrijft het echt) denkt Broertjes „het journalistieke erfgoed van de *Volkskrant* in ere te kunnen houden”.

Dit magazine valt nog in de schaduw bij *HP/De Tijd* van vorige week. Daarin wordt het PvdA-Kamerlid Marjet van Zuijlen met argeloze vanzelfsprekendheid voorgesteld als de 'lekkerste babe' van het parlement, 'met de wilde frisheid van limoenen', waarover een collega-Kamerlid ongestraft mag opmerken: „Marjet netwerkt zich het apenzuur; dan is het: tietenvooruit en hier ben ik.” De verslaggever zal gedacht hebben: ze heeft het ernaar gemaakt. Moet ze (fotootje erbij natuurlijk) zichzelf maar niet op een pornosite van Internet presenteren als 'the hairy babe of the month'. Maar dan nog, De journalistiek heeft toch een eigen standaard?

Boter aan de galg. Vorige week ook riep correspondent Ineke Holtwijk voor 'het Nos-journaal' uit: „Maxima is verpletterend mooi! Ze doet Diana verbleken! Ze wordt de mooiste prinses van Europa!” Het inspireerde Dorien Pessers dinsdag in haar column in de *Volkskrant* tot de fraaie exclamatie: „Een exotische koninklijke liefde raakt kennelijk het collectieve onderbewuste van de Noord-Europese mannen. Voor de gereformeerde kaaskoppen staat een Zuid-Amerikaanse vrouw nog steeds voor warmbloedigheid, hitsigheid en geilheid (...) dan slaan in de infantiele koppen van de Nederlandse journalisten de seksuele fantasiën op hol.”

Kortom, in de (media)cultuur zijn we inmiddels ver afgedwaald van het beeld dat ik vroeger ooit van een prinses koesterde. Verder vermoedelijk nog dan Pessers veronderstelt, want de wildste aanprijzingen over Maxima kwamen niet uit de mond van mannen, maar van vrouwen. Niet alleen uit die van Ineke Holtwijk. Zo las ik in mijn eigen *Trouw* van gisteren hoe Wilma Nanninga van Privé Maxima noemde: „Een struise, blonde, swingende jetset-koningin, heerlijk. Maxima heeft het potentieel van een prinses Diana of een Gracia van Monaco”.

Waarop dat oordeel gebaseerd is? Niet op een diepte-interview met de mogelijke aanstaande koningin. Evenmin knoopt deze waarneming aan bij haar filosofische overpeinzingen over het Argentijnse kolonelsregime van weleer, of haar visie op de cultuur in het algemeen. Hier is sprake van pure visuele zeggingskracht. Vraag me niet wat daarmee bedoeld wordt. Maar pak ik de vroegere kwaliteitsbladen *HP/De Tijd* en de *Volkskrant* erbij, dan begin ik zo langzaam wel een indruk te krijgen. Het gaat hier om een zeggingskracht die niet zozeer gericht is op de geest of op het verstand. Een zeggingskracht die inspireert, of op zijn minst tot nadenken stemt. Nee, het gaat hier om een zeggingskracht die zich richt op een vaag gevoel in de onderbuik, dat besloten ligt in de woorden 'lekker bloot'. Een gevoel dat niet verder reikt dan een oppervlakkig 'aha'.

Willem Breedveld

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Yugoslavia: Milosevic must be transferred to The Hague

"Former President Slobodan Milosevic should be arrested and transferred to the custody of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (Tribunal), which has indicted him under international law for crimes against humanity", Amnesty International stated today.

"As a member of the United Nations, the FRY is obliged to surrender Slobodan Milosevic and all other people indicted by the Tribunal to its custody", the organization stressed.

On Wednesday 28 February Serbian authorities instructed the police to investigate crimes - including financial improprieties- allegedly committed by the former President.

In view of increasing reports from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) that former President Slobodan Milosevic may be arrested very soon, Amnesty International calls on President Vojislav Kostunica to recognize the primacy of the Tribunal, and the gravity of the crimes for which former President Milosevic has been indicted by the Tribunal.

Under the United Nations Security Council Resolution, which established the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, all states are obliged to surrender a person indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

Article 6 of UN SC Resolution 827, May 1993, states that the Tribunal does not require states to extradite their citizens to the Tribunal, but to transfer persons accused by the Tribunal - residing remaining on their territory - to the Tribunal's jurisdiction.

Background

Slobodan Milosevic was indicted with four other people who are former government officials on May 1999 on charges of crimes against humanity and violations of the law and customs of war committed in Kosovo by Serbian and FRY forces acting under their command, with their encouragement and with their support. Co-indicted with the former president are Milan Milutinovic, President of Serbia until 25 January 2001, Nikola Sainovic, former Deputy Prime Minister, Dragomir Odzanic, former Yugoslav Army Chief of Staff and Vlastimir Djindjic, former Serbian Minister of Internal Affairs.

According to reported statements of Serbian Interior Minister Dusan Mihajlovic the former leader has been placed under 24-hour surveillance since February. Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic announced on 2 February in Washington that evidence was being gathered in preparation for the indictment of Slobodan Milosevic, suggesting that proceedings could be initiated before the end of the month. On 15 February, while visiting London, Zoran Djindjic made a similar announcement. Apparently there is a division amongst the FRY and Serbian leadership regarding the transfer of Slobodan Milosevic to The Hague. President Vojislav Kostunica has repeatedly stated that he will transfer indicted suspects to the Hague. The Federal Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic, has reportedly remarked that Slobodan Milosevic will not be handed over to the UN tribunal, stating: "As long as I am heading the federal government, extradition of Milosevic is out of the question," adding extradition would be "below the dignity of our state and the people."

Federal Justice Minister, Momcilo Grubac, who is currently drafting legislation to enable the FRY to cooperate more fully with the Tribunal, has reportedly stated that Slobodan Milosevic could be transferred to The Hague soon after the passing of a law on cooperation.

Amnesty International is concerned that many people indicted by the Tribunal for war crimes in

Bosnia- Herzegovina and Croatia remain at liberty in the FRY including the so- called Vukovar -indicted for the mass killings of at least 200 people taken from Vukovar hospital; General Ratko Mladic - (indicted for genocide); and Predrag and Nenad Banovic, accused of crimes committed Keraterm detention camp.

\\ENDS

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YUGOSLAVIA

(FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF)

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Head of state: Slobodan Milosevic

Head of government: Momir Bulatovic

Capital: Belgrade

Population: 10.6 million

Official language: Serbian

Death penalty: retentionist

The armed conflict between the Serbian and Yugoslav forces, and armed ethnic Albanians of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) reached its climax between March and June after NATO intervened with air attacks against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). Gross human rights violations on a large scale by Serbian police and paramilitary units and by the Yugoslav army drove around 850,000 ethnic Albanians out of Kosovo, creating a regional refugee crisis. Extrajudicial executions, "disappearances", arbitrary detention, torture, ill-treatment, forcible expulsions and the deliberate destruction of homes were widespread and systematic. There were also reports of rape or other sexual violence against ethnic Albanian women. According to independent estimates, at least 500 civilians were killed by NATO. There were concerns as to whether NATO took sufficient precautions in selecting targets and executing its attacks so as to minimize civilian casualties; AI considered that NATO forces may have violated international humanitarian law. After the withdrawal of Serbian and Yugoslav forces from Kosovo in June, there were widespread human rights abuses by armed ethnic Albanians, many of them belonging to, or representing themselves as members of, the KLA. The victims were Serbs, Roma and ethnic Albanians accused of "collaboration" with the Serbian authorities, or activists in moderate political parties. Hundreds of people were unlawfully killed or abducted and, partly as a result of these attacks, more than half of the non-Albanian population had fled Kosovo by the end of 1999. Human rights violations occurred throughout the rest of the FRY. Hundreds of anti-government demonstrators were beaten by police. Opposition activists, independent journalists and conscientious objectors were arrested and imprisoned.

The Kosovo crisis

For many years demands, expressed largely through peaceful means by ethnic Albanians, for autonomy and independence for Kosovo had been met with routine torture or ill-treatment by police and the incarceration of prisoners of conscience. In the 1990s, frustration with the political situation led to the formation of the KLA, which sought Kosovo's secession through force. By early 1998 the situation had deteriorated into armed conflict. At the beginning of 1999 a cease-fire was in place, but was growing steadily weaker. Small-scale attacks on Serbian targets by the KLA continued to be met with excessive force by the Serbian police. The killing of 45 ethnic Albanians at Racak village by police at the end of January led to intense diplomatic pressure and renewed threats of armed intervention by NATO. Citing violence by the Serbian and Yugoslav forces and the FRY's refusal to sign up to a peace plan, NATO ordered air strikes against the FRY which commenced on 24 March.

Mass expulsions during the NATO bombing campaign

The Yugoslav leadership responded to the NATO action with an upsurge in violence against the civilian ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo and new offensives against the KLA. The Yugoslav army took part in the actions in Kosovo, but human rights violations were perpetrated primarily by Serbian police and paramilitaries who operated alongside them. A systematic program to expel the civilian population began in the first days of the NATO campaign. Extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detention, "disappearances", beatings, rape, and the burning of houses and shops were used to terrorize the population into flight. Serbian forces systematically directed people from western and northern Kosovo towards the Albanian or Macedonian borders, allowing them through or stopping them at will.

Extrajudicial executions

Thousands of ethnic Albanian civilians were killed by police, paramilitaries or soldiers between 24 March and 10 June. The victims appeared to have been targeted for suspected connections with the KLA, for their political activities, or for links with international organizations. Men of military age were widely regarded as suspects and many were killed shortly after coming under the control of Serbian police or paramilitaries.

* Prominent lawyer and human rights activist Bajram Kelmendi and his two sons, one of whom was only 16 years old, were taken from their house in Pristina by police on the night of 24/25 March. They were found shot dead two days later.

* On 27 March Serbian forces overran KLA fighters defending the village of Kladerica, near Srbica (Skënderaj); ethnic Albanian civilians fled into the surrounding hills. Witnesses

described the killings of around 30 civilians by Serbian forces. In the nearby village of Izbica, most men of military age had fled before Serbian forces moved into the village the following day. Houses in the village were set on fire and several bodies, apparently of elderly people who had been unable to flee, were later found in the ruins. Witnesses described how scores of men, including the young and elderly, were separated from the women and shot. Some 150 people were believed to have been killed, although it was impossible to confirm whether all were non-combatants.

'Disappearances'

At least 2,000, perhaps many more, ethnic Albanians, the majority of whom were believed to have fallen into the hands of Serbian police or paramilitaries between March and June, were unaccounted for at the end of 1999. Relatives and witnesses of the "disappeared" feared that some had been killed shortly after their arrest. Subsequent discoveries of bodies and exhumations of mass graves confirmed these fears in a number of cases.

* In the town of Djakovica (Gjakovë) police arrested large numbers of ethnic Albanian men in house-to-house searches. Most were taken to places of detention where many were tortured or ill-treated. Although some were released or later confirmed to be held in prison, hundreds of people from the area remained unaccounted for at the end of 1999.

Sexual violence against ethnic Albanian women

There were allegations of rape and sexual violence by Serbian police or paramilitaries against ethnic Albanian women. The need to protect victims and witnesses meant that the full extent of the abuses could not be determined.

* In April Serbian forces took a village near Suva Reka (Suhareka); only women, children and older men remained in the village. The elderly men "disappeared" amid fears that they were killed. The women and children were kept in three houses from which women were taken out repeatedly over several days. Three women testified that they had been raped, while statements from others indicated that there were many more victims.

NATO's bombing campaign

Despite NATO claims that it mounted the "most accurate bombing campaign in history", AI had serious concerns about several attacks which may have breached international law. NATO gave only general assurances that every effort had been made to avoid civilian casualties and did not provide substantive answers to AI's questions on specific incidents, nor any indication of whether investigations were being conducted. Despite repeated requests, NATO failed to provide details of the rules of engagement and other relevant instructions, which AI requested in order to allow an assessment of whether they complied with international humanitarian law.

* On 12 April a train carrying civilian passengers was twice hit by missiles launched by a NATO airplane during an attack on a railway bridge at Grdelica, reportedly killing at least 12 people. The incident called into question whether the pilot adhered to fundamental principles of humanitarian law which state that an attack should be cancelled or suspended if it becomes clear that the objective is not a military one or may cause disproportionate loss of civilian life.

* On 23 April NATO bombed the Serbian state television building in Belgrade killing 15 people, all of them apparently civilians. NATO justified the attack in the context of its policy to "disrupt the national command network and to degrade the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's propaganda apparatus". However, even if the station could have been considered a military target — which NATO failed to demonstrate — serious questions remained as to why precautions were not taken or warnings given to avoid killing civilians.

Trials and imprisonment of ethnic Albanians

In June the FRY authorities acknowledged that they were holding some 2,000 people, mostly ethnic Albanians on "terrorism"-related charges; some were prisoners of conscience. The majority had been detained in Kosovo and moved to prisons in Serbia. Most had either been sentenced following unfair trials or were under investigation in a new series of trials. There was evidence that they had been tortured or ill-treated in order to extract confessions and that for this and other reasons, they were not receiving fair trials. There were further concerns about the welfare of the prisoners, including complaints of inadequate food and healthcare for prisoners with medical problems. Some 300 prisoners were released between July and December after the charges against them were dropped.

* Flora Brovina, a doctor from Pristina, was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment by a court in Nis in December. Reports of her trial indicated that it was seriously flawed and that charges of her having been involved in "terrorism" were not substantiated. She was a prisoner of conscience.

Abuses in Kosovo after the withdrawal of Serbian and Yugoslav forces

In mid-June huge numbers of non-Albanians fled Kosovo with the withdrawing Serbian and Yugoslav forces. KLA members and other armed ethnic Albanians, who frequently claimed KLA membership, commenced widespread and almost daily attacks on Serbs, Roma and ethnic Albanians accused of "collaboration" who remained. Houses were burned to force occupants to leave and to discourage their return. People were abducted and questioned; ill-treatment and torture of detainees were routine.

Hundreds of people who were believed to have been abducted remained unaccounted for at the end of 1999. A few of those abducted were later found dead. There were also reports of Serbian or Romani women being raped by ethnic Albanians. According to UN estimates, which were generally regarded as optimistic, 50 per cent of the non-Albanian population had fled Kosovo by the end of 1999.

Kosovo policing and the judicial system

The NATO-led KFOR peacekeeping force struggled to maintain law and order. The UN interim police force, which was to take over policing from KFOR until the formation of a new local force, was desperately short-staffed since less than 1,900 of the promised 6,000 officers had been seconded by governments by the end of the year.

Policing, which like most aspects of civilian administration in Kosovo was the responsibility of the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), therefore continued to rely heavily on KFOR. UNMIK was also responsible for re-establishing the judicial system, but it was hampered by lack of resources, political pressure on judges, and the strain of trying to re-establish a multi-ethnic judiciary.

Refugees and displaced persons

Between April and June, some 500,000 Albanian refugees were forcibly expelled from Kosovo to Albania, about 350,000 to Macedonia and a smaller number to Montenegro. On several occasions thousands of asylum-seekers had their journeys blocked when the Macedonian authorities closed the border. The Macedonian authorities used closures and restrictions at the border to maintain pressure on other governments, particularly NATO members, to accept refugees. Governments were generally reluctant to share responsibility for the Kosovo refugees, who were given only temporary protection in most countries. The majority of the ethnic Albanian refugees in neighbouring countries had returned to Kosovo by the end of August.

Serbs and Roma who fled or were expelled into Serbia as a result of the actions of the KLA or other armed Albanians found themselves blocked by the Serbian authorities who tried to restrict their movements and prevent them from reaching Belgrade. A Kosovo Serb who succeeded in reaching Belgrade was imprisoned for 30 days after he demonstrated about the plight of displaced Kosovo Serbs.

Arrests for violations of international humanitarian law

KFOR troops in Kosovo arrested Serbs and Roma whom they suspected of involvement in the unlawful killing of ethnic Albanian civilians or other violations of international humanitarian law between March and June. The investigation of the suspects was taken over by investigating magistrates and prosecutors of the interim judicial system which was established in Kosovo from July onwards. Around 30 people were under investigation at the end of 1999.

The federal and Serbian governments failed to cooperate with the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The Tribunal issued an indictment in May accusing the Federal President, Slobodan Milosevic, and four members of the Serbian and federal governments of murder, persecution and deportation perpetrated by forces under their control between January and May 1999.

State of emergency

On 25 March the federal authorities declared a state of emergency as a result of NATO's attack. The declaration, and decrees issued in conjunction with it, widened police powers and restricted the right to freedom of assembly. The penalties for avoiding call-up and desertion were automatically increased to a maximum of 20 years' imprisonment. Most of the emergency decrees were lifted in June.

Conscientious objectors

Thousands of men, including conscientious objectors, who failed to comply with call-up regulations while the state of emergency was in force, were prosecuted and faced the increased penalties. Despite propaganda from NATO encouraging these men not to fight, after the conflict they had difficulty in obtaining protection as refugees in other countries.

Independent journalists and opposition activists

In the aftermath of the Yugoslav withdrawal from Kosovo, opposition party supporters, trade unionists and students demonstrated in towns throughout Serbia calling for the resignation of President Slobodan Milosevic. The demonstrations became more frequent from September onwards and were often allowed by the authorities. However, on several occasions police used truncheons to break up what started as peaceful demonstrations. Hundreds of demonstrators were beaten in the course of several such incidents. Independent or opposition publications or printing houses were often given huge fines which threatened their viability. Several journalists were prosecuted for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

* Bogoljub Arsenijevic, an opposition activist from Valjevo, was severely beaten in police custody following his arrest in August. In October he went on hunger strike in protest at inadequate medical treatment.

* Newspaper editor Slavko Curuvija and two of his journalists were sentenced to five months' imprisonment in March for "spreading false information" after being accused of associating a Serbian government minister with a murder in an article. Slavko Curuvija was murdered in April amid claims that the killing had been ordered by the authorities. No one had been charged with his murder by the end of the year. The two other journalists were called to serve their sentences in July, but reportedly went into hiding. If imprisoned they would be prisoners of conscience.


AI's actions


AI issued a series of appeals, statements and reports on human rights abuses in Kosovo. Researchers in the field carried out interviews with refugees, other victims and witnesses, lawyers, and representatives of the local and international organizations. AI issued recommendations and lobbied governments connected to or influential in the Kosovo crisis.

AI country reports

- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: A decade of unheeded warnings — Amnesty International's concerns in Kosovo, May 1989 to March 1999, volumes 1 and 2 (AI Index: EUR 70/039/99 and EUR 70/040/99)
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Amnesty International memorandum to the UN Security Council (AI Index: EUR 70/049/99)

- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Amnesty International's concerns relating to NATO bombings (AI Index: EUR 70/069/99)
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Kosovo): Killings in the Izbica area (AI Index: EUR 70/079/99)
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Kosovo): After tragedy, justice? (AI Index: EUR 70/080/99)
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Amnesty International's recommendations for the protection of human rights in post-conflict peace building and reconstruction in Kosovo (AI Index: EUR 70/091/99)
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: A broken circle — "disappeared" and abducted in Kosovo province (AI Index: 70/106/99)
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Kosovo): Smrekovnica prison — a regime of torture and ill-treatment leaves hundreds unaccounted for (AI Index: EUR 70/107/99)
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: The forgotten resisters — the plight of conscientious objectors to military service after the conflict in Kosovo (AI Index: EUR 70/111/99)
- Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Amnesty International urges KLA leader to stop human rights abuses (AI Index: EUR 70/112/99)

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TERRORISM IN KOSOVO AND METOHIA

Summary

- The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia made it possible to Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija to enjoy the highest degree of human rights and liberties, in accordance with the international conventions on human rights and other international documents in force.
- The members of the national minorities, who represent one third of the population of the FRY, use their rights in accordance with the Constitution, except the Albanian national minority.
- The situation with the human rights and liberties in Kosovo and Metohija is not the result of repression, but of the selective boycott, by the Albanian separatists, of the Yugoslav institutions and of the state, which prevents the Albanian national minority from using the rights they have according to the Constitution.
- The right to self-determination, at the basis of their number, which is invoked by the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija is not envisaged in International Law for national minorities, regardless of their percentage in the total population of a country.
- The Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija decided, in line with their separatist aspirations, to apply terrorism and smuggling and sales of narcotics to the countries from which the Albanians expect support for the achievement of their objectives, the countries that invest enormous funds in the struggle against such activities.
- The pre-requisite for the normalization of the situation in Kosovo and Metohija is the dialogue about the question of the achievement of human, citizen's and national rights, with the consistent application of the constitution of the FRY and a clear condemnation of terrorism.

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NATO has installed a reign of terror in Kosovo



If you're undecided about American policy in the Balkans, or if you support it, read this essay.

Professor Chossudovsky states his bold conclusions at the outset: double standards, lies, and murder constitute American policy in Kosovo. Do Professor Chossudovsky's conclusions, and the factual evidence adduced to support them, hold up? - George Thompson

NATO has installed a reign of terror in Kosovo

by Michel Chossudovsky

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(Michel Chossudovsky is Professor of Economics at the University of Ottawa and author of *The Globalization of Poverty, Impacts of IMF and World Bank Reforms*, Third World Network, Penang and Zed Books, London, 1997.)

MASSACRES OF CIVILIANS

While the World focuses on troop movements and war crimes, the massacres of civilians in the wake of the bombings have been casually dismissed as "*justifiable acts of revenge*". In occupied Kosovo, "double standards" prevail in assessing alleged war crimes. The massacres directed against Serbs, ethnic Albanians, Roma and other ethnic groups have been conducted on the instructions of the military command of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).

Yet because NATO ostensibly denies KLA involvement, these so-called "*unmotivated acts of violence and retaliation*" are not categorized as "war crimes" and are therefore not included in the mandate of the numerous FBI and Interpol police investigators dispatched to Kosovo under the auspices of the Hague War Crime's Tribunal (ICTY). Moreover, whereas NATO has tacitly endorsed the self-proclaimed KLA provisional government, KFOR—the international security force in Kosovo—has provided protection to the KLA military commanders responsible for the atrocities. In so doing both NATO and the UN Mission have acquiesced to the massacres of civilians.

In turn, public opinion has been blatantly misled. In portraying the massacres, the Western media has casually overlooked the role of the KLA, not to mention its pervasive links to organized crime. In the words of National Security Advisor Samuel Berger, "*these people [ethnic Albanians] come back ... with broken hearts and with some of those hearts filled with anger*"¹. While the massacres are seldom presented as the result of "deliberate decisions" by the KLA military command, the evidence (and history of the KLA) amply confirm that these atrocities are part of a policy of "ethnic cleansing" directed mainly against the Serb population but also against the Roma, Montenegrins, Goranis and Turks:

Serbian houses and business have been confiscated, looted, or burned, and Serbs have been beaten, raped, and killed. In one of the more dramatic of incidents, KLA troops ransacked a monastery, terrorized the priest and a group of nuns with gunfire, and raped at least one of the nuns. NATO's inability to control the situation and provide equal protection for all ethnic groups, and its apparent inability or unwillingness to fully disarm the KLA, has

created a serious situation for NATO troops...2

the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), confirms in this regard that:

"more than 164,000 Serbs have left Kosovo during the seven weeks since... the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) entered the province... A wave of arson and looting of Serb and Roma homes throughout Kosovo has ensued. Serbs and Roma remaining in Kosovo have been subject to repeated incidents of harassment and intimidation, including severe beatings. Most seriously, there has been a spate of murders and abductions of Serbs since mid-June, including the late July massacre of Serb farmers" 3.

POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS

Under NATO's regency, the KLA has also ordered assassinations directed against political opponents including "loyalist" ethnic Albanians and supporters of the Kosovo Democratic League (KDL). These acts—ordered by the self-proclaimed Provisional Government of Kosovo (PGK)—are being carried out in a totally permissive environment. The leaders of the KLA rather than being arrested for war crimes, have been granted KFOR protection.

According to a report of the Foreign Policy Institute (published during the bombings):

"...the KLA have [no] qualms about murdering Rugova's collaborators, whom it accused of the "crime" of moderation... [T]he KLA declared Rugova a "traitor" - yet another step toward eliminating any competitors for political power within Kosovo."4

Already in May, Fehmi Agani, one of Rugova's closest collaborators in the Kosovo Democratic League (KDL) was killed. The Serbs were blamed by NATO spokesperson Jamie Shea for having assassinated Agani. According to Skopje's paper Makedonija Danas, Agani had been executed on the orders of the KLA's self-appointed Prime Minister Hashim Thaci.⁵ *"If Thaci actually considered Rugova a threat, he would not hesitate to have Rugova removed from the Kosovo political landscape."6*

In turn, the KLA has abducted and killed numerous professionals and intellectuals:

"Private and State properties are threatened, home-and apartment-owners are evicted en masse by force and threats, houses and entire villages are burned, cultural and religious monuments are destroyed... A particularly heavy blow... has been the violence against the hospital center in Pristina, the maltreatment and expulsion of its professional management, doctors and medical staff."7

Both NATO and the UN prefer to turn a blind eye. UN Interim Administrator Bernard Kouchner (a former French Minister of Health) and KFOR Commander Sir Mike Jackson have established a routine working relationship with Prime Minister Hashim Thaci and KLA Chief of Staff Brigadier General Agim Ceku.

ATROCITIES COMMITTED AGAINST THE ROMA

Ethnic cleansing has also been directed against the Roma (which represented prior to the conflict a population group of 150,000 people). (According to

es provided by the Roma Community in New York). A large part of the Roma population has already escaped to Montenegro and Serbia. In turn, there are reports that Roma refugees—who had fled by boat to Southern Italy—have been expelled by the Italian authorities.⁸ The KLA has also ordered the systematic looting and torching of Romani homes and settlements:

"All houses and settlements of Romani, like 2,500 homes in the residential area called 'Mahala' in the town of Kosovska Mitrovica, have been looted and burnt down".⁹

With regard to KLA atrocities committed against the Roma, the same media distortions prevail. According to the BBC: *"Gypsies are accused by [Kosovar] Albanians of collaborating in Serb brutalities, which is why they've also become victims of revenge attacks. And the truth is, some probably did."*¹⁰

INSTALLING A PARAMILITARY GOVERNMENT

As Western leaders trumpet their support for democracy, State terrorism in Kosovo has become an integral part of NATO's post-war design. The KLA's political role for the post-conflict period had been mapped out well in advance. Prior to the Rambouillet Conference, the KLA had been promised a central role in the formation of a post-conflict government. The "hidden agenda" consisted in converting the KLA paramilitary into a legitimate and accomplished civilian administration. According to US State Department spokesman James Foley (February 1999):

"We want to develop a good relationship with them [the KLA] as they transform themselves into a politically-oriented organization, ...[W]e believe that we have a lot of advice and a lot of help that we can provide to them if they become precisely the kind of political actor we would like to see them become."¹¹

In other words, Washington had already slated the KLA "provisional government" (PGK) to run civilian State institutions. Under NATO's "Indirect Rule", the KLA has taken over municipal governments and public services including schools and hospitals. Rame Buja, the KLA "Minister for Local Administration" has appointed local prefects in 23 out of 25 municipalities.¹²

Under NATO's regency, the KLA has replaced the duly elected (by ethnic Albanians) provisional Kosovar government of President Ibrahim Rugova. The self-proclaimed KLA administration has branded Rugova as a traitor declaring the (parallel) Kosovar parliamentary elections held in March 1998 to be invalid. This position has largely been upheld by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) entrusted by UNMIK with the post-war task of "democracy _building" and "good governance". In turn, OSCE officials have already established a working rapport with KLA appointees.¹³

The KLA provisional government (PGK) is made up of the KLA's political wing together with the Democratic Union Movement (LBD), a coalition of five opposition parties opposed to Rugova's Democratic League (LDK). In addition to the position of prime minister, the KLA controls the ministries of finance, public order and defense. The KLA has a controlling voice on the UN sponsored Kosovo Transitional Council set up by Mr. Bernard Kouchner. The PGK has also established links with a number of Western governments.

Whereas the KLA has been spearheaded into running civilian institutions (under the guidance of the OSCE), members of the duly elected Kosovar (provisional) government of the Democratic League (DKL) have been blatantly excluded from acquiring a meaningful political voice.

stalled a reign of terror in Kosovo

ESTABLISHING A KLA POLICE FORCE TO "PROTECT CIVILIANS"

Under NATO occupation, the rule of law has visibly been turned up side down. Criminals and terrorists are to become law-enforcement officers. KLA troops --which have already taken over police stations-- will eventually form a 4,000 strong "civilian" police force (to be trained by foreign police officers under the authority of the United Nations) with a mandate to "protect civilians". Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien has already pledged Canadian support to the formation of a civilian police force.¹⁴ The latter --which has been entrusted to the OSCE-- will eventually operate under the jurisdiction of the KLA controlled "Ministry of Public Order".

US MILITARY AID

Despite NATO's commitment to disarming the KLA, the Kosovar paramilitary organization is slated to be transformed into a modern military force. So-called "security assistance" has already been granted to the KLA by the US Congress under the 'Kosovar Independence and Justice Act of 1999'. Start-up funds of 20 million dollars will largely be "used for training and support for their [KLA] established self-defense forces."¹⁵ In the words of KLA Chief of Staff Agrim Ceku:

"The KLA wants to be transformed into something like the US National Guard, ... we accept the assistance of KFOR and the international community to rebuild an army according to NATO standards. ... These professionally trained soldiers of the next generation of the KLA would seek only to defend Kosova. At this decisive moment, we [the KLA] do not hide our ambitions; we want the participation of international military structures to assist in the pacific and humanitarian efforts we are attempting here"
16.

While the KLA maintains its links to the Balkans narcotics trade which served to finance many of its terrorist activities, the paramilitary organization has now been granted an official seal of approval as well as "legitimate" sources of funding. The pattern is similar to that followed in Croatia and in the Bosnian Muslim-Croatian Federation where so-called "equip and train" programs were put together by the Pentagon. In turn, Washington's military aid package to the KLA has been entrusted to Military Professional Resources Inc (MPRI) of Alexandria, Virginia, a private mercenary outfit run by high ranking former US military officers.

MPRI's training concepts --which had already been tested in Croatia and Bosnia-- are based on imparting "offensive tactics... as the best form of defense".¹⁷ In the Kosovar context, this so-called "defensive doctrine" transforms the KLA paramilitary into a modern army without however eliminating its terrorist makeup.¹⁸ The objective is to ultimately transform an insurgent army into a modern military and police force which serves the Alliance's future strategic objectives in the Balkans. MPRI has currently "ninety-one highly experienced, former military professionals working in Bosnia & Herzegovina".¹⁹ The number of military officers working on contract with the KLA has not been disclosed.

FORMER CROATIAN GENERAL APPOINTED KLA CHIEF OF STAFF

The massacres of civilians in Kosovo are not disconnected acts of revenge by civilians or by so-called "rogue elements" within the KLA as claimed by

O and the United Nations. They are part of a consistent and coherent pattern. The intent (and result) of the KLA sponsored atrocities have been to trigger the "ethnic cleansing" of Serbs, Roma and other minorities in Kosovo.

KLA Commander Agim Ceku referring to the killings of 14 villagers at Gracko on July 24, claimed that: "We [the KLA] do not know who did it, but I sincerely believe these people have nothing to do with the KLA." 20 In turn, KFOR Lieutenant General Sir Mike Jackson has commended his KLA counterpart, Commander Agim Ceku for "efforts undertaken" to disarm the KLA. In fact, very few KLA weapons have been handed in. Moreover, the deadline for turning in KLA weaponry has been extended. "I do not regard this as noncompliance" said Commander Jackson in a press conference, "but rather as an indication of the seriousness with which General Ceku is taking this important issue." 21

Yet what Sir Mike Jackson failed to mention is that KLA Chief of Staff Commander Agim Ceku (although never indicted as a war criminal) was (according to *Jane Defense Weekly* June 10 1999) "one of the key planners of the successful 'Operation Storm'" led by the Croatian Armed Forces against Krajina Serbs in 1995.

General Jackson—who had served in former Yugoslavia under the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR)—was fully cognizant of the activities of the Croatian High Command during that period including the responsibilities imparted to Brigadier General Agim Ceku. In February 1999, barely a month prior to the NATO bombings, Ceku left his position as Brigadier General with the Croatian Armed Forces to join the KLA as Commander in Chief.

FROM KRAJINA TO KOSOVO: SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

According to the Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Operation Storm resulted in the massacre of at least 410 civilians in the course of a three day operation (4 to 7 August 1995). 22 An internal report of The Hague War Crimes Tribunal (leaked to the *New York Times*), confirmed that the Croatian Army had been responsible for carrying out

"summary executions, indiscriminate shelling of civilian populations and "ethnic cleansing" in the Krajina region of Croatia...." 23

In a section of the report entitled "The Indictment. Operation Storm, A Prima Facie Case.", the ICTY report confirms that:

"During the course of the military offensive, the Croatian armed forces and special police committed numerous violations of international humanitarian law, including but not limited to, shelling of Knin and other cities... During, and in the 100 days following the military offensive, at least 150 Serb civilians were summarily executed, and many hundreds disappeared....In a widespread and systematic manner, Croatian troops committed murder and other inhumane acts upon and against Croatian Serbs" 24.

US "GENERALS FOR HIRE"

The internal 150 page report concluded that it has "sufficient material to establish that the three [Croatian] generals who commanded the military operation" could be held accountable under international law. 25 The individuals named had been directly involved in the military operation "in

are". Those involved in "the planning of Operation Storm" were not mentioned:

"The identity of the "American general" referred to by Fenrick [a Tribunal staff member] is not known. The tribunal would not allow Williamson or Fenrick to be interviewed. But Ms. Arbour, the tribunal's chief prosecutor, suggested in a telephone interview last week that Fenrick's comment had been 'a joking observation'. Ms. Arbour had not been present during the meeting, and that is not how it was viewed by some who were there. Several people who were at the meeting assumed that Fenrick was referring to one of the retired U.S. generals who worked for Military Professional Resources Inc.... Questions remain about the full extent of U.S. involvement. In the course of the three-year investigation into the assault, the United States has failed to provide critical evidence requested by the tribunal, according to tribunal documents and officials, adding to suspicion among some there that Washington is uneasy about the investigation... The Pentagon, however, has argued through U.S. lawyers at the tribunal that the shelling was a legitimate military activity, according to tribunal documents and officials.26.

The Tribunal was attempting to hide what had already been revealed in several press reports published in the wake of Operation Storm. According to a US State Department spokesman, MPRI had been helping the Croats "avoid excesses or atrocities in military operations."27 . Fifteen senior US military advisers headed by retired two star General Richard Griffiths had been dispatched to Croatia barely seven months before Operation Storm. 28 According to one report, MPRI executive director General Carl E. Vuono: "held a secret top-level meeting at Brioni Island, off the coast of Croatia, with Gen. Varimar Cervenko, the architect of the Krajina campaign. In the five days preceding the attack, at least ten meetings were held between General Vuono and officers involved in the campaign..."29

According to Ed Soyster a senior MPRI executive and former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) (interviewed by Time Magazine in early 1996):

"MPRI's role in Croatia is limited to classroom instruction on military-civil relations and doesn't involve training in tactics or weapons. Other U.S. military men say whatever MPRI did for the Croats—and many suspect more than classroom instruction was involved—it was worth every penny. "Carl Vuono and Butch [Crosbie] Saint are hired guns and in it for the money," says Charles Boyd, a recently retired four-star Air Force general who was the Pentagon's No. 2 man in Europe until July [1995]. "They did a very good job for the Croats, and I have no doubt they'll do a good job in Bosnia. " 30.

THE HAGUE TRIBUNAL'S COVER UP

The untimely leaking of the ICTY's internal report on the Krajina massacres barely a few days before the onslaught of NATO's air raids on Yugoslavia was the source of some embarrassment to the Tribunal's Chief Prosecutor Louise Arbour. The Tribunal (ICTY) attempted to cover up the matter and trivialize the report's findings (including the alleged role of the US military officers on contract with the Croatian Armed Forces). Several Tribunal officials including American Lawyer Clint Williamson sought to discredit the Canadian Peace-keeping officers' testimony who witnessed the Krajina massacres in 1995.31

Williamson, who described the shelling of Knin as a "minor incident," said that the Pentagon had told him that Knin was a

legitimate military target... The [Tribunal's] review concluded by voting not to include the shelling of Knin in any indictment, a conclusion that stunned and angered many at the tribunal" ...32

The findings of the Tribunal contained in the leaked ICTY documents were downplayed, their relevance was casually dismissed as "expressions of opinion, arguments and hypotheses from various staff members of the OTP during the investigative process".³³ According to the Tribunal's spokesperson "the documents do not represent in any way the concluded decisions of the Prosecutor." ³⁴

The internal 150 page report has not been released. The staff member who had leaked the documents is (according to a Croatian TV report) no longer working for the Tribunal. During the press Conference, the Tribunal's spokesman was asked: "about the consequences for the person who leaked the information", Blewitt [the ICTY spokesman] replied that he did not want to go into that. He said that the OTP would strengthen the existing procedures to prevent this from happening again, however he added that you could not stop people from talking". ³⁵

THE USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN CROATIA

The massacres conducted under Operation Storm "set the stage" for the "ethnic cleansing" of at least 180,000 Krajina Serbs (according to estimates of the Croatian Helsinki Committee and Amnesty International). According to other sources, the number of victims of ethnic cleansing in Krajina was much larger.

Moreover, there is evidence that chemical weapons had been used in the Yugoslav civil war (1991-95).³⁶ Although there is no firm evidence of the use of chemical weapons against Croatian Serbs, an ongoing enquiry by the Canadian Minister of Defense (launched in July 1999) points to the possibility of toxic poisoning of Canadian Peace-keepers while on service in Croatia between 1993 and 1995:

"There was a smell of blood in the air during the past week as the media sensed they had a major scandal unfolding within the Department of National Defense over the medical files of those Canadians who served in Croatia in 1993. Allegations of destroyed documents, a cover-up, and a defensive minister and senior officers..." 37.

The official release of the Department of National Defense (DND) refers to the possibility of toxic "soil contamination" in Medak Pocket in 1993 (see below). Was it "soil contamination" or something far more serious? The criminal investigation by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) refers to the shredding of medical files of former Canadian peace-keepers by the DND. In other words, did the DND have something to hide? The issue remains as to what types of shells and ammunitions were used by the Croatian Armed Forces – i.e. were chemical weapons used against Serb civilians?

OPERATION STORM: THE ACCOUNT OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN REGIMENT

Prior to the onslaught, Croatian radio had previously broadcasted a message by president Franjo Tudjman, calling upon "Croatian citizens of Serbian ethnicity... to remain in their homes and not to fear the Croatian authorities, which will respect their minority rights". ³⁸ Canadian peace-keepers of the Second Battalion of the Royal 22nd Regiment witnessed the atrocities committed by Croatian troops in the Krajina offensive in September 1995:

"Any Serb who had failed to evacuate their property were systematically "cleansed" by roving death squads. Every abandoned animal was slaughtered and any Serb household was ransacked and torched". 39.

Also confirmed by Canadian peace-keepers was the participation of German mercenaries in Operation Storm:

Immediately behind the front-line Croatian combat troops and German mercenaries, a large number of hard-line extremists had pushed into the Krajina.... Many of these atrocities were carried out within the Canadian Sector, but as the peacekeepers were soon informed by the Croat authorities, the UN no longer had any formal authority in the region.40.

How the Germans mercenaries were recruited was never officially revealed. An investigation by the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) confirmed that foreign mercenaries in Croatia had in some cases "been paid [and presumably recruited] outside Croatia and by third parties"41

THE 1993 MEDAK POCKET MASSACRE

According to *Jane Defense Weekly* (10 June 1999), Brigadier General Agim Ceku (now in charge of the KLA) also "masterminded the successful HV [Croatian Army] offensive at Medak" in September 1993. In Medak, the combat operation was entitled "Scorched Earth" resulting in the total destruction of the Serbian villages of Divoselo, Pocitelj and Citluk, and the massacre of over 100 civilians.42

These massacres were also witnessed by Canadian peace-keepers under UN mandate:

"As the sun rose over the horizon. It revealed a Medak Valley engulfed in smoke and flames. As the frustrated soldiers of 2PPCLI waited for the order to move forward into the pocket, shots and screams still rang out as the ethnic cleansing continued.... About 20 members of the international press had tagged along, anxious to see the Medak battleground. Calvin [a Canadian officer] called an informal press conference at the head of the column and loudly accused the Croats of trying to hide war crimes against the Serb inhabitants. The Croats started withdrawing back to their old lines, taking with them whatever loot they hadn't destroyed. All livestock had been killed and houses torched. French reconnaissance troops and the Canadian command element pushed up the valley and soon began to find bodies of Serb civilians, some already decomposing, others freshly slaughtered.... Finally, on the drizzly morning of Sept. 17, teams of UN civilian police arrived to probe the smoldering ruins for murder victims. Rotting corpses lying out in the open were catalogued, then turned over to the peacekeepers for burial. 43.

The massacres were reported to the Canadian Minister of Defense and to the United Nations:

Senior defense bureaucrats back in Ottawa had no way of predicting the outcome of the engagement in terms of political fallout. To them, there was no point in calling media attention to a situation that might easily backfire.... So Medak was relegated to the memory hole - no publicity, no recriminations, no official record. Except for those soldiers involved, Canada's most lively

military action since the Korean War simply never happened. 44

NATO'S POST-CONFLICT AGENDA IN KOSOVO

Both the Medak Pocket massacre and Operation Storm bear a direct relationship to the ongoing security situation in Kosovo and the massacres and ethnic cleansing committed by KLA troops. While the circumstances are markedly different, several of today's actors in Kosovo were involved (under the auspices of the Croatian Armed Forces) in the planning of both these operations. Moreover, the US mercenary outfit MPRI which collaborated with the Croatian Armed Forces in 1995 is currently on contract with the KLA. NATO's casual response to the appointment of Brigadier General Agim Ceku as KLA Chief of Staff was communicated by Mr. Jamie Shea in a Press Briefing in May:

"I have always made it clear, and you have heard me say this, that NATO has no direct contacts with the KLA. Who they appoint as their leaders, that is entirely their own affair. I don't have any comment on that whatever." 45

While NATO says it "has no direct contacts with the KLA", the evidence confirms the opposite. Amply documented, KLA terrorism has been installed with NATO's tacit approval. The KLA had (according to several reports) been receiving "covert support" and training from the CIA and Germany's Bundes Nachrichten Dienst (BND) since the mid-nineties. Moreover, MPRI collaboration with the KLA predates the onslaught of the bombing campaign. 46

The building up of KLA forces was part of NATO planning. Already by mid-1998, "covert support" had been replaced by official ("overt") support by the military Alliance in violation of UN Security Council Resolution UNSCR 1160 of 31 March 1998 which condemned: "...all acts of terrorism by the Kosovo Liberation Army or any other group or individual and all external support for terrorist activity in Kosovo, including finance, arms and training."

NATO officials, Western heads of State and heads of government, the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan not to mention ICTY chief Prosecutor Louise Arbour, were fully cognizant of General Brigadier Agim Ceku's involvement in the planning of Operation Storm and Operation Scorched Earth. Canadian Major General Lewis McKenzie who served under the United Nations confirmed that "the same officer who masterminded the 1993 Medak offensive in Croatia that saw Canadian soldiers using deadly force to stop horrendous atrocities against Serb civilians [had also] ordered the overrunning of lightly armed UN outposts, in blatant contravention of international law. His influence within the KLA does not augur well for its trustworthiness during Kosovo's political evolution". 47 Surely, some questions should have been asked....

Yet visibly what is shaping up in the wake of the bombings in Kosovo is the continuity of NATO's operation in the Balkans. Military personnel and UN bureaucrats previously stationed in Croatia and Bosnia have been routinely reassigned to Kosovo. KFOR Commander Mike Jackson had previously been responsible —as IFOR Commander for organizing the return of Serbs "to lands taken by Croatian HVO forces in the Krajina offensive". 48 And in this capacity General Mike Jackson had "urged that the resettlement [of Krajina Serbs] not [be] rushed to avoid tension [with the Croatians]" while also warning returning Serbs "of the extent of the [land] mine threat" 49. In retrospect, recalling the events of early 1996, very few Krajina Serbs were allowed to return to their homes under the protection of the United Nations. According to "Veritas" (a Belgrade based organization of Serbian refugees from Croatia), some 10-15,000 Serbs were able to resettle in Croatia.

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and a similar process is unfolding in Kosovo, --i.e. the conduct of senior military officers conforms to a consistent pattern, the same key individuals are now involved in Kosovo. While token efforts are displayed to protect Serb and Roma civilians, those who have fled Kosovo are not encouraged to return under UN protection... In post-war Kosovo, "ethnic cleansing" implemented by the KLA has been accepted by the "international community" as a "fait accompli"...

Moreover, while calling for democracy and "good governance" in the Balkans, the US and its allies have installed in Kosovo a paramilitary government with links to organized crime. The foreseeable outcome is the outright "criminalisation" of civilian State institutions and the establishment of what is best described as a "Mafia State". The complicity of NATO and the Alliance governments (namely their relentless support to the KLA) points to the de facto "criminalisation" of KFOR and of the UN peace-keeping apparatus in Kosovo. The donor agencies and governments (e.g. the funds approved by the US Congress in violation of several UN Security Council resolutions) providing financial support to the KLA are, in this regard, also "accessories" to the de facto criminalisation of State institutions. Through the intermediation of a paramilitary group (created and financed by Washington and Bonn), NATO ultimately bears the burden of responsibility for the massacres and ethnic cleansing of civilians in Kosovo.

STATE TERROR AND THE "FREE MARKET"

State terror and the "free market" seem to go hand in hand. The concurrent "criminalisation" of State institutions in Kosovo is not incompatible with the West's economic and strategic objectives in the Balkans. Notwithstanding the massacres of civilians, the self-proclaimed KLA administration has committed itself to establishing a "secure and stable environment" for foreign investors and international financial institutions. The Minister of Finance Adem Grobozci and other representatives of the provisional government invited to the various donor conferences are all KLA appointees. In contrast, members of the KDL of Ibrahim Rugova (duly elected in parliamentary elections) were not even invited to attend the Stabilisation Summit in Sarajevo in late July.

"Free market reforms" are envisaged for Kosovo under the supervision of the Bretton Woods institutions largely replicating the structures of the Rambouillet agreement. Article I (Chapter 4a) of the Rambouillet Agreement stipulated that: "*The economy of Kosovo shall function in accordance with free market principles*". The KLA government will largely be responsible for implementing these reforms and ensuring that loan conditionalities are met.

In close liaison with NATO, the Bretton Woods institutions had already analyzed the consequences of an eventual military intervention leading to the military occupation of Kosovo: almost a year prior to the beginning of the War, the World Bank conducted "simulations" which "*anticipated the possibility of an emergency scenario arising out of the tensions in Kosovo*". 50.

The eventual "reconstruction" of Kosovo financed by international debt largely purports to transfer Kosovo's extensive wealth in mineral resources and coal to multinational capital. In this regard, the KLA has already occupied (pending their privatization) the largest coal mine at Belacevac in Dobro Selo northwest of Pristina. In turn, foreign capital has its eyes riveted on the massive Treпча mining complex which constitutes "*the most valuable piece of real estate in the Balkans, worth at least \$5 billion*." 51. The Treпча complex not only includes copper and large reserves of zinc but also cadmium, gold, and silver. It has several smelting plants, 17 metal treatment sites, a power plant and Yugoslavia's largest battery plant. Northern Kosovo also has estimated reserves of 17 billion tons of coal and lignite.

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In the wake of the bombings, the management of many of the State owned enterprises and public utilities were taken over by KLA appointees. In turn, the leaders of Provisional Government of Kosovo (PGK) have become "the brokers" of multinational capital committed to handing over the Kosovar economy at bargain prices to foreign investors. The IMF's lethal "economic therapy" will be imposed, the provincial economy will be dismantled, agriculture will be deregulated, local industrial enterprises which have not been totally destroyed will be driven into bankruptcy.

The most profitable State assets will eventually be transferred into the hands of foreign capital under the World Bank sponsored privatization program. "Strong economic medicine" imposed by external creditors will contribute to further boosting a criminal economy (already firmly implanted in Albania) which feeds on poverty and economic dislocation.

*"The Allies will work with the rest of the international community to help rebuild Kosovo once the crisis is over: The International Monetary Fund and Group of Seven industrialized countries are among those who stand ready to offer financial help to the countries of the region. We want to ensure proper co-ordination of aid and help countries to respond to the effects of the crisis. This should go hand in hand with the necessary structural reforms in the countries affected -- helped by budget support from the international community."*⁵²

Moreover, the so-called "reconstruction" of the Balkans by foreign capital will signify multi-billion contracts to foreign firms to rebuild Kosovo's infrastructure. More generally, the proposed "Marshall Plan" for the Balkans financed by the World Bank and the European Development Bank (EBRD) as well as private creditors will largely benefit Western mining, petroleum and construction companies while fuelling the region's external debt well into the third millennium.

And Kosovo is slated to reimburse this debt through the laundering of dirty money. Yugoslav banks in Kosovo will be closed down, the banking system will be deregulated under the supervision of Western financial institutions. Narco-dollars from the multi-billion dollar Balkans drug trade will be recycled towards servicing the external debt as well as "financing" the costs of "reconstruction". The lucrative flow of narco-dollars thus ensures that foreign investors involved in the "reconstruction" program will be able reap substantial returns. In turn, the existence of a Kosovar "narco-State" ensures the orderly reimbursement of international donors and creditors. The latter are prepared to turn blind eye. They have a tacit vested interest in installing a government which facilitates the laundering of drug money.

The pattern in Kosovo is, in this regard, similar to that observed in neighboring Albania. Since the early 1990s (culminating with the collapse of the financial pyramids in 1996-97), the IMF's reforms have impoverished the Albanian population while spearheading the national economy into bankruptcy. The IMF's deadly economic therapy transforms countries into open territories. In Albania and to a lesser extent Macedonia, it has also contributed to fostering the growth of illicit trade and the criminalisation of State institutions.

(Prepared for and presented at the New York hearing of the Independent Commission of Inquiry to Investigate U.S./NATO War Crimes Against The People of Yugoslavia, called by former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, July 31, 1999)

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- 13. See Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Mission in Kosovo, Decision 305, Permanent Council, 237th Plenary Meeting, PC Journal No. 237, Agenda item 2, Vienna, 1 July 1999 .
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- 15. 106th Congress, April 15, HR 1425.
- 16. Interview with KLA Chief of Staff Commander Agim Ceku, *Kosovapress*, 31 July 1999
- 17. See Tammy Arbucki, "Building a Bosnian Army", *Jane International Defense Review*, August 1997.
- 18. *Ibid.*
- 19. Military Professional Resources, Inc, "Personnel Needs", <http://www.mpri.com/current/personnel.htm>
- 20. Associated Press Report
- 21. *Ibid.*
- 22. The actual number of civilians killed or missing was much larger.
- 23. Quoted in Raymond Bonner, *War Crimes Panel Finds Croat Troops Cleansed the Serbs*, *New York Times*, 21 March 1999).
- 24. *Ibid.*
- 25. *Ibid.*
- 26 Raymond Bonner, *op cit.*
- 27. Ken Silverstein, "Privatizing War", *The Nation*, New York, 27 July 1997.
- 28. See Mark Thompson et al, "Generals for Hire", *Time Magazine*, 15 January 1996, p. 34.
- 29. Quoted in Silverstein, *op cit.*
- 30. Mark Thompson et al, *op cit.*
- 31. Raymond Bonner, *op cit.*
- 32. *Ibid.*
- 33. ICTY Weekly Press Briefing, 24 March 1999).
- 34. *Ibid.*
- 35. *Ibid.*
- 36. See inter alia Reuters dispatch, 21 October 1993 on the use of chemical grenades, a New York Times report on 31 October 1992 on the use of poisoned gas).
- 37. Lewis MacKenzie, "Giving our soldiers the benefit of the doubt", *National Post*, 2 August 1999
- 38. *Slobodna Dalmacija*, Split, Croatia, August 5 1996.
- 39. Scott Taylor and Brian Nolan, *The Sunday Sun*, Toronto, 2 November 1998.
- 40. *Ibid.*
- 41. United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Fifty-first session, Item 9 of the provisional agenda, Geneva, 21 December 1994).
- 42. (See Memorandum on the Violation of the Human and Civil Rights of the Serbian People in the Republic of Croatia, <http://serbianlinks.freehosting.net/memorandum.htm>)
- 43. Excerpts from the book of Scott Taylor and Brian Nolan published in the *Toronto Sun*, 1 November 1998.
- 44. *Ibid.*

NATO Press Briefing, 14 May 1999.

- For further details see Michel Chossudovsky, *Kosovo 'Freedom Fighters' financed by Organized Crime*, CAQ, Spring-Summer 1999.
47. Lewis McKenzie, "Soldier's View Nato Should Disarm the KLA Before It's Too Late", *The Vancouver Sun*, June 12, 1999.
 48. *Jane's Defense Weekly*, Vol 25, No. 7, 14 February 1996.
 49. *Ibid.*
 50. World Bank Development News, Washington, 27 April 1999.
 51. *New York Times*, July 8, 1998, report by Chris Hedges.
 52. Statement by Javier Solano, Secretary General of NATO, published in *The National Post*, Toronto May 1999.

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JOEGOSLAVIË - 4-4-2002

(AANKOMST NED. DET
SEZER)

Grand maart 2002 heeft de Tunesische President en
staatsbeweek in Nederland. Hij werd door een hoge
regering delegatie op het vliegveld ontvangen, heeft
en ontvangst door de Nederlandse gezachten en een
staatsbanket aangeboden in de Koninklijke familie.

In dezelfde tijd werd Melorice gevestigd
wegen en er is het KTG en de
wegen 10000.

van holst en steijnen

From: Hans Hupkes <hans.hupkes@planet.nl>
To: Nico Steijnen <n.h.van.holst@freeler.nl>
Sent: maandag 9 april 2001 10:23
Subject: Fw: Racak was a fake

----- Original Message -----

From: Michel Collon
Sent: Monday, April 09, 2001 9:02 AM
Subject: Tr : Racak was a fake

Please find below confirmation of what we wrote in our book Monopoly, march 2000 about the "massacre of Racak". Plus Sunday Times accusing also William Walker of being CIA.

The question is: why do most of the media refuse to come back on the "Racak medialie" and open the debate?

-- Michel Collon

michel.collon@skynet.be

The New Statesman

Not as it seems... Was 'Racak' Kosovo's Gulf of Tonkin?

April 5 2001

Armen Georgian and Arthur Neslen

There were no howls of outrage from world leaders or press cries for action when the Forensic Science International Journal published its report on the alleged massacre of 45 Albanian civilians by Serb forces in the Kosovan village of Racak. Yet the Journal's report cast massive doubt on an incident that played the central part in justifying Nato's bombing campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999. It could not establish that the victims were civilians, that they were from Racak or even that they had been killed there. It left open the distinct possibility that the single incident that ignited the war could have been a lie.

Published on 15 February, the report by a Finnish EU Forensic Experts Team (EU-FET) was based on autopsies carried out on 40 bodies found at Racak on 16 January 1999. The EU commissioned the team in October 1998 following international calls to investigate human rights abuses in Kosovo. The Milosevic regime had previously obstructed ICTY (International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia) investigators but accepted the EU-mandated team as a compromise. When the bodies were discovered at Racak, EU-FET received an urgent request from the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and returned to Kosovo immediately.

The apparent "massacre" of civilians at Racak had stunned the world. It "transformed the West's Balkan policy as singular events seldom do", reported the Washington Post. Many feared an incipient genocide and pressure for action bounced previously reluctant Nato allies into line. German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, approving German military participation abroad for the first time since World War Two, averred: "Racak was the turning point for me."

On March 19 1999, President Clinton told the world's press: "We should remember what happened in the village of Racak, where innocent men, women and children were taken from their homes to a gully, forced to kneel in the dirt, sprayed with gunfire - not because of anything they had done, but because of who they were." Five days later NATO planes went into action.

In the fog of war, such statements were taken at face value but the Finnish report found that only one of the dead was a woman, just one was under 15. Six had suffered single gunshot wounds but most were covered in multiple wounds coming from many different angles and elevations, as might be expected from victims of a firefight, not of execution-style killings. Only one had been shot "at close range or contact discharge." Contrary to claims made at the time by William Walker, the American OSCE chief in Kosovo in 1999, the pathologists found "no signs of postmortem mutilation."

Crucially, the team were "unable to confirm the chain of custody, concerning the localisation of the victims at the site of the incident and their transportation to the Institute of Forensic Medicine in Pristina." Thus, they "could not confirm that the victims were from Racak."

On the alleged day of the killings, a fierce battle between besieging Serb forces and KLA units was fought around Racak, "a fortified village with lots of trenches," according to Le Figaro's Renaud Girard. That morning, Serb police

had invited journalists to accompany them and, as fighting raged in the nearby woods, Le Monde's Christophe Chatelet travelled to Racak with OSCE monitors in search of civilian casualties at the alleged time that Serb forces were slaughtering villagers. He found four wounded and was told of one person dead.

The following day however, the OSCE team discovered up to 18 bodies in the deserted village, and KLA units guided the press corps to a gully where 22 corpses were laid out. Later that day, William Walker arrived to announce the "horrendous massacre" to the world. Few press reports mentioned that, at the time the massacre was supposedly taking place, the Information Press Centre in Pristina was receiving independent reports that 15 KLA fighters had been killed around Racak.

Interestingly, the Sunday Times, a paper with close links to British security sources, last year reported claims by Pristina-based European diplomats that William Walker was "inextricably linked with the CIA". In their story, diplomatic and intelligence sources alleged that the team led by Walker had been a 'CIA front' helping the KLA with logistical and technical support. Walker had previously been an ambassador to El Salvador in the 1980s, when Washington backed extreme-right wing paramilitaries in that country's civil war.

Echoes of the Gulf of Tonkin, the CIA-manipulated story of the 'torpedoing' of two US destroyers that escalated the Vietnam war, are resonant. On 12 August 1998, the US Senate Republican Policy Committee had commented: "Planning for a US-led Nato intervention in Kosovo is now largely in place. The only missing element seems to be an event - with suitably vivid media coverage - that could make the intervention politically saleable . . . That Clinton is waiting for a 'trigger' in Kosovo is increasingly obvious."

The EU-FET team returned to Racak in November 1999 and March 2000 to conduct further detailed investigations. They submitted the 1400-page result to the ICTY on 21 June 2000 but this has never been made public. Still, Racak heads the list of Milosevic's ICTY indictments for murder but while Article 28 refers to "45 unarmed Kosovo Albanians murdered in the village of Racak", Florence Hartman, the spokesperson for the prosecutor at the ICTY, could not confirm that all the dead were civilians. "Some are in doubt," she conceded. "But part of them for sure, maybe most, maybe all, were civilians."

"We have established that the dead were not wearing military dress. Is that enough to draw the conclusion that they were not fighters? No, it's not enough but we have other information from investigators and other sources, and we have photographs taken on the day and the day after." Strange then, that none of this information has yet been made public.

Even so, the world's media has largely remained silent. Professor Saukko, editor of Forensic Science International, said he had only received inquiries from Dutch and Yugoslav journalists. The veteran British Labour MP Tony Benn believes: "truth is the first casualty of war and Racak is one of those war stories - I nearly said 'lies' - that politicians would much rather forget."

According to Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), the failure to question basic assumptions about the event "bolsters the KLA" and its ongoing campaign to ethnically cleanse Kosovo of non-Albanian minorities. In southern Serbia and Macedonia, the self-styled Liberation Army for Presevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac (UCPMB) and National Liberation Army (NLA) are receiving weapons and recruits from the KLA. Serb civilians and KFOR peacekeepers have been targeted in a bid to graft the territories onto KFOR-administered Kosovo as a prelude to full-blown independence and possible unification into a Greater Albania.

Just three weeks before the bus bombing in February that killed nine Serb civilians, a UCPMB rebel told the Chicago Tribune: "The essence of our existence is preventing what happened at Racak. We don't want that repeated." Gordana Igric of the independent Institute of War and Peace Reporting said: "KFOR has the means to disarm the KLA and its UCPMB allies and is required to do so under its mandate. But no KFOR member wants bodybags." She added: "Most Western governments now privately admit that it's only a matter of time before the first KFOR troops are killed." While political games are played out at the International Criminal Court in The Hague, one thing appears certain: the ghosts of Racak will haunt the Western alliance for years to come. As Tony Benn put it: "...we're by no means out of this war, or its consequences, yet."

BACKGROUND

[1] Principle VI : <http://deoxy.org/wc/wc-nurem.htm>

1)The crimes hereinafter set out are punishable as crimes under; international law: Crimes against peace:Planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or

assurances;

ii) Participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the acts mentioned under (i).

[2] J. Rainio, K. Lalu A. Penttila: Independent forensic autopsies in an armed conflict: investigation of the victims from Racak, Kosovo. Forensic Science International, Feb 2001
contact Editor-in-Chief: P. Saukko <mailto:p.saukko@utu.fi>

[3] Westdeutsches Rundfunk: it started with a lie, documentary March 2001
<http://www.wdr.de/online/news/kosovoluege/index.phtml>

[4] Chris Soda: Complete Analysis of the Incident at Racak on Jan. 15, 1999 (includes extensive library of references) published November 4 1999
<http://www.egroups.co.uk/message/yugoslaviainfo/618>

[5] Peter Worthington: The hoax that started a war
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sorabia/message/13966>

[6] FAIR media advisory: DOUBTS ON A MASSACRE: Media Ignore Questions About Incident That Sparked Kosovo War February 1, 2001
<http://www.fair.org/press-releases/racak.html>

[7] Reed Irvine, Whose Massacre ? Accuracy in Media January 13, 2000
<http://www.balkanpeace.org/racak/rck06.shtml>

[8] Christophe Chatelot, Le Monde Le Monde WERE THE RACAK DEAD REALLY COLDLY MASSACRED?
<http://www.balkanpeace.org/racak/rck02.shtml>

[9] The Strategic Issues Research Institute Archive: The Racak Killings, A Massacre?
<http://www.globalresistance.com/siri-us/KIA-Racak.html>

[10] WWII German propaganda principles <http://www.propaganda101.com/newpage118.htm>

[11] NATO public statements <http://www.google.com/cobrand?q=jamie?>

"It changes nothing, but Racak should make people wary of government propaganda[1] about areas where they have little knowledge, but strong feelings. Remember the emotions generated about "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo? At the end of World War II, the population of Kosovo was 50-50 Serb and Albanian. By 1999 it was 90% Albanian. Today, it's close to 96%. Over 50 years, who's been "ethnically cleansed"? <end quote>

THE TORONTO SUN
April 1, 2001

The hoax that started a war

HOW THE U.S. NATO AND THE WESTERN MEDIA WERE CONNED IN KOSOVO
<http://www.canoe.ca/Columnists/worthington.html>

By PETER WORTHINGTON -- Toronto Sun

Back in March, 1999, what tipped the scales for then U.S. president Bill Clinton to launch an air war against Serbia, were reports of a massacre of 45 Albanian civilians by Serb security forces at the village of Racak, some 30 km from Pristina in southern Kosovo.

Clinton told the world on March 19, 1999: "We should remember what happened in Racak ... innocent men, women and children were taken from their homes to a gully, forced to kneel in the dirt and sprayed with gunfire." Photos circled the world. NATO bombing began March 24, and lasted 78 days.

White House press secretary Joe Lockhart said of Racak: "A strong message will be brought to President (Slobodan) Milosevic about bringing those to justice who should be punished for this ... "

U.S. Foreign Secretary Madeleine Albright, eager to make war against then-Yugoslavia and speaking on CBS' Face the Nation, cited Racak where, she said, there were "dozens of people with their throats slit." She called this the "galvanizing incident" that meant peace talks at Rambouillet were pointless, "humanitarian bombing" the only recourse.

Germany's Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, told the newspaper Berliner Zeitung that the Racak massacre "became the turning point for me" and war was the only answer.

Canada's then foreign minister, Lloyd Axworthy, called the massacre "a disgusting victimization of civilians."

Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported the dead had fingernails torn out - evidence of torture.

On Jan. 16, the day after the actual massacre, William Walker, the veteran American diplomat who headed peace verifiers for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), was taken by Kosovo Liberation Army members to Racak to see the bodies in the ditch. He declared that the dead "obviously were executed where they lay."

His OSCE report spoke of "arbitrary arrests, killings and mutilations of unarmed civilians" at Racak.

GROUND TROOPS

Canada's Louise Arbour, then special prosecutor for the war crimes tribunal, (hand-picked for the job by Albright) was prevented by Serb authorities from visiting Racak. She vowed retribution for the massacre, urging that "international troops on the ground" were the only way to effect arrests.

When Milosevic was indicted as a war criminal, the massacre at Racak was cited as evidence. The London Times wrote that victims had their eyes gouged out, heads smashed in, faces blown away at close range, all "farmers, workers, villagers, aged 12-74, men, women, children."

Serbian and Belorussian forensic people investigated, but were suspect, so the European Union authorized a forensic team from Finland, headed by Helena Ranta, a dental pathologist, to investigate. The Finnish report was not made public.

Ranta gave a press conference at which she was vague, admitting there was no evidence of mutilation or torture, and that Yugoslav authorities had co-operated. But she also called the killings "a crime against humanity," widely interpreted to mean Racak was indeed a cold-blooded massacre.

It has since turned out, through subsequent investigations by German, French and American correspondents and by human rights and peace groups, including the anti-war International Action Centre and the Liberty Foundation, that the Racak massacre seems an enormous, albeit effective, hoax perpetrated by the Kosovo Liberation Army to persuade the U.S. and NATO to attack the Serbs. The goal was independence for Kosovo, possibly leading to the dream of a Greater Albania.

We now have a far better idea of what really happened at Racak - a pre-crisis town of 2,000 and a stronghold of KLA agitation. By January, 1999, most of its population had fled to a nearby town, Stimlje, leaving perhaps 400 people behind. When four Serbian policemen were ambushed and murdered in two separate incidents in a week, Serb security forces surrounded Racak and attacked. The Serbs tipped off foreign journalists who came to see. Fighting was savage and brief, not only in town but in the countryside.

Journalists found Racak had few people actually living there.

Some 20 bodies were counted. Serbs and journalists left at dusk. The next day, Jan. 16, the KLA was again in control.

During the night, it seems that all the KLA killed fighting in the area - 45 of them - were dumped in a gully at Racak and journalists and the OSCE investigators invited to see what was described as the "massacre" of unarmed civilians.

Military insignia and/or badges had been removed from clothing, military gear replaced by civilian clothing. No weapons were in sight. The hoax was on. William Walker was first on the scene and believed what he saw and was told. The international press relayed his outrage to the world.

Forensic evidence showed - as the Finnish team has since confirmed - that most of the 45 Racak dead had been shot at long range, not execution-style. Corpses tested positive with residue of gunpowder on their hands, indicating they had been firing weapons. No ammunition or shell casings were found near the bodies, where they had supposedly been massacred, nor were there pools of blood.

BODIES MOVED

Pathologists also found the 45 dead men had all been shot in different parts of the body, from different directions, indicating a battle somewhere else, the dead dumped together for effect.

Until recently, no one was interested in the truth. "Whether or not it's a massacre, nobody wants to know any more," wrote Austria's Die Welt newspaper. Autopsy findings were delayed while the thirst for war echoed in the halls of allied power.

The German newspaper Berliner Zeitung got access to the Finnish forensic findings, and sent a team of reporters to investigate and concluded: "In all probability, there was no Racak massacre at all ..."

French journalist Renaud Girard of Le Figaro was in Racak and was puzzled that reports failed to mention it was a "fortified village with a lot of trenches" - a KLA stronghold. Although he wrote an initial massacre story, he later had doubts: "I felt something was wrong."

Christophe Chatelet of Le Monde was in Racak the day of the Serb attack, and found one dead and four wounded when he left at dusk. The next day the KLA showed bodies from a massacre that hadn't been there before. "I can't solve that mystery," he said. (At the time, KLA commander-in-chief Hashim Thaci told the BBC: "We had a key unit in the region and had a fierce fight. Regrettably, we had many casualties, but so did the Serbs.")

Further investigation shows that two TV journalists for Associated Press and two teams of OSCE observers also saw the fight for Racak from a hill, entered when Serb security forces did and left when they left. The AP crew filmed a deserted village. It was overnight that the

KLA returned and gathered their dead from the fighting. Next day, Walker told the world how adults and children had been "executed," some as they tried to flee. CNN reporter Christiane Amanpour, wife of U.S. State Department spokesman James Rubin, showed little skepticism in reporting on the "massacre of civilians."

CHECK THE NET

For those who want to check further, enter "Racak massacre" on Google or Yahoo on the Internet and see what you get.)

It changes nothing, but Racak should make people wary of government propaganda about areas where they have little knowledge, but strong feelings. Remember the emotions generated about "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo?

At the end of World War II, the population of Kosovo was 50-50 Serb and Albanian. By 1999 it was 90% Albanian. Today, it's close to 96%. Over 50 years, who's been "ethnically cleansed"? Today, Albanians in Macedonia are using arguments similar to those used against Serbs in Kosovo - prejudice, being frozen from jobs, discriminated against. Rarely mentioned are maps produced in Albania that show not only Kosovo, but parts of Macedonia and Montenegro as part of "Greater Albania."

It doesn't take an Einstein to realize that the U.S., NATO and western media have been conned and manipulated into supporting an aggressive exercise in nation-building that is not likely to be resolved peaceably. NATO's beleaguered soldiers are innocents caught in a Balkan quagmire, thanks to a blundering, myopic, vainglorious political leader. <end> -----

Backgrounder:

[1] "One result of the massive military sponsorship of US communication research was that the main perspectives in the field

were in tune with military priorities. Specifically, both the content and method of communication research was oriented to the goals of domination and manipulation of mass audiences."

Science of Coercion: Communication Research and Psychological Warfare
- book review

<http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/94BRq12.html>

[2] Doug Bandow Balkan blunders Washington Times March 30 2001
<http://www.washtimes.com/commentary/20010330-14061926.htm>

[3] Destabilizing the Balkans: US & Albanian Defense Cooperation in the 1990s - Antiwar
<http://antiwar.com/orig/dakovic2.html>

[4] Peter Beaumont, Ed Vulliamy and Paul Beaver
Observer March 11 2001
<http://www.observer.co.uk/international/story/0,6903,449923,00.html>

[5] Martin A. Lee More bloodshed in the Balkans- The bitter legacy of NATO's "humanitarian" war <http://www.sfbq.com/reality/21.html>

[6] Time to Pay the Piper Stratfor 23 March 2001
<http://www.stratfor.com/home/giu/archive/032301>

[7] David H. Hackworth, DEFENDING AMERICA, June 7, 1999:
DEFANG THE KLA TODAY OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES TOMORROW
<http://www.hackworth.com/7jun99.html>

[8] "Backing the KLA is simply insane," Levine protests.
Levine, a highly decorated former undercover agent for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), told THE NEW AMERICAN, "My contacts within the DEA are quite frankly terrified, but there's not much they can say without risking their jobs. These guys [the KLA] have a network that's active on the streets of this country..."

They're the worst elements of society that you can imagine, and now, according to my sources in drug enforcement, THEY'RE POLITICALLY PROTECTED."

W.M.Grigg, May 24, 1999
http://thenewamerican.com/tna/1999/05-24-99/vol5no11_kla.htm

[9] "Many reports in the past have mentioned the covert forces involved with the KLA. For example, on July 15, 1998, PBS Newshour reported that U.S. Vietnam War veterans were training KLA mercenaries in Albania."

Wilson, G.
<http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/ops/docs99/990423-kosovo01.htm>

[10] "MPRI sub-contracted some of the training programme to two British private security companies, ensuring that between 1998 and June 1999 the KLA was being armed, trained and assisted in Italy, Turkey, Kosovo and Germany by the Americans, the German external intelligence service and former and serving members of Britain's 22 SAS Regiment. "

<http://www.thescotsman.co.uk/world.cfm?id=51340>

[11] "American intelligence agents have admitted they helped to train the Kosovo Liberation Army before Nato's bombing of Yugoslavia. The disclosure angered some European diplomats, who said this had undermined moves for a political solution to the conflict between Serbs and Albanians. Central Intelligence Agency officers were cease-fire monitors in Kosovo in 1998 and 1999, developing ties with the KLA and giving American military training manuals and field advice on fighting the Yugoslav army and Serbian police."

Tom Walker and Aidan Laverty, 'Sunday Times', London Dec 03, 2000

[12] "Peaceful Eagle 95 is designed to foster cooperation between the

4.3. and Minutes. Soldiers will have to carry out of processing tasks, including securing transportation services...

DefenseLine, September 1999

http://www.defenseline.com/Articles/Sept99/091999_0919_01.html

for info use only

17 mei 2000
URL for this article is <http://www.emperors-clothes.com/interviews/emperor.htm>

EMPEROR'S CLOTHES INTERVIEWS BELGRADE "INDEPENDENT" RADIO B292

On May 17th, the Yugoslav government closed Studio B, controlled by Vuk Draskovic's Serbian Renewal Party in Belgrade. The charge: that Studio B Television "has been calling for armed terrorist and criminal actions against the Republic of Serbia and its citizens." Since the controversial Radio B292 used space at Studio B, B292 was effectively closed as well.

Some said that the charges were fabricated, that this was a terrible attack on free speech. Were they right? Did the station represent an attempt at free journalism, stifled by heavy-handed bureaucrats?

Emperor's Clothes published two articles by geopolitical analyst Paul Treanor which argued, with documentation, that Radio B292 was in fact controlled by powerful Western interests which aimed to bring Yugoslavia down.

Shortly after Studio B was closed, Emperor's Clothes editor Jared Israel tracked down B292 staff members at a temporary office in Belgrade. He interviewed two people, Gordan Paunovic, who ran B292's web page, and Sanda Savic, the news editor. The interviews were an attempt to shed light on the charges raised

by Mr. Treanor. They relate directly to the question: Is the Serbian opposition in fact funded by the U.S. government as well as private agencies, such as the Soros Foundation, with which the U.S. government is linked? This has direct bearing on the charge, which we have raised, that the U.S. government is meddling in the most extreme way in the Yugoslav elections.

Interview with Gordan Paunovic webmaster for B292. Conducted by Jared Israel, editor www.tenc.net

Jared: Why did the government shut down Studio B?

Gordan Paunovic: The main accusation was that they called for an armed response to overthrow the government

Jared: Is that true?

Paunovic: No, of course not. On the 13th of May you had a rally on a mountain over there and you had these people who shouted "Uprising! Uprising!" And they had coverage of both rallies. So if you think that's a call for uprising -

[Note: Subsequently I learned from a Montenegrin student whose family has been involved in "uprisings" for 200 years, that while the term "uprising" might be taken as radical chic in English, in Serbia it is associated with a bloody history of anti-Turkish rebellions, a history with which every Serbian child is familiar. It is therefore not a term likely to be used casually.]

Jared: Well the news report I read in the West said that guns were fired in

05-10-00

Ring Sanitaire. [NATO has had a strategy of preventing Serbia from interacting with European talking:

"SEN. BIDEN: "What can we do about inside Serbia? For example Draskovic continues to deny access to Studio B, which is supposedly, as I understand it -- he's not?"

"MR. GELBARD: No, he's actually given access to Studio B -- excuse me; given access of Studio B to Radio B-92. And my understanding is that Radio B-92, one of the independent voices, has just reopened as Radio B-292. We want Draskovic to open up Studio B to the rest of the opposition, and that's a message that he'll be getting from us in the next few days."

Jared resumes: That's how they talked about you. Any comment?

05-10-00

ic air and

Vuk Draskovic said, "Save your bullets, we're going to need them." Doesn't that sound like a call for civil war and -

Paunovic: These are folklore events without any political weight which are happening every year. It is the anniversary of the Chetniks' uprising against the Nazi's in the Second World War, on this mountain. It's a completely folklore gathering. They always have guns.

Jared: But his comment? "Save your bullets we'll need them later?"

Paunovic: Well then let them arrest Draskovic.

Jared: Well, they closed his Studio B... Tell me, is radio B292 funded by George Soros?

Paunovic: Funded or founded?

Jared: Funded. Given money -

Paunovic: I think it happens quite often since 1992 but it's not the only source of money. But I'm not the right person to talk about this.

Jared: Do you know anything about -

Paunovic: There is a list of international foundations, not only Soros who -

Jared: Like what else?

Paunovic: Press Now, from Holland, Royal Swedish Foundation or something, Royal Netherlands Foundation.

Jared: Any in the US?

Paunovic: I guess so. I don't know the details. Those things I know by chance. But Soros Foundation, yes, definitely, but much, these days in last year or two years much less than before.

Jared: Any money coming from foundations in the US?

Paunovic: Probably, but I don't know which Foundations. I am pretty much pissed off in putting this kind of argumentation, like Soros equals B92. That really comes from people who are not in a position to see what we are doing. We will take money from anyone. To make a good production on many levels, from radio, to TV and video productions to Internet, Books, music. You need money.

Jared: I'll read you a statement from Gelbard. You know who Gelbard is?

Paunovic: US Special Envoy to the Balkans.

Jared: Exactly. [Jared's note: actually prior to this interview Gelbard had been moved to a new position, Ambassador to Indonesia...] Do you know who Biden is? Sen. Biden? This an exchange from the July 29th [1999] hearings on supporting the so-called independent forces in Serbia. The hearings took place the day after the Senate voted to give 100,000,000 dollars to the 'independent' opposition. This is Sen. Biden. He's been talking about the Ring Sanitaire. [NATO has had a strategy of preventing Serbia from interacting with European talking:

"SEN. BIDEN: "What can we do about inside Serbia? For example Draskovic continues to deny access to Studio B, which is supposedly, as I understand it - he's not?

"MR. GELBARD: No, he's actually given access to Studio B - excuse me; given access of Studio B to Radio B-92. And my understanding is that Radio B-92, one of the independent voices, has just reopened as Radio B-292. We want Draskovic to open up Studio B to the rest of the opposition, and that's a message that he'll be getting from us in the next few days."

Jared resumes: That's how they talked about you. Any comment?

Paunovic: Who?

Jared: In these hearings they say it explicitly; they say, we've been giving large sums of money to the 'independent' media. Now the main, the only name of 'independent' media they mention is yours. They say, we had to stop when the bombing started. Since the bombing ended we've been able to start again and we're immediately going to get 10 million dollars in there. And we have voted 100 million. That's what they say.

Paunovic: You know, I don't know. That help was not only for B92. I mean you have a list, practically everyone, all media that exists in Serbia that is not controlled by the Serbian government is on that list.

Jared: Getting money from the US?

Paunovic: Exactly.

Jared: So they're all getting it, not just B92?

Paunovic: You know it's not a question of morality or something like that because we're in an open war with the government. We realized much before Washington realized we had to overthrow Milosevich

Jared: Let me ask you, I understand you're broadcasting on satellite. What satellite is that?

Paunovic: I don't know.

Jared: Is that Eurosat?

Paunovic: I am not a technical expert on the satellite. I can tell you about the Internet.

Jared: Is there somebody who handles the radio I can talk to?

Paunovic: You can talk to me about it.

Jared; So do you know what satellite it is?

Paunovic: Yes but I don't know. I don't have anybody here who can help you about this.

Jared: Is there anybody I can call to find that out?

Paunovic: Before, the way satellite operation was done I think in cooperation with BBC.

Jared: Ahh, so you do know. And so now?

Paunovic: Probably the same.

Jared: Have you protested the Serbian government's exclusion from Eurosat [the European Satellite TV link]

Paunovic: We protest all those things. Everything. [At this point Paunovic instructed Jared to check on their website to see about the protest against Yugoslav exclusion from Eurosat. He checked but found no such protest against Yugoslav exclusion. Paunovic promised to send Emperor's Clothes the URL for the description of that protest; he sent an email in which he stated his regrets that the URL for the protest against Yugoslav exclusion from the Eurosat was "unavailable".]

End of interview with Gordan Pauvonic

Interview with Sanda Savic, News editor of Radio B292
Conducted by Jared Israel, May 23, 2000.

Jared: Are you in an office there or somebody's house?

Sanda: So-called office. We are just trying to gather computers, telephones and etc., etc.

Jared: But I understand you're still able to transmit by satellite? What satellite to you use?

Sanda: It's a BBC satellite.

Jared: You have an arrangement with them where you can -

Sanda: It's old arrangement. They give us more time on satellite now. Every day we are broadcasting two hours in the morning, two afternoon and two at the evening. Six hours a day.

Jared: The BBC contributes this?

Sanda: I don't know the details about that agreement. But we used their satellite before. But it was just three hours before. We made a new agreement. They just wanted to help us now.

Jared: That's a lot of time. What does that reach?

Sanda: We cover all the protests. That can be heard by everyone but Belgrade because local stations rebroadcast our programs, between 20 and 30 local stations. Unfortunately BBC cannot be heard in Belgrade.

Jared: I understand some people are very mad at you and some support you. Are you getting strong support?

Sanda: Many of us are very disappointed. We expect nothing special from opposition [parties.] That's why we prepared earlier offices and other ways to continue our work. That's why we able to work now. Because we didn't expect anything from the others, especially not from the opposition parties.

Jared: So you prepared a whole alternative set of offices before this happened? Sounds expensive. Sanda: And we are doing some things to cover Belgrade. We are trying to do that.

Jared: How are you doing that?

Sanda: I can't tell you more

Jared: What do you mean though, you say you're trying to cover Belgrade?

Sanda: We are trying to make some agreement with other radio stations, not in Serbia.

Jared: You mean like Bulgaria or something?

Sanda: I can't tell you now. You're going to find out in the next ten or 15 days. Yes this is expensive but you know the European Union and every organization from the outside helped us for years and they are going to help [now].

Jared: Like what organizations?

Sanda: Like, I don't know; [George] Soros, you know? There are so many organizations from abroad. They all help us.

Jared: Who owns the station?

Sanda: No one.

Jared: That can't be.

Sanda: We are not private. We are not a city organization. We are just, I don't know. It's private owner

Jared: Who is the private owner?

Sanda: No one. It's just a part of Association of Independent Electronic Media in Serbia.

Jared: You say no one is it but I'm unclear. You said no one owns it, but you said "we prepared other offices." Somebody has to write checks. You've got phones; you have relations with a satellite, etc. Soros gives money; the money must go to something, some entity. Does Soros own it?

Sanda: No no no no no no no. We don't have a legal status. We are just part of an Association. You know what happened during the bombing?

Jared: But somebody pays you a paycheck every week? Someone writes a check and signs it?

Sanda: Yes but you have to ask my Director.

Jared: In other words you don't know who writes the -

Sanda: I don't know much about - it's so confused -

Jared: Specifically though you get a check you can cash at the bank? Yes?

Sanda: Yes.

Jared: How much pay would a person get there? Is it a very good job?

Sanda: It's a good job.

Jared: Well somebody owns it because they write a check. Means ownership, control.

Sanda: It's like a non-government organization. We have an Editor, Director, it's just their job to get money.

Jared: Let me read you something that's on the net now from a guy named Paul Treanor. He says the website that was set up when radio B292 came around is owned by KPB Telecom through its subsidiary XS4ALL NederlandBV. (2)

Sanda: Uh -huh.

Jared: Is that correct?

Sanda: Really, I really don't know. I'm not sure. I can't tell you anything about that. I can just give you the number of Sasa Milkovic. He's the Editor in Chief.

[Jared's note: I called Mr. Milkovic numerous times but he was always too busy to talk.] Further reading

'Do anti-Yugoslav Western interests own Radio 'Free' B292?'
by Paul Treanor www.emperors-clothes.com/articles/treanor/rcisa.htm

'B92 "solidarity" money goes to Soros Fund'
by Paul Treanor at [http://emperors-clothes.com/articles/treanor/b92\\$.htm](http://emperors-clothes.com/articles/treanor/b92$.htm)

www.tenc.net [Emperor's Clothes]

Global Reflexion - Amsterdam - The Netherlands

10

van holst en steijnen

From: <ssicc@planet.nl>
To: <arthurjk@euronet.nl>; vlajki emil <evlajki@sprint.ca>; <michel.collon@skynet.be>; <Joveljic.Nebojsa.N@bhp.com>; <mmr@EUnet.yu>; <veritas@yubc.net>; <106057.1021@compuserve.com>; <redactie@targets.org>; <yuambanl@bart.nl>; <norge@bxy.org.yu>; <n.h.van.holst@freeler.nl>; <casa@lepidachrosite.lion-access.net>
Sent: vrijdag 27 april 2001 10:59
Subject: The Budapest Sun

Camp Bondsteel: Permanent Staging Post For
 Out-Of-Area Operations?

The Budapest Sun

There are unconfirmed reports in Kosovo that the US government is seeking a lease of up to 75 years....Although at present it has only helicopter facilities, sufficient real estate remains unused to build runways large enough for B-52 bombers, which could make Bondsteel a forward staging post for US out-of-area operations in the Middle East.

April 26, 2001 - Volume IX, Issue 17
 US forces get settled in Kosovo

By Neil Barnett

The US government is negotiating to secure a more permanent status for Camp Bondsteel, its main base in Kosovo. Currently the legal status of the property is unclear due to the destruction of property records in the war.

The negotiations may provide further evidence of a long-term US commitment to the Balkans despite George W Bush's election rhetoric.

According to Major James Marshall, a US Army spokesman, "We want UNMIK (the UN interim government) to re-establish property ownership titles.

At present there is a temporary arrangement under the Military Technical Agreement between the UN and Yugoslavia."

There are unconfirmed reports in Kosovo that the US government is seeking a lease of up to 75 years, although Marshall refused to comment on possible future contracts.

The 900-acre (360,000 sqm) base is located near Urosevac, 25km south of the provincial capital Pristina. It acts as the headquarters of the US contingent and logistics base for the US-led sector of the province. Some 4,800 troops are accommodated in Bondsteel.

The size and apparent permanence of Camp Bondsteel has been a source of speculation in Kosovo for some time. Although at present it has only helicopter facilities, sufficient real estate remains unused to build runways large enough for B-52 bombers, which could make Bondsteel a forward staging post for US out-of-area operations in the Middle East. "About 55-60% of the camp is developed," leaving around 150,000 sqm so far unused, Marshall said. The camp has a command center,

• a hospital, two education centers, three fitness centers, three dining halls, a cinema and two chapels.

It generates its own electricity and purifies two million liters of drinking water per day. Outside the camp's Burger King restaurant, American soldiers sun themselves while listening to Britney Spears and Eminem.

Evidence of an apparent long-term commitment to Kosovo sits oddly with a growing US reluctance to perform the occasionally hazardous task of peacekeeping.

The US Army in Kosovo has been criticized recently for its obsession with "force protection" (ie prevention of US casualties) at the expense of the peacekeeping mission. In February, Britain's 1st Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment (1PWRR) was rushed into the US sector to secure the Presevo Valley border area after an upsurge in activity by ethnic Albanian rebels in southern Serbia.

Then in late March, as fighting between ethnic Albanian rebels and government forces erupted in northern Macedonia, the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment (2RTR) was sent into the border area to prevent cross-border activity by insurgents.

In both cases, it was mainly US reluctance to deal with dangerous situations that necessitated British intervention in the US sector. The difference in approaches between US troops and others is clear in Kosovo. British troops patrol on foot, wearing berets and no body armor, allowing them to interact with the local population and win their confidence.

The American soldiers, by contrast, seldom venture out of their Humvee 4x4s, and travel in convoys, with helmeted and flack-jacketed soldiers training roof-mounted machine guns on the surrounding area.

Privately, some KFOR officers are concerned that over time, as the Kosovar Albanian's delight at NATO's intervention wears off, the US approach will cause a deterioration of relations between KFOR and the local population.

Bush said during his election campaign that he would review the US commitment to the Balkans and seek to hand a greater share of European peacekeeping to Europe. But US Secretary of State Colin Powell recently said that there was no exit date for US forces in Bosnia or Kosovo.

THE HOAX THAT STARTED A WAR

How the US, NATO and the western media were conned in kosovo
<http://www.canoe.ca/Columnists/worthington.html>

By PETER WORTHINGTON – Toronto Sun, April 1, 2001

Back in March, 1999, what tipped the scales for then U.S. president Bill Clinton to launch an air war against Serbia, were reports of a massacre of 45 Albanian civilians by Serb security forces at the

03-04-01

then-Yugoslavia and speaking on CBS' Face the Nation, cited Racak where, she said, there were "dozens of people with their throats slit." She called this the "galvanizing incident" that meant peace talks at Rambouillet were pointless, "humanitarian bombing" the only recourse.

Germany's Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, told the newspaper Berliner Zeitung that the Racak massacre "became the turning point for me" and war was the only answer.

Canada's then foreign minister, Lloyd Axworthy, called the massacre "a disgusting victimization of civilians."

Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported the dead had fingernails torn out - evidence of torture.

On Jan. 16, the day after the actual massacre, William Walker, the veteran American diplomat who headed peace verifiers for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), was Taken by Kosovo Liberation Army members to Racak to see the bodies in the ditch. He declared that the dead "obviously were executed where they lay."

His OSCE report spoke of "arbitrary arrests, killings and mutilations of unarmed civilians" at Racak.

GROUND TROOPS

Canada's Louise Arbour, then special prosecutor for the war crimes tribunal, (hand-picked for the job by Albright) was prevented by Serb authorities from visiting Racak. She vowed retribution for the massacre, urging that "international troops on the ground" were the only way to effect arrests.

When Milosevic was indicted as a war criminal, the massacre at Racak was cited as evidence. The London Times wrote that victims had their eyes gouged out, heads smashed in, faces blown away at close range, all "farmers, workers, villagers, aged 12-74, men, women, children."

Serbian and Belorussian forensic people investigated, but were suspect, so the European Union authorized a forensic team from Finland, headed by Helena Ranta, a dental pathologist, to investigate. The Finnish report was not made public.

Ranta gave a press conference at which she was vague, admitting there was no evidence of mutilation or torture, and that Yugoslav authorities had co-operated. But she also called the killings "a Crime against humanity," widely interpreted to mean Racak was indeed a cold-blooded massacre.

It has since turned out, through subsequent investigations by German, French and American correspondents and by human rights and peace groups, including the anti-war International Action Centre and the Liberty Foundation, that the Racak massacre seems an enormous, albeit effective, hoax perpetrated by the Kosovo Liberation Army to persuade the U.S. and NATO to attack the Serbs. The goal was independence for Kosovo, possibly leading to the dream of a Greater Albania.

We now have a far better idea of what really happened at Racak - a pre-crisis town of 2,000 and a stronghold of KLA agitation. By January, 1999, most of its population had fled to a nearby town, Stimlje, leaving perhaps 400 people behind. When four Serbian policemen were ambushed and

03-04-01

village of Racak, some 30 km from Pristina in southern Kosovo.

Clinton told the world on March 19, 1999: "We should remember what happened in Racak ... innocent men, women and children were taken from their homes to a gully, forced to kneel in the dirt and sprayed with gunfire." Photos circled the world. NATO bombing began March 24, and lasted 78 days.

White House press secretary Joe Lockhart said of Racak: "A strong message will be brought to President (Slobodan) Milosevic about bringing those to justice who should be punished for this ..."

U.S. Foreign Secretary Madeleine Albright, eager to make war against then-Yugoslavia and speaking on CBS' Face the Nation, cited Racak where, she said, there were "dozens of people with their throats slit." She called this the "galvanizing incident" that meant peace talks at Rambouillet were pointless, "humanitarian bombing" the only recourse.

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murdered in two separate incidents in a week, Serb security forces surrounded Racak and attacked. The Serbs tipped off foreign journalists who came to see. Fighting was savage and brief, not only in town but in the countryside.

Journalists found Racak had few people actually living there. Some 20 bodies were counted. Serbs and journalists left at dusk. The next day, Jan. 16, the KLA was again in control.

During the night, it seems that all the KLA killed fighting in the area - 45 of them - were dumped in a gully at Racak and journalists and the OSCE investigators invited to see what was described as the "massacre" of unarmed civilians.

Military insignia and/or badges had been removed from clothing, military gear replaced by civilian clothing. No weapons were in sight. The hoax was on. William Walker was first on the scene and believed what he saw and was told. The international press relayed his outrage to the world.

Forensic evidence showed - as the Finnish team has since confirmed - that most of the 45 Racak dead had been shot at long range, not execution-style. Corpses tested positive with residue of gunpowder on their hands, indicating they had been firing weapons. No ammunition or shell casings were found near the bodies, where they had supposedly been massacred, nor were there pools of blood.

BODIES MOVED

Pathologists also found the 45 dead men had all been shot in different parts of the body, from different directions, indicating a battle somewhere else, the dead dumped together for effect.

Until recently, no one was interested in the truth. "Whether or not it's a massacre, nobody wants to know any more," wrote Austria's Die Welt newspaper. Autopsy findings were delayed while the thirst for war echoed in the halls of allied power.

The German newspaper Berliner Zeitung got access to the Finnish forensic findings, and sent a team of reporters to investigate and concluded: "In all probability, there was no Racak massacre at all ..."

French journalist Renaud Girard of Le Figaro was in Racak and was puzzled that reports failed to mention it was a "fortified village with a lot of trenches" - a KLA stronghold. Although he wrote an initial massacre story, he later had doubts: "I felt something was wrong."

Christophe Chatelet of Le Monde was in Racak the day of the Serb attack, and found one dead and four wounded when he left at dusk. The next day the KLA showed bodies from a massacre that hadn't been there before. "I can't solve that mystery," he said. (At the time, KLA commander-in-chief Hashim Thaci told the BBC: "We had a key unit in the region and had a fierce fight. Regrettably, we had many casualties, but so did the Serbs.")

Further investigation shows that two TV journalists for Associated Press and two teams of OSCE observers also saw the fight for Racak from a hill, entered when Serb security forces did and left when they left. The AP crew filmed a deserted village. It was overnight that the KLA returned and gathered their dead from the fighting. Next day, Walker told the world how adults and children had been "executed," some as they tried to flee. CNN reporter Christiane Amanpour, wife of U.S. State Department spokesman James Rubin, showed little skepticism in reporting on the "massacre of civilians."

CHECK THE NET

For those who want to check further, enter "Racak massacre" on Google or Yahoo on the Internet and see what you get.) It changes nothing, but Racak should make people wary of government propaganda about areas where they have little knowledge, but strong feelings. Remember the emotions generated about "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo?

At the end of World War II, the population of Kosovo was 50-50 Serb and Albanian. By 1999 it was 90% Albanian. Today, it's close to 96%. Over 50 years, who's been "ethnically cleansed"? Today, Albanians in Macedonia are using arguments similar to those used against Serbs in Kosovo - prejudice, being frozen from jobs, discriminated against. Rarely mentioned are maps produced in Albania that show not only Kosovo, but parts of Macedonia and Montenegro as part of "Greater Albania."

It doesn't take an Einstein to realize that the U.S., NATO and western media have been conned and manipulated into supporting an aggressive exercise in nation-building that is not likely to be resolved peaceably. NATO's beleaguered soldiers are innocents caught in a Balkan quagmire, thanks to a blundering, myopic, vainglorious political leader.
<end> -----

Background:

[1] "One result of the massive military sponsorship of US communication research was that the main perspectives in the field were in tune with military priorities. Specifically, both the content and method of communication research was oriented to the goals of domination and manipulation of mass audiences."

Science of Coercion: Communication Research and Psychological Warfare - book review
<http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/94BRgl2.html>

[2] Doug Bandow Balkan blunders Washington Times March 30 2001
<http://www.washtimes.com/commentary/20010330-14061926.htm>

[3] Destabilizing the Balkans: US & Albanian Defense Cooperation in the 1990s - Antiwar
<http://antiwar.com/orig/dakovic2.html>

[4] Peter Beaumont, Ed Vulliamy and Paul Beaver Observer March 11 2001
<http://www.observer.co.uk/international/story/0,6903,449923,00.html>

[5] Martin A. Lee More bloodshed in the Balkans- The bitter legacy of NATO's "humanitarian" war <http://www.sfbg.com/reality/21.html>

[6] Time to Pay the Piper Stratfor 23 March 2001
<http://www.stratfor.com/home/giu/archive/032301>

[7] David H. Hackworth, DEFENDING AMERICA, June 7, 1999:
DEFANG THE KLA TODAY OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES TOMORROW
<http://www.hackworth.com/7jun99.html>

[8] "Backing the KLA is simply insane," Levine protests. Levine, a highly decorated former undercover agent for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), told THE NEW AMERICAN, "My contacts within the DEA are quite frankly terrified, but there's not much they can say without risking their jobs. These guys [the KLA] have a network that's active on the streets of this country..."

They're the worst elements of society that you can imagine, and now, according to my sources in drug enforcement, THEY'RE POLITICALLY PROTECTED."

W.M. Grigg, May 24, 1999
http://thenewamerican.com/tna//1999/05-24-99/vo15no11_kla.htm

[9] "Many reports in the past have mentioned the covert forces involved with the KLA. For example, on July 15, 1998, PBS Newshour reported that U.S. Vietnam War veterans were training KLA mercenaries in Albania." Wilson, G.
<http://www.fas.org/man/dod-101/ops/docs99/990423-kosovo01.htm>

[10] "MPRI sub-contracted some of the training programme to two British private security companies, ensuring that between 1998 and June 1999 the KLA was being armed, trained and assisted in Italy, Turkey, Kosovo and Germany by the Americans, the German external intelligence service and former and serving members of Britain's 22 SAS Regiment."

We call all citizens, along with our members and supporters, to continue and to keep up their political struggle, as well as to use all democratic means to have Mr. Slobodan Milosevic released

We request authorities to free Mr. Slobodan Milosevic immediately and to allow him to defend himself as a free person, since he is the most honest man who will never leave his country or run away anywhere.

The Socialist Party of Serbia would like to express its gratitude to numerous honorable policemen who, with tears in their eyes and apologies on their mouths, were forced to participate unwillingly in the dubious action of the Interior Ministry against those same citizens who stand along with them during patriotic defense of the country, particularly in Kosovo and Metohija.

We condemn, also, all fabricated attacks on the Yugoslav Army who strictly fulfilled its legal role and tasks in securing the objects that are vitally important for the country. Yugoslav Army prevented possible bloodshed since policemen from Interior Ministry have tried to penetrate into object contrary to the valid Government's decision on the security of the former Yugoslav President.

To join or help this struggle, visit:
<http://www.sps.org.yu/> (official SPS website)
<http://www.belgrade-forum.org/> (forum for the world of equals)
<http://www.24casa.co.yu/> (the only free daily newspaper in Yugoslavia)

Global Reflexion - Amsterdam - The Netherlands
Ph. ++ 31 20 615 1122 - Fax: ++ 31 20 615 1120

- 1. Opening en definitieve vaststelling van de agenda
- 2. Vaststellen notulen overlegverg. 30 januari 1998
- 3. ARBO-zaken [EM]
- Rapport risico-inventarisatie en -evaluatie
- Toelichting door mevr. J. Ledegang, van ARBO-dienst AMG
- ARBO-jaarpian ICCO 1998 en 1999
- Toelichting door WM
- ter info: brief OR over behandelprocedure
- instemmingsverzoek Werkplan AMG 98
- Meenemen: Pelling OR over werkdruk + conclusies
- 150/97

AGENDA
CONCEPT-EN WERK-
OVERLEGVERGADERING 20 MAART 1998
Tijd: 9.30u - ...n Plaats: Bieb-zaal
Gast bij punt 3: mevr. Ledegang: 9.45-10.30u
voorzitter: BR

voor: OR/Dir/Voorzitter AB/Personeel
m: agenda.ovl

correspondentieadres: postbus 151, 3700 AD Zeist
telefoon: 030 - 6927811

OR 66
NVA

ONDERNEMINGSRAD ICCO

13.15h
← Vertalen in document

← Caverste BR →

TER INFO:
- Verandering vergaderdata '98
- Notulen OR-verg. 13-2 en 6-3 '98
- Jaarpian agendapunten OR/overlegverg. /commissies '98
a.u.b. bespreken in agenda

8. Rondvraag
7. Schalen t/m 7: [EM]
Brief OR met verzoek een eigen ICCO-regelend te stellen

6. Verouwencommissie [BR]/brief OR aan dir. mevr. Ledegang
antwoord op vragen JVE op overlegverg. 30-1-98
Bijlage: info over klachtenregelingen/klachtencommissie
deskundige over proefopstelling
Commentaar van de OR n.a.v. bezoek en advies ARBO

5. Stand van lopende zaken
Nieuws uit DB of AB [JVE]
Nabeschouwing cultuurdag (?/nvh): JVE + OR
Directiebestuur?? [JVE]

4. Meublaar/huisvesting: [AZ]
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CENSORED ALERT!

CENSORED ALERT: The Newsletter of Project Censored
Summer 2000 Sonoma State University Vol. 4, Issue 2

Project Censored's 7th Annual Award Ceremony

Caps off Press Freedom Conference

Project Censored's seventh annual award ceremony capped off two days of groundbreaking workshops and panel discussions at the Press Freedom Conference at Fordham University on April 11 and 12, 2000. Independent media were well represented at both the Conference and Award Ceremony as the events fittingly preceded the high-profile IMF protest in Washington, DC (see inside).

Laura Flanders of KWAB Radio provided highly entertaining wit and humor as master of ceremony for the sold-out program.



Project Censored interns, Corey Hale, Melissa Bonham, (MC Laura Flanders), Katie Sims, Jeremiah Price, Katie Anderson, and Damian Uriarte present award for story # 8.

Keynote speaker Benjamin Pogrund, author of *Memoir of a South African Journalist*, addressed the social significance and courage required of journalists in the role of investigating and reporting international human rights violations.

Greg Ruggiero from Seven Stories Press and Robin Anderson, Project Censored national judge from Fordham University, were the principle organizers of the Award Ceremony which was co-hosted by Seven Stories Press, Project Censored, Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), The Investigative Fund of the Nation Institute, and The Peace and Justice Studies Program at Fordham University.

Award winners for the evening were:

Story #1: Multinational Corporations Profit from Brutality: Arvind Ganesan

Story #2: Pharmaceutical Companies Put Profits Before Need: Ken Silverstein

Story #3: American Cancer Society: The

World's Wealthiest 'Non-profit' Institution: Samuel S. Epstein

Story #4: American Sweatshops Sew U.S. Military Uniforms: Mark Boal

Story #5: Turkey Destroys Kurdish Villages with U.S. Weapons: Kevin McKeiman

Story #6: NATO Defends Western Economic Interests in the Balkans: Diana Johnstone, Sara Flounders, and Pratap Chatterjee

Story #7: U.S. Media Reduces Foreign Coverage: Peter Arnett

Story #8: US Violates World Law to Militarize Space: Karl Grossman and Bruce K. Gagnon

Story #9: Louisiana Promotes Toxic Racism: Ron Nixon

Story #10: US and NATO Deliberately Started the War with Yugoslavia: Jason Vest, Seth Ackerman, Diana Johnstone, Maria Carrion, Amy Goodman and Jeremy Scahill

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Director's column:

Project Censored Replies to Annual Critics

For the past 24 years, the annual release of Top 25 News Stories has prompted critics to challenge the work of Project Censored. It is important for us to take our annual critics seriously. Their efforts over the years have tended to bring about Project improvements and expansions. The year 2000 brings little new in this regard, but there have been a number of common misunderstandings and some misguided criticisms.

Dan Hazen from *Alternet*, B.S. Biggs writing for *MOJOwire*, and Dan Kennedy at the *Boston Phoenix* each criticized the selections of particular news accounts from this year's list, and from there drew inappropriately negative conclusions. Hazen added a slightly different twist by criticizing our choices with regard to literary quality—we have never claimed to base our awards on literary quality—our awards are based on the value of investigative journalism.

Project Censored simply selects the most important news stories published or discussed in alternative media that were not covered in mainstream corporate media in the United States.

Each year over 200 faculty, research students, and national judges select the 25 most "censored," i.e. undercovered, news stories of the year. These stories are screened from thousands and go through four levels of review. The initial screening is done by a faculty or community expert who rates the story for national importance and credibility. The highest ranked stories are researched for amount of national coverage by Project students using three full text library data bases to determine mainstream coverage. Then all 200 faculty and students narrow the stories down to 25 for the national judges to rank.

Predictably, every year someone is offended by one or another of the stories and thinks his/her individual judgment is superior to our collective efforts. We often find this criticism to be limited and self-centered, as the critic has some special interest or personal point of view not served by the story. Project Censored cannot pull back from exposing stories simply because they may upset or contradict certain convictions or belief systems. We are by mission broadly iconoclastic.

The year 1999 was unique in that the Pentagon and NATO

went on an international rampage attacking Serbia and conducted a massive propaganda effort to justify their deeds. Mainstream media fully covered NATO's perspective. Project Censored found dozens of news stories regarding this war that were not covered in the U.S. Our inclusion of five stories regarding the war in *Censored 2000* is fully justifiable — we will do it again under similar circumstances.

One common misunderstanding is over our definition of censorship. Critics often fall back on a Webster definition of censorship, claiming that our stories weren't actually "censored" but rather weren't selected for coverage by mainstream media. Our definition of censorship is: "any interference with the flow of information in a society." This includes factors much more insidious than overt corporate or governmental banning of particular news stories. Censorship today includes self-censorship, which over 40% of journalists admitted to in a recent Pew survey. Another major reason for "censorship" of, or neglect to cover, important stories is the priority mainstream media places on entertainment value. There is also the tendency for corporate media to not cover stories that may offend their major advertisers or government sources.

As we move toward our 25th anniversary, and into the 21st century, we find it more important than ever to remind the public that mainstream media is not keeping us informed.

For this reason we are starting up a NPR satellite link to distribute our hour-long newscasts on important undercovered news stories. We have also started a weekly internet release of synopses of important undercovered news stories. To sign up on this list just visit our new website at www.projectcensored.org.

As always, thank you for your continuing support.

Peter Phillips is an associate professor of Sociology at Sonoma State University and the director of Project Censored.

Press Freedom Conference

On April 11th and 12th, Project Censored co-hosted the Press Freedom Conference at Fordham University in New York City. Keynoted by Amy Goodman, host of *Democracy Now!* and winner of the George Polk Award for Journalism, the Conference preceded Project Censored's seventh annual Award Ceremony and was attended by media activists, First Amendment advocates, journalists, students, and alternative news producers and publishers who came from as far away as the Netherlands and South Africa.

The two day Press Freedom Conference focused on building a democratic alternative to current, corporate controlled media systems. Panels, workshops and strategy sessions were dedicated to supporting investigative journalism, strengthening independent media, and building alternative news networks on a national scale.

Energized by the vision of the Independent Media Center (IMC) organizers, the group of Seattle activists who organized an independent media command center that shut down the WTO in November, the Conference became a hub for on-the-spot grassroots organizing. In a workshop facilitated by Eric Galatas, a Seattle and Washington DC IMC volunteer, media activists soon moved from visionary brainstorming,



to concrete decision making as to the sustainability, implementation/creation of, and networking between IMC's that are cropping up in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Boulder and Washington DC.

Project Censored Award winners, Peter Arnett, Karl Grossman, Sara Flounders, Arvind Ganesan, Kevin McKiernan, Jason Vest, and Jeremy Scahill addressed issues of independent media's role in US foreign policy.

Abbey Scher of *Dollars and Sense*, Rachel Coen of Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting, Danny Schechter of mediachannel.org, Nancy Kranich of the American Library Association, Laura Flanders of Working Assets, Dan Simon of Seven Stories Press, Mike Elsenmenger of Paper Tiger Television, Natalie Byfield of Black Media Foundation, DeeDee Halleck of Deep Dish TV, Angela Ards of the Nation Institute, and Manse Jacobi of Free Speech

TV were among the many celebrated media experts who joined Project Censored Award winners Samuel Epstein, Ken Silverstein, Ron Nixon, and Mark Boal in discussing alternative networking tactics and the means of confronting the power of corporate media. When asked what Indy Media can do to create more solidarity, David Barsamian of Alternative Radio responded, "We need to use synergy. The fact that the US is marketing journalism has become status quo. If we need to do anything it's to change that."

Question Authority and get credit for it

Last summer, students probed civil rights violations by masked police who burst into homes and took property without cause. The government got so frightened they begged the university provost to call us off. It didn't work.

Join us this summer for Round 2:

Project Censored Investigative Reports

stream media's failure to cover important news topics and how grassroots sociological investigation and use of freedom of information and insight into important societal problems. Students learn to use high-tech web-based newsletters and local independent sociological investigative reports in alternative media in the US. Ervin... is editor and publisher of the Putnam Plk. "One of the few journalistic pit bulls on the Internet," says Tabloid.net's Matt Welch.

de oarsverbanden moeten in dit verband nog nader... hebben hier een belangrijke taak... Ook het... Censored Alert 3
Voorts is uiteraard ook in het geval van de directeur intern beleid van groot belang dat hij zich goed op de hoogte houdt van de ontwikkelingen binnen de teams, met name daar waar het gaat om beleidsontwikkeling en het doorvertalen van leerresultaten.

IMCs: The People (Didn't) Have A Voice

By: CORRIE ROBB, COREY HALE, AND KATIE ANDERSON

Building on its strong presence at the World Trade Organization protests in November of 1999, the volunteer organizers of the Independent Media Centers (IMC) brought their brand of empowering, grassroots media coverage to the World Bank/International Monetary Fund Protests in Washington DC this April 16th (A16). Project Censored had a small delegation of student journalists on hand to witness the work of the Washington IMC in action. The regional IMCs, which are now emerging in major urban centers around the country, focus on building a democratic alternative to corporate media systems. Most exciting about the IMC's is that they are not fighting for the scraps left over from the Corporate Media table. Instead, they are using new avenues such as interactive web activity, made possible by new software which allows anyone to access their site at www.indymedia.org, and instantaneously upload video, audio and text, from any computer.

The DC IMC also carried on the tradition of issuing its own press passes to dozens of writers, camera people, and videographers with the express intent of creating non-corporate, noncommercial documentary TV and radio programming that is available for free public distribution. Once completed, the programs are uploaded onto a telecommunications satellite where they can be downloaded for airing at a later date



by any media outlet, usually public access and PBS affiliates. It was in this way that the world originally began to find out about the indiscriminate pepper spraying and rubber bullet blasting of peaceful protesters at the WTO, which mainstream media had originally denied was happening. Thanks to the Indymedia Center, the corporate media sham could not be sustained.

What the IMCs are offering is not a voice to the few, for there is no censorship, no middle person monitoring what goes onto the web page (except in the case of repeats), but rather an avenue for alternative perspectives. What the Project Censored group found most intriguing was the IMC's ability to circumvent mainstream media, to completely take it out of the loop, leaving mainstream media journalists scrambling for retractions and corrections as the real story leapt ahead of scheduled corporate controlled broadcasts. As part of their coverage of the A16 protests many mainstream media outlets, including CNBC, were forced to make

mention and respond to the work of the IMC and its pioneering brand of coverage because informed protesters actively pressured mainstream reporters and producers. There were several mainstream profiles of the Washington IMC and the videographers documenting every facet of the police activity, the peaceful civil disobedience, and the all important message of the protesters, which focused on drawing attention to the globally destructive misdeeds of the World Bank and IMF.

One concern regarding the ability to interact via the web was that www.indymedia.org could be inundated by cranks, minimizing its effectiveness. However, after monitoring the Seattle protests, and the IMF/World Bank protests of April 16th, this was found not to be the case. While alternative and sometimes conflicting views were presented, it was exhilarating to get information from many perspectives, rather than just the side the mainstream media had chosen to focus on. The Independent Media Center movement plans to next turn its energy to the upcoming Los Angeles Democratic Convention, and the Philadelphia Republican Convention.

For more information about IMCs, how to support your nearest center, and how to get your local cable access or PBS affiliate to air the wide variety of programming, visit the Project Censored website at www.papertiger.org, www.a16.org, or www.deepdish.org.

Censored 2000 Radio Series

Over 200 radio stations across the nation are participating in the Censored 2000 Radio Series. This series features a variety of programming that is available for free public distribution. Once completed, the programs are uploaded onto a telecommunications satellite where they can be downloaded for airing at a later date.

by Jim Hightower, ask them to call

1-800-444-2500 for a free CD set.

de overvelden moe... 2000 Radio Series... de overvelden moe... 2000 Radio Series... de overvelden moe... 2000 Radio Series...

Ook het stafbureau en in het bijzonder de functionarissen behorende ten- nind hebben hier een belangrijke taak te vervullen. De rol en werking van

CensoredAlert 6

Voorts is uiteraard ook in het geval van de directeur intern beleid van groot belang dat hij zich goed op de hoogte houdt van de ontwikkelingen binnen de teams, met name daar waar het gaat om beleidsontwikkeling en het doorvertalen van leerrechten.

mediachannel.org

**the first global
media and
democracy
supersite on the
Internet**

Online since February, 2000, at: <http://www.mediachannel.org>. It is the definitive portal to news, information, and opinion about the media, its cultural, political and social impact, with an emphasis on the quality of journalism. It brings together, through one "front door," the best material from leading media issues organizations, academic institutions, and publications from around the world, makes it available via an easy to use interface, contextualizes the material with original editorial content, and offers an outlet for independent media perspectives. With 395 (and growing) affiliated organizations, MEDIACHANNEL.ORG is the world's

"I'm particularly excited about one aspect of the MediaChannel's work—its encouragement to people inside media to speak up, to speak out, about their own experiences. Corporate censorship is just as dangerous as government censorship."

— WALTER CRONKITE

more effective media consumers, encouraging them to engage with their media, and to support independent media initiatives worldwide.

MEDIACHANNEL.ORG also showcases original news and commentary from respected journalists, scholars and critics, written exclusively for the supersite. It actively encourages a cross-pollination of ideas from a wide variety of perspectives. Recent contributors of original content include South Africa's Nobel Laureate Nadine Gordimer, *New York Times* Executive Editor Joe Lleyveld, and the novelist Eduardo Galeano of Uruguay. In addition, MEDIACHANNEL.ORG presents a daily media news digest culled from affiliated sites, international newspapers, wire services and trade publications—with links to diverse original on-line sources. We also have a pool of regular columnists, including Executive Editor Danny Schechter's column, and Whistleblowers, that features insider reports about the practices of the major media corporations. With its wide range of material and substantive content, MEDIACHANNEL.ORG is a model of innovative on-line news presentation at its best.

Aside from being a media news and information source, MEDIACHANNEL.ORG is also a global network of organizations, educators and individuals that work on media issues. In this way, MEDIACHANNEL.ORG provides a new kind of service — facilitating communications between groups and individuals who are interested in better use of the web, press freedom, reporting individuals' experiences that relate to their interests; and creating a forum where new ideas and policy proposals can take shape and be debated to inform and engage up-to-date news and information about the media

— its ownership, controversies, trends, how it works, and the challenges it faces as new technology reshapes the media environment. The supersite is an action center for citizens who wish to participate in media reform and promote media freedom. It offers resources for teachers and students involved in the growing media literacy movement. It also offers innovative tools and resources for groups and individuals to help them become more effective media practitioners. Editorial offices are in New York, but the supersite has a global focus, and contributions come from all over the world.

"We seek to transform a news media landscape that is quickly modeling itself on the old, bragging about content but offering little diversity and treating web users more as consumers than citizens."

— DANNY SCHECHTER

MEDIACHANNEL.ORG is designed to look like a news site to the casual visitor — on par with CNN.com or ABCNEWS.com. The front page is divided into three columns, with site navigation on the left-hand side. In-depth features in the middle, and breaking news and announcements on the right. It is professionally designed and attractive to the general consumer making use of cutting-edge database technology. It is a user-friendly site that is easy to navigate, so anyone with a four year-old computer can use it. The supersite also offers a searchable database of an affiliated directory of media issues organizations on the Internet. In addition, the site has a network of 80 advisors (leading media professionals, critics, scholars, and policy makers) in 36 countries. It is updated daily.

largest network of media issues groups. Its resources and tools help organizations and concerned citizens become more effective media consumers, encouraging them to engage with their media, and to support independent media initiatives worldwide. It actively encourages a cross-pollination of ideas from a wide variety of perspectives. Recent contributors of original content include South Africa's Nobel Laureate Nadine Gordimer, *New York Times* Executive Editor Joe Lleyveld, and the novelist Eduardo Galeano of Uruguay. In addition, MEDIACHANNEL.ORG presents a daily media news digest culled from affiliated sites, international newspapers, wire services and trade publications—with links to diverse original on-line sources. We also have a pool of regular columnists, including Executive Editor Danny Schechter's column, and Whistleblowers, that features insider reports about the practices of the major media corporations. With its wide range of material and substantive content, MEDIACHANNEL.ORG is a model of innovative on-line news presentation at its best. Aside from being a media news and information source, MEDIACHANNEL.ORG is also a global network of organizations, educators and individuals that work on media issues. In this way, MEDIACHANNEL.ORG provides a new kind of service — facilitating communications between groups and individuals who are interested in better use of the web, press freedom, reporting individuals' experiences that relate to their interests; and creating a forum where new ideas and policy proposals can take shape and be debated to inform and engage up-to-date news and information about the media environment. The supersite is an action center for citizens who wish to participate in media reform and promote media freedom. It offers resources for teachers and students involved in the growing media literacy movement. It also offers innovative tools and resources for groups and individuals to help them become more effective media practitioners. Editorial offices are in New York, but the supersite has a global focus, and contributions come from all over the world. It is professionally designed and attractive to the general consumer making use of cutting-edge database technology. It is a user-friendly site that is easy to navigate, so anyone with a four year-old computer can use it. The supersite also offers a searchable database of an affiliated directory of media issues organizations on the Internet. In addition, the site has a network of 80 advisors (leading media professionals, critics, scholars, and policy makers) in 36 countries. It is updated daily.

Pat Thurston joins Project Censored to produce *For the Record*



Pat Thurston, progressive radio show host formerly with KGO, KPIX and KSRO, mentors Project Censored students.

Radio team completes first in a series of radio documentaries

By PAT THURSTON

The Project Censored radio team has just completed its first in a series of sixty minute radio documentaries called "For The Record."

This is a project long dreamed of—a regular program broadcast nationwide to highlight underreported stories, many of which have been included in the annual yearbook. But being an ongoing series—it also affords us the opportunity to respond rapidly to any story that should be further explored.

In our first For The Record, we took on cancer from three different perspectives.

The first is the problem and proliferation of cancer exemplified by cancer clusters —geographic areas with inordinately high rates of cancer. We begin with the infamous Cancer Alley in Louisiana where pollution spewing industry is wooed into the state by its government while the health consequences to the residents is virtually ignored. The government in Louisiana has taken the position that a healthy economy necessitates sacrificing the environment. But as this program exposes, the destruction of Louisiana's environment has done nothing to bolster its economy.

Then we venture closer to the home of Project Censored with discussion of the lesser known but highly toxic little town of Willits, California.

We discover that Willits may be the most toxic place in the nation, the result of one company's disregard for proper

disposal of the chemicals being used in their hydraulic components plant. The company was Remco, now bankrupt, and its owner dead himself of cancer. But Remco's parent company has their own ideas on how to clean up the cancerous environment they created. The problem is, their solution may also be toxic.

Secondly, we explore conflicts of interest by those who are touted as helping cancer victims—specifically AstraZeneca, makers of tamoxifen and creators of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Their conflicts include being the manufacturers of carcinogenic substances even while manufacturing cancer treatments, owning cancer treatment centers and being the major sponsor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. And in terms of awareness, do they make people aware of how to prevent cancer—by avoiding carcinogens? No. And they are not alone in that regard.

And finally, we take aim at the sacred cow of cancer—The American Cancer Society, exposing their own conflicts of interest, spending questions and priorities—or lack thereof. Why did the American Cancer Society oppose the Clean Air Act? Why doesn't the American Cancer Society take on chemical companies who poison our environment? Why isn't the primary goal of the Society to prevent cancer, rather than detect the cancer in its earliest stages and get it treated promptly? Dr. Samuel Epstein offers his opinions on these and other questions concerning the responsibilities and the focus of the American Cancer Society.

See Record back page

Contact your
local radio station.
Ask them to call
Project Censored
at 707-664-2500
for free CD sets
of the series of 60
minute radio
documentaries

For the Record

Now's the time . . .

Nominate a Censored News Story

Some of the most interesting stories Project Censored evaluates are sent to us as nominations from people all over the world. These stories are clipped from small-circulation periodicals or from the back pages of regional newspapers. If you see a story and wonder why it hasn't been covered in mainstream media, we encourage you to send it to us as a Project Censored nomination.

To nominate a *Censored* story, send us a copy of the article, including the name of the source publication, date on which the article appeared, and page numbers.

Criteria for Project Censored News Story Nominations

1. A censored news story is one which contains information that the general United States population has a right and need to know, but to which it has had limited access.
2. The news story is timely, ongoing, and has implications for a significant number of people in the United States.
3. The story has clearly defined concepts and is backed up with solid, verifiable documentation.
4. The news story has been published, either electronically or in print, in a circulated newspaper, journal, magazine, newsletter, or similar publication from either a foreign or domestic source.
5. The news story has direct connections to and implications for people in the United States, which can include activities that U.S. citizens and entities are engaged in abroad.

We evaluate stories year-round and post important under-published stories on our website each month. October 1st is, however, the final deadline for nominating a *Censored* story of the year.



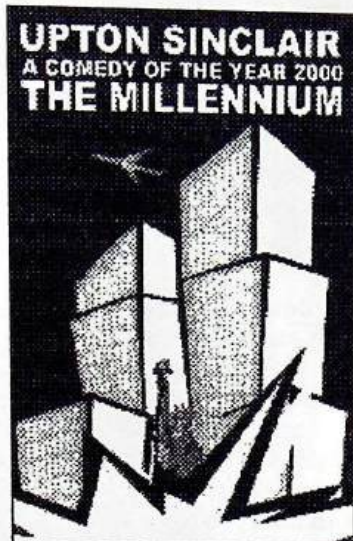
Please send nominations to:

Project Censored
Nominations
Sociology Department
Sonoma State University
1801 East Cotati Avenue
Rohnert Park, CA 94928

or e-mail nominations to:

censored@sonoma.edu

Jensen discovers rare Sinclair novel



Carl Jensen, professor emeritus of communications studies at SSU and founder of Project Censored, discovered a rare novel written by famed muckraker Upton Sinclair titled *The Millennium: A Comedy of the Year 2000*.

Originally written as a science fiction play, but never produced or published, *The Millennium* was serialized in 1914 in *Appeal to Reason* and then self-published as a book by Sinclair in 1924. It had limited distribution and no other edition was ever printed.

Jensen found the book while researching a biography on Upton Sinclair for another book he was writing titled *Stories That Changed America: Muckrakers of the 20th Century* that will be published in August 2000. Jensen purchased the reprint rights from the Sinclair estate and arranged for Seven Stories Press to publish *The Millennium*. It includes an introductory biography of Sinclair written by Jensen and features a cover design by Sandra Jensen.

The Millennium is Sinclair's utopian vision of a reconstructed world. During

the grand opening of the Pleasure Palace, a glittering half-mile-high structure in the middle of Central Park, a scientific experiment with radiumite goes haywire killing all life on the planet except for eleven people, passengers on an experimental flight from the roof of the Palace. Sinclair documents their attempts at rebuilding their lives.

Sinclair (1878-1968) was a true Renaissance man and a fearless crusader for social justice. His novel *The Jungle* (1906) led to the reform of the nation's meat supply and the creation of the Food and Drug Administration; another, *The Brass Check*, paved the way for the Newspaper Guild; *Boston* influenced America's perception of the Sacco-Vanzetti case; *OIL!* opened America's eyes to avaricious corporate oil swindlers; *Dragon's Teeth* brought Sinclair the Pulitzer Prize for literature and his 11-volume *Lanny Budd* series became an internationally popular history of the world from 1911 to 1950.

The Millennium is available through Project Censored. See enclosed order form.

Record from page 4

The program, while exposing many failings and unnecessary cases of cancer and other diseases, also offers a real message of hope—that an enormous number of cases of cancer are easily preventable. The disease can be prevented by avoiding carcinogens. When people recognize that simple truth and demand greater testing of the chemicals to which we are exposed, then government action to require the use of alternative substances to carcinogenic ones, the incidents of cancer will be substantially reduced.

In this first program we have included interview segments from Dr. Samuel Epstein, long-time critic of

Project Censored

Peter Phillips, Ph.D.
Project Director

Scot Frazier
Computer and
Internet Systems

Tricia Boreta
Coordinator,
Newsletter

Corey Hale
Administrative
Assistant

the American Cancer Society; Dr. Paul Templet, former Secretary of Environmental Quality for the state of Louisiana; Dr. Peter Montague, founder of Rachel's Environmental Weekly Newsletter; Emelda West, Cancer Alley resident and activist in her seventies; residents/victims in Willits; AstraZeneca's spokesperson; and a toxic site investigator. The American Cancer Society became highly agitated when asked to participate in a taped interview and refused to do so in relation to any question even remotely connected to criticisms made by Dr. Epstein. Their voices, therefore, are not included in the program. It has been a daunting challenge to fit all of these incredibly important discussions into one 60 minute program. But it was not our intent to do in-depth reporting—rather to highlight the story and give listeners the impetus and direction to discover more.

We have learned a great deal in the production of this show that will be incorporated into future episodes. Our goal is to have one sixty minute show distributed through the National Public Radio network every month. In the near future, we have plans to make the show available on the Project Censored website.

And that's "For The Record!"

Sicherheitspolitik



Bundeswehr

Berufe

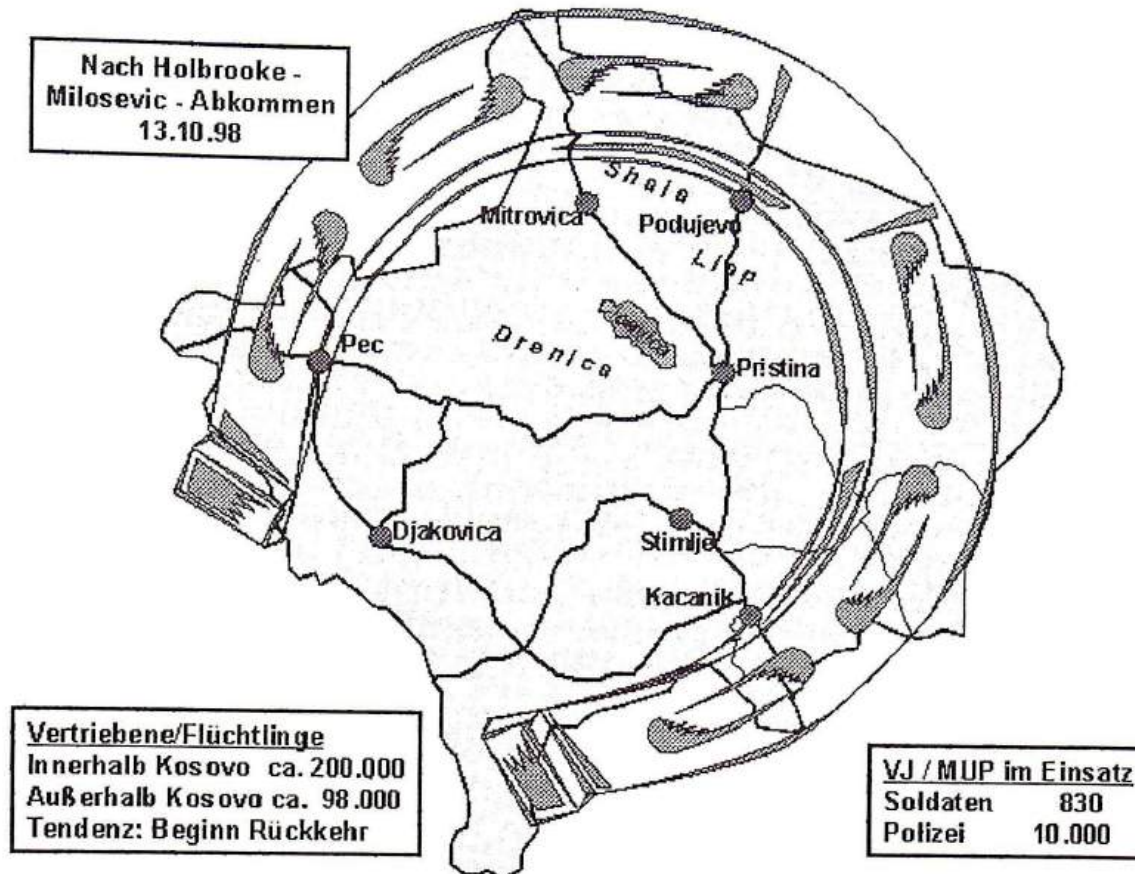
Presse

Neues

Suchen

Kontakt

Operation "horseshoe" (Potkova)



The present position in the Kosovo places itself to a large extent also as result of a yearly last after several notes obviously already to end in Milosevics surrounding field of compiled strategic plan with the designation "horseshoe" - Serbian: Potkova -.

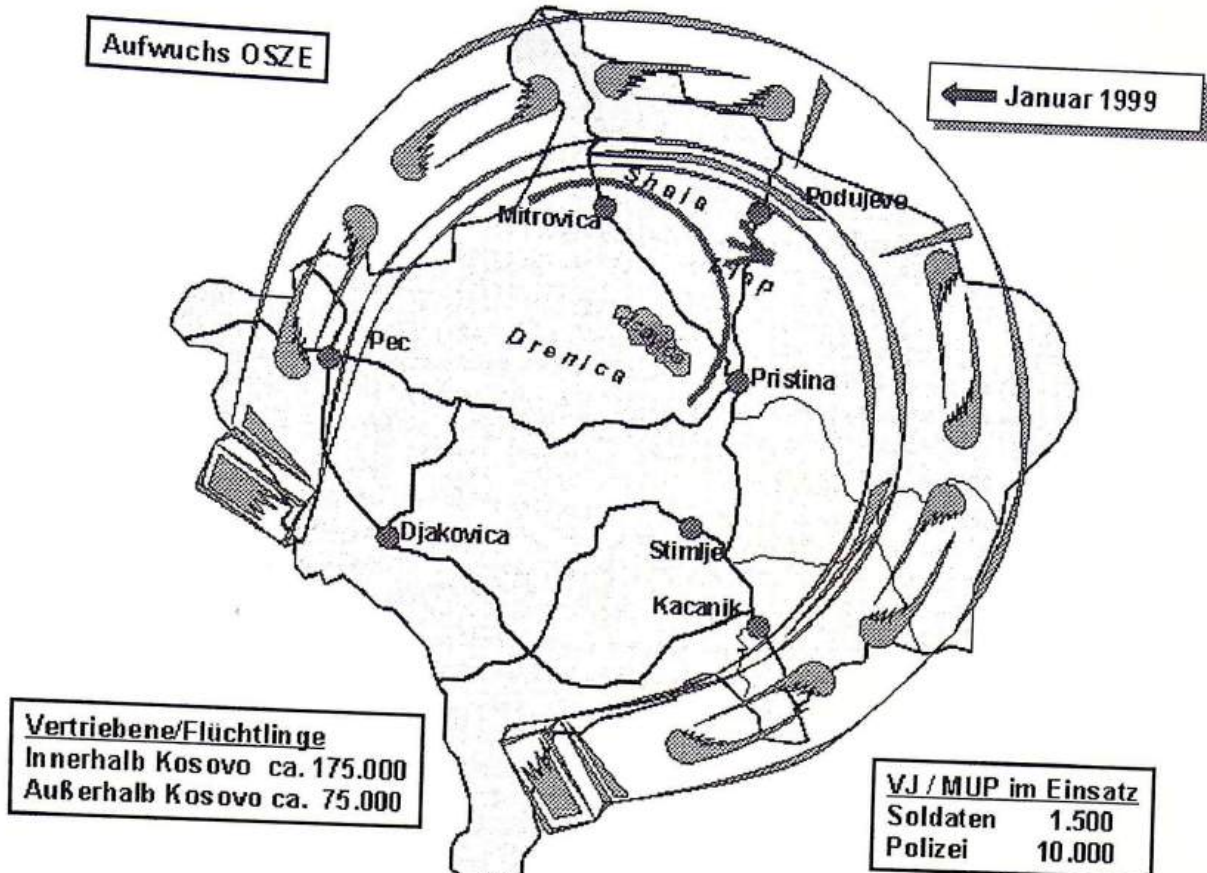
The items of this plan, which does not admit in its details however is, might have been adapted partly - like each operation plan - actually modifying political specifications and military position developments or have been included to from the beginning certain versions. Deployment and directions of attack of the Serbian-Yugoslav forces in the Kosovo in the last months offer however enough indications, which point on in principle a "hufeisenfoermiges" procedure in the Kosovo.

Principal purpose of the "operation horseshoe" is from our view smashing or. Neutralization of the UCK in the Kosovo. Driving out the kosovo Albanian population with the target of regional demographic modifications by force are obviously constituent of the plan. Thus unique a direct driving out of Kosovo Albanians from its villages and settlements was detected along a broad strip reciprocally the highway circuit roads in the Kosovo. Particularly in the UCK centers in the Llap, Shala and Drenica region became with driving out of Kosovo Albanians of the UCK their base and their support.

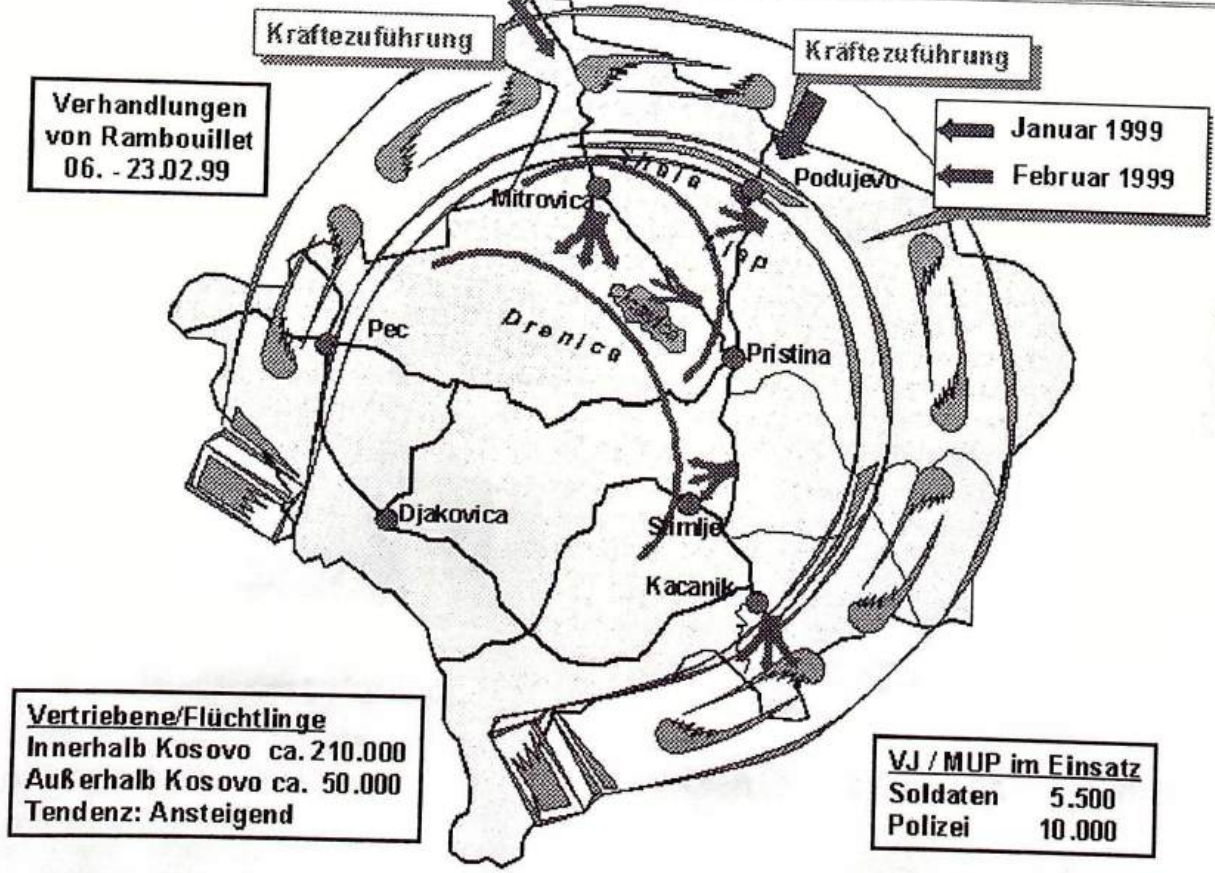
This was very probably for Belgrade the conversion of the central teachings, which were drawn from the procedure against the UCK in the summer/autumn last yearly. At that time Belgrade had succeeded, with substantial operations the UCK from from it controlled, about 40%-igen of surface portion of the Kosovo back urge. But only for short time.

To the memory - on the high point of these operations the number amounted out their houses refugees or fled humans on approximately 300,000 humans, up to 50.000 kampierten temporarily in the open air. After in October on printing of the international community Belgrade gave in first, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Euro verification mission accepted and obligations regarding strength and deployment of its forces in the Kosovo was received, returned at least many Binnenvertriebene to its homeland residences. With them in addition, the UCK - for Belgrade an unacceptable status.

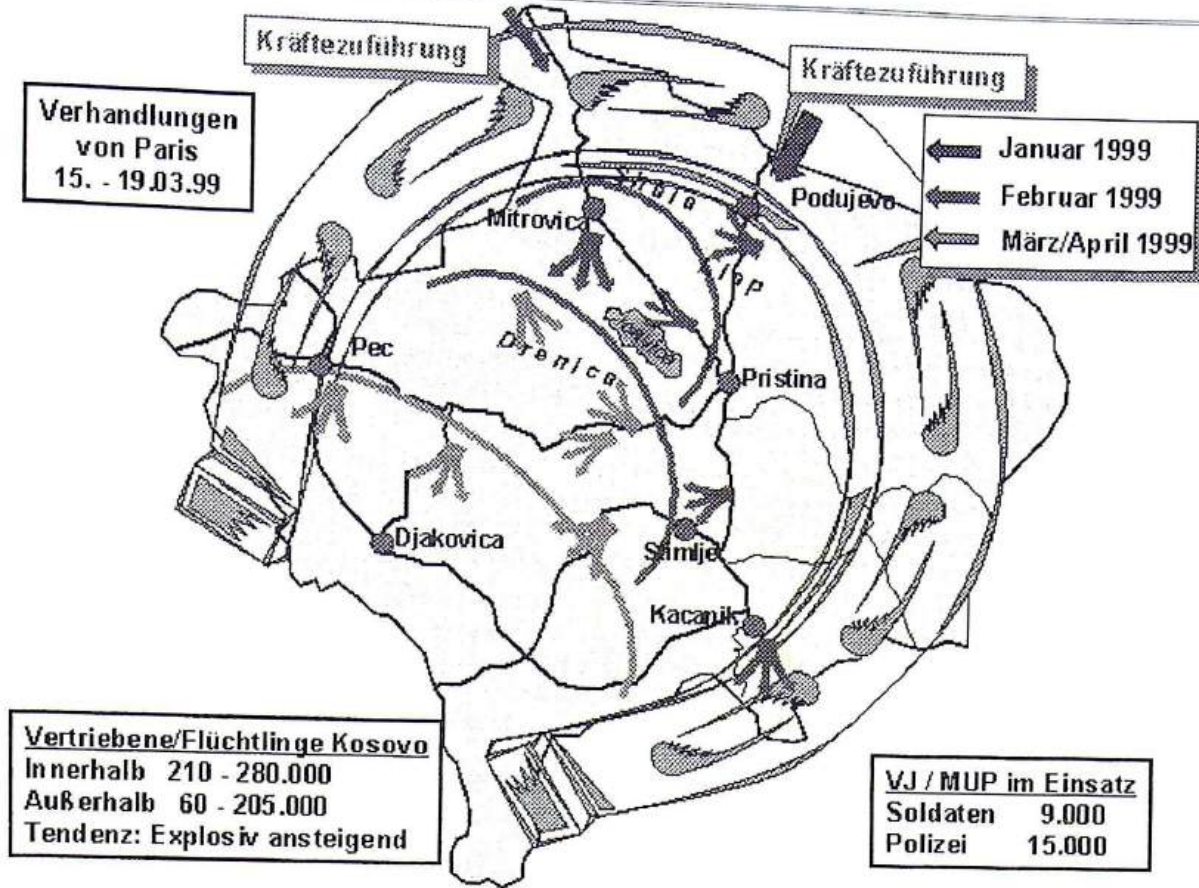
With the "horseshoe plan" the repetition of these flows should be prevented once and for all. Even during the Rambouillet discussions from 6 to 20 February 1999 it was unmistakable that Belgrade did not want to resign itself to the existence of the UCK in the Kosovo. For Belgrade and is the UCK was instrument of the terror and the separatism, against which each means must be used. While the Serbian delegation in Rambouillet and Paris of 15. Until 19 March 1999 aroused the impression to negotiate the Serbian forces continued their operation against the UCK and the civilian population. A serious participation of the Serbs in the negotiations was thus hardly intended of Milosevic.



Already in January the fight of the UCK increased by controversy and security forces first in particular in the north in the space Podujevo and Mitrovica. At the same time north Podujevo was supplied outside of the Kosovo a strong armored strike force.



In February the Serbian forces pushed the UCK aside from the surface from both sides in the west and east slopes of the ICCAcVclcCA MOUNTAINS, proceeded against the UCK von Osten ago in the space Stimlje and fought these for the first time in the south of the Kosovo in the space Kacanik in border proximity to Macedonia.



At the end of March was the operation horseshoe in full course, after some reinforcement of the ground forces had taken place before into the Kosovo. Before the fights were expanded into the Drenica region, in which the fight of the UCK had its starting point in the spring 1998 after the massacre of Serbian forces at the Jashari clan. The UCK turned out in all operation zones into the defensive, the number of the refugees and refugees rose dramatically. At present the emphasis of the procedure of the Serbian forces is situated in the west in the space Pec Djakovica.



GenOberst Perisic



GenOberst „Drago“ Ojdanic

Perisic and Ojdanic
would know a temporal connection between the creation of the plan for the operation horseshoe and the ends November last yearly
took place separation as pragmatic-moderated a valid general staff boss of the Perisic to exist. This was strict against an application of
the Yugoslav armed forces the inside one the country. The conversion of " horseshoes " presupposed however mandatory one in the
summer 1998 still hardly effected support of the Serbian security forceses by the infantry of the Yugoslav ground forces. Perisics
successor, general Ojdanic, seems to show here fewer scruples.