

Serbia: Kostunica Resigns, Elections Ahead

March 8, 2008 | 1624 GMT

Summary

The prime minister of Serbia, Vojislav Kostunica, resigned March 8. New elections tentatively have been set for May 11. These elections have three potential outcomes: a victory for pro-Western forces, a victory for pro-Russian forces, or more of the same muddle.

Analysis

Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica resigned March 8. Serbia's coalition government cannot stand without him, so elections have been tentatively set for May 11.

Kostunica has served as prime minister even though his party is the smallest in Serbia's three-way governing coalition. The other two parties are moderate groups that seek to bring Serbia into Western institutions — namely the European Union — while Kostunica is more of an opportunist perfectly willing to play his partners, the West and Russia against each other. That makes dissolution a bold step for Kostunica.

His Democratic Party is small; it used to be called the “van party” because all its members supposedly could squeeze into a single vehicle. Thus, Kostunica's power comes from tacking with the political wind and allying with whatever bloc he can extract the most concessions from. His presence thus has been critical to his party's ability to govern. Historically, he has chosen not to ally with the opposition Radical Party because its far larger size would condemn him to the role of adjunct rather than kingmaker.

Kostunica's greatest political successes have occurred with the current government, but in the aftermath of the West's forcing of Kosovar independence against Belgrade's wishes, he has seen his power ebb. His pro-Western partners have forged ahead with relations with the West over his objections, leaving him with the choice of meekly submitting or chancing a new election. While it is clearly impossible to predict the results at present, Serbia's upcoming elections have three potential outcomes.

The West hopes the pro-European forces nominally led by President Boris Tadic will win votes to form a government without involving Kostunica. If this coalition can win, Serbia could quickly move toward EU accession and finally put the past two decades of ostracism and war behind it. The “only” price for that is letting Kosovo go, but since the West has already hived it off and imposed a reality upon Belgrade, that price is already paid. Unfortunately, the Kosovo decision has polarized the Serbian electorate and sown deeply anti-Western feelings among Serbs, so this outcome is not necessarily the most likely.

The second potential result is that the Serb Radicals — who already hold a plurality of seats in the parliament — will gain an outright majority. While they are the single most powerful party, they are seen as throwbacks to the Milosevic era, and therefore no one will form a coalition with them. The Radicals would lead Serbia on a nationalist path that envisions partnership with Russia and confrontation with the West. Ironically, this is the West's second-best outcome.

A Serbia that remains committed to a past that can never be resurrected is a Serbia that can be flatly ignored. Serbia's military and economy are a far cry from what they were four wars ago in 1991, and the country's best and brightest have long since left. Its economy is now completely dependent on its neighbors. For example, transit routes that once granted Serbia leverage over Europe having been bypassed. Serbia lacks a seaport and is completely surrounded by EU and NATO member states, candidates and/or protectorates. It is physically impossible for Russia to grant it any appreciable help. If Belgrade chooses a



DIMITAR DILKOFF/AFP/Getty Images

Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica

RELATED LINKS

- [Serbia's Choice](#)
- [Serbia: Belgrade Boxes Itself In](#)
- [Serbia: Belgrade's Options on Kosovo](#)

self-destructive path, the West would find it unfortunate, but such a development would allow the West to wash its hands of Serbia.

The final option would be the most problematic — namely, a return of the present split government with a powerful Radical presence in opposition and the opportunistic Kostunica holding the balance of power in a nominally pro-Western coalition. In such a situation, the indecision and schizophrenia that have characterized Belgrade since Slobodan Milosevic's fall would persist. The West would remain forcibly engaged, with the Russians opportunistically involved and Serbia in limbo.

Serbia: The Struggle for Mitrovica

March 17, 2008 | 2307 GMT

Summary

Trouble continued on Kosovo's northern border with Serbia on March 17. Angry Serbs skirmished with a U.N. convoy transporting a handful of Serbian prisoners away from the offices of a U.N. tribunal they had invaded days before. In Serbia's bid to break the Mitrovica district away from Kosovo, it is employing three tactics: civil disobedience, attacking civil institutions and disrupting the Kosovar-Serbian border. Belgrade will achieve the ethnic partitioning of Kosovo only if it can sustain these tactics.



DIMITAR DILKOFF/AFP/Getty Images

A Serb clashes with NATO forces in Mitrovica, Kosovo

Analysis

U.N. police raided the headquarters of the U.N. court in Mitrovica, Kosovo, on March 17, which Serbs had taken over March 14 by protests. The police drove out the Serbian occupiers with tear gas, but protests continued outside the building. Shortly thereafter, a separate group of Serbs ambushed a U.N. convoy carrying prisoners from the raid, freeing many of them.

The violence highlights continued chaos in Serbia after Kosovo declared independence Feb. 17, as well as the Serb bid to detach the Mitrovica district from Kosovo.

Mitrovica, the major city in the district of the same name in northern Kosovo, has become the focal point of the conflict because it is divided between ethnic Serbs and Albanians. The Serbian government has sworn never to recognize Kosovo's independence and has moved to protect Kosovo's 70,000 Serbian inhabitants; but Albanian Kosovars see the northern territory as their own. NATO — and soon EU peacekeepers — maintain security and provisional government in the area, much to the chagrin of Serbia and its allies. These include Russia, which sees the shift to EU peacekeepers as an attempt to bypass Moscow's veto power at the United Nations.

The Serbs want to wrest the Mitrovica district from Kosovo and bring it back into Serbia proper. This would create a new Serbian-Kosovar border along ethnic boundaries. Recovering Mitrovica would serve as a consolation prize for Belgrade after losing Kosovo. It would deliver an early blow to Kosovo's pride over independence and demonstrate to the Kosovars that Serbia is still calling some of the shots. Losing Mitrovica also would harm Kosovo economically, since the region's mines are the fledgling state's only source of income other than foreign aid.

To this end, the Serbs have employed three tactics, all leading to initial successes. The first is civil disobedience, a natural response to the recent events that have so angered many Serbs. The persistence of massive protests has further energized popular resistance and could lead to material changes in the Kosovo situation.

The second tactic is attacking civil and judicial institutions that legitimize the current status, which is seen as favoring Kosovo. Burning the U.S. Embassy in Serbia was one example of this tactic, though not the most effective use of it. Targeting U.N. or EU institutions with direct jurisdiction over Mitrovica is much more likely to have the desired effect.

The Serbs recognize the need to strike at the symbols of law and order in Kosovo, as revealed by the recent incidents at the U.N. court in Mitrovica. Serb demonstrators can claim to have won this battle, since peacekeepers were not able to detain many of them. The incident also gives insight into how future sabotages of the same kind could be carried out. The Serbs who orchestrated the takeover of the U.N. court had been employees and clerks in the court before the 1999 NATO war. While civil institutions are vulnerable to plots by those familiar with their inner workings, insiders are not necessary for Serbia to continue to

RELATED SPECIAL TOPIC PAGE

[Kosovo, Russia and the West](#)

succeed on this front.



The third tactic for the Serbs to achieve the partition of Kosovo is to disrupt Mitrovica's borders. Just after Kosovo declared independence, about 1,000 Serb Kosovars lashed out at two border crossings March 19. But the Kosovar Albanian police force was not strong enough to block the action. Border posts are sparse along Mitrovica's borders, making it easier for Serbs to claim this area. Also, the natural border formed by the Iber River means Serbia's control of the Mitrovica district seems inevitable. Closing off the major bridge across the river would alone accomplish a de facto partition.

NATO and EU forces would have to institute draconian measures to preserve this territory for Kosovo and block Serb ambitions, something they are not willing to do. But to fully achieve the partitioning of Mitrovica from Kosovo, the Serbs will have to sustain these tactics. Otherwise their small and sporadic victories will easily be reversed over time, as Western influence strengthens the status quo and as Serb fury over Kosovar secession gradually ebbs. While partition seems like a natural outcome, the Serbs will have to work to make it happen.

Serbia: Belgrade Boxes Itself In

February 22, 2008 | 1606 GMT

Summary

Serbia's standoff with the West over Kosovo has backed Belgrade into a corner. The only winner is Russia, which has been supporting Serbia's intransigence on the breakaway province's independence in order to sustain an issue that distracts the West from Moscow's actions.

Analysis

Serbian riot police guarding the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade abandoned their positions Feb. 21 during protests of the West's broad approval of the independence of Serbia's breakaway province of Kosovo. The gap allowed protesters to break into the building's forward atrium and light fires. Similar, albeit less dramatic, attacks occurred at other Western embassies. The U.S. Embassy ultimately survived, but the inability — or potential unwillingness — of the Serbian police to protect the structure raised the hackles even of European governments who sided with Serbia in opposing the Feb. 19 Kosovar declaration of independence.



Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica

ANDREJ ISAKOVIC/AFP/Getty Images

RELATED PODCAST

[Serbia: Unanswered Questions in Embassy Attacks](#)

Serbs perceive Kosovo as the birthplace of their nationality, and to say that most Serbs are furious about the West's support for its independence is a gross understatement. Additional government-sponsored protests in Serbia are scheduled for this weekend, and they have presented the Serbian government with a dilemma from which there is no easy escape.

If the government continues to allow the Serbs to blow off steam by attacking Western embassies, it will force a deep and lasting breach between Belgrade and the West. Protection of embassy property is one of the few rules of international conduct that is (nearly) always followed. Granted, in the Serbian mind, that breach already exists because of Kosovo — but so far, the European Union has remained willing to put Serbia on an accelerated path toward membership. Additional attacks against Western embassies will not only close off that path but also trigger recriminations that will clearly demonstrate to Serbia how nonexistent its other options are. Serbia is wholly surrounded by states that are either members or protectorates of the European Union and NATO. Strategically, it has no other nonsuicidal options.

Alternately, Belgrade could defend the embassies; it certainly has the manpower and the experience with crowd control to do so. But in using force to protect the embassies of states that many Serbs see as responsible for Kosovar independence, the government would discredit itself in the eyes of much of the populace.

Serbia's Interior Ministry falls under the direct control of Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, who has proven to be a master of political manipulation and maneuvering. But he has done this by being kingmaker and turning his competitors against each other. While Stratfor certainly is not counting him out, protection of the embassies very clearly falls to him. And should a nationalist wave destroy Kostunica, it would certainly destroy the pro-Western coalition allies in the government who have been less fervent on the issue of Kosovo.

RELATED LINKS

- [Serbia: Belgrade's Options on Kosovo](#)
- [Geopolitical Diary: Riots and the Political Rift in Serbia](#)
- [Serbia: U.S. Embassy Attacked](#)

The one winner from Serbia's dilemma is Moscow. Russia has encouraged Serbian intransigence and hostility in order to drag out the Kosovo issue for years. This was not done out of any love for Serbia, but because the issue served to distract the West from anything that Moscow might be up to farther east. Now that Kosovo has formally broken with Serbia, and Belgrade is locked in a geopolitical prison, the Kosovo issue is no longer of use to Moscow. But that does not mean Russia is going to disengage

just yet.

From Moscow's perspective, Belgrade has one final distraction to perform. The Serbian government appears to be on the verge of either becoming a deep pariah in the West's eyes or shattering under the strain — and being replaced with a new government that would become a deep pariah in the West's eyes. Either way, those Western eyes are going to have something loud and fiery to focus on in Belgrade for a while.

For the Russians, it matters little that this will be the end of their Serbian ally; Moscow is more concerned about losing international prestige because its objections to Kosovo's independence were ignored. The Kremlin cares little for what happens to Serbia, so long as Belgrade keeps distracting the West.

Serbia: A Pro-EU Government in the Making

June 27, 2008 | 2132 GMT

Summary

A new pro-EU government will soon emerge in Serbia, notable for involving Slobodan Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia. It will also mark the rise of a newly competitive regional player as well as the partial eclipse of Russian influence in the Balkans.



Serbian President Boris Tadic

Analysis

Serbian President Boris Tadic announced June 27 that he will ask former Serbian Finance Minister Mirko Cvetkovic to form a government and serve as prime minister. The new government, expected to be in place by July 4, will be the result of elections called in March after a split between Tadic and then-Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica over the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement — a step toward EU membership. Kostunica insisted that it contain provisions guaranteeing Serbia's sovereignty over Kosovo while Tadic wanted to keep Kosovo and EU accession separate.

The new government will be notable in that it will include former President Slobodan Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), a long-time opponent of Tadic's Democratic Party (DS). It will also be much more pro-EU and likely more stable than the previous one, led by Kostunica, who was known to play both the Russians and the EU for personal political gain. The biggest obstacle for Serbia since the fall of Milosevic has been its inability to pick a course and stick to it.

Although the new government will have an SPS component, it will be firmly pro-EU. The SPS has decided to look beyond its nationalist ideology and sell itself to the highest bidder. In its decision to join the DS government — its historical enemy, which removed it from power in a 2000 bloodless revolution — SPS is motivated by two main goals:

becoming a modern, European-focused leftist party and signaling to other parties and the EU that it can be bought.

The SPS was swayed to join the new government through intense lobbying by the EU, which convinced party leaders that being kingmakers of a pro-EU government was far more lucrative than being the third wheel of a pro-Russian Kostunica-Radical coalition. Yet joining the new government does not really make them indispensable kingmakers. If SPS decides to change its mind and make trouble for the Cvetkovic government, an even more pro-EU Liberal Democratic Party will be waiting in the wings. This makes the new Serbian government as stable as a coalition government can be.

A new pro-EU Serbia will be a stronger regional player competing for EU attention and it will diminish Russian influence in the region. The EU and Russia have long vied for influence in the Balkans, a conflict that came to a head with the independence of Kosovo in mid-February.

The regional effect of the new government is that Serbian neighbors will no longer be able to view Serbia as a political black hole. A democratic Serbia will cause its neighbors to view it as a competitor, particularly for EU development aid. Croatia, in particular, will need to speed up its accession talks because it will want to be in the EU when Serbia begins negotiating in order to set the terms for Serbian accession. Hungary will also no longer be able to take it for granted that the EU will listen to its concerns about the Hungarian minority in Vojvodina, Serbia's northern region.

Meanwhile, the EU is extremely satisfied that its long-term strategy for the Balkans has been successful — a far cry from its failure to be relevant during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. With the election of a pro-EU government in Serbia, EU's plan of rushing Bulgaria and Romania into the union to close off Russian (and to an extent American) access and influence in the Balkans has succeeded. The main foreign policy goal of the western Balkan states is to enter Brussels' club, and that gives the EU enormous leverage over other powers who may want influence in southeastern Europe.

The EU has also managed to influence Serbian politics, preventing the nationalists from using the loss of Kosovo to take power, an impressive feat in and of itself. The EU now has four full years, assuming the new Serbian coalition holds, to mold and influence Belgrade to such an extent that a return to a non-EU-oriented Serbia would be difficult. Nonetheless, the EU is too preoccupied with internal concerns (e.g., failure to ratify the Lisbon Treaty) to seriously push expansion in the region. This could cause a problem for

Serbia's pro-EU government in four years if the Serbs, at that point, feel their progress toward EU membership should be further along.

For Russia, the new government represents a catastrophic loss. Serbia was Moscow's only noteworthy non-former Soviet Union ally and was willing to sell to Russians important infrastructure, including the state-owned Petroleum Industry of Serbia for well under its market value in return for Russian political backing over Kosovo.

The Serbian Radical Party, the country's ultra-nationalists, talked of bringing Russians into Serbia militarily and turning Serbia into a Russian launching pad for power projection into the very heart of Europe. Russia will still have strong economic interests in Serbia, and many pro-EU Serbs still want Russian investment. With Serbia orienting itself toward the West, however, Russia will have to reconsider its plans to confront the EU in the Balkans.

Russia: A Major Mediterranean Deployment

December 17, 2007 | 2231 GMT

Summary

A Russian battle group led by Moscow's sole aircraft carrier is heading for the Mediterranean Sea. The sailing represents a significant demonstration, both military and political, by the Kremlin.

Analysis

The Admiral Kuznetsov, Russia's sole aircraft carrier, is leading a battle group to the Mediterranean Sea. The move represents a major deployment for Russia's Northern Fleet. Though the Russian navy suffers significant disadvantages in the sea, the deployment could ultimately prove to be the strongest naval showing in more than a decade for the Kremlin.



Alexey Panov/AFP/Getty Images
The Russian aircraft carrier Admiral Kuznetsov and two Su-33 Flanker D fighters

On Dec. 11, the Kuznetsov reportedly began conducting flight operations close enough to Norwegian oil platforms to spook the operators into suspending their own flights to and from the rigs. Whether this was intended to frighten the Norwegians or was more a symptom of Russian inexperience with the basic etiquette of carrier aviation is unclear. Either way, it almost certainly indicates how this deployment will play out: This is a battle group, the presence of which will be felt.

Once it rendezvous in the Mediterranean, the Russian battle group reportedly will be made up of four major warships, including the:

- . Admiral Kuznetsov. The lead ship of its class, the Kuznetsov displaces nearly 60,000 tons fully loaded — making it the largest warship ever constructed by Russia. Moscow has claimed significantly larger aircraft capacity than has been demonstrated. It can accommodate Su-33 Flanker D and Su-25 Frogfoot navalized fighter aircraft as well as Ka-27/29 Helix helicopters. Bristling with anti-air systems, it also is armed with 10 SS-N-19 “Shipwreck” supersonic anti-ship missiles. China acquired its sister ship, the Varyag.
- . Admiral Levchenko. A ship of the Udaloy (Project 1155) class, a mainstay of the Russian surface fleet, Levchenko possesses an extensive anti-submarine warfare suite, including the SS-N-14 “Silex” missile.
- . Admiral Chabanenko. The sole ship of the Udaloy II (Project 1155.1) class, the Chabanenko is an improvement on the Levchenko's class. It incorporates aspects of two other late Soviet-era classes. It carries the SS-N-22 “Sunburn” supersonic anti-ship missile and is one of the most active ships in the Russian Northern Fleet.
- . Moskva. The flagship of the Black Sea Fleet, the Moskva is the lead ship of the Slava (Project 1164) guided missile cruisers. Sixteen large SS-N-12 “Sandbox” anti-ship missiles are fitted in rows of two on the port and starboard sides, a distinctive feature.

A number of support vessels and almost certainly at least one nuclear-powered attack or cruise missile submarine accompany these ships. Despite the notable absence of the Pyotr Velikiy, this grouping of ships largely represents the best the Russian surface navy has to offer. On paper, it brings significant offensive anti-ship capability to bear. For the most part, however, Russian sailors are more likely to be honing rather than flaunting their skills on this deployment.

The greatest challenge for Russia in the Mediterranean is geographic. The sea route from Severodvinsk to the Strait of Gibraltar is actually longer than the transit from Norfolk, Va., — home of the U.S. 2nd Fleet — to the strait. And the entire Mediterranean Sea is within range of NATO aircraft. Despite the fact that several of these ships, especially the Kuznetsov, bristle with anti-air

weaponry, they stand little chance against U.S. and NATO dominance of the Mediterranean.

NATO PROXIMITY TO THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA



This dynamic is not much altered by the presence of Moscow's Black Sea Fleet. That fleet is bottled up behind the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, the straits connecting the Black and Mediterranean seas, thus facing the Turkish navy at a disadvantage. Though even at the height of Soviet naval power Russia never has attained a particularly strong military position in the Mediterranean, this is a crucial political juncture for Moscow. Before the deployment concludes in February, calls at the Syrian ports of Tartus — where the Kuznetsov moored the last time it was in the Mediterranean in 1996 — or Latakia are likely.

This is potentially the strongest Russian naval move in more than a decade. While in a shooting war it would

be a foolish play, Russia is making a strong political show of force at a time when its interests are on the line in both Kosovo and the Middle East. And people tend to notice when someone else's aircraft carrier parks off their coast.

Lebanon: What U.S. Warships off the Coast Do -- and Do Not -- Mean

February 29, 2008 | 1713 GMT

Summary

At least part of the USS Nassau Expeditionary Strike Group will pause in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Lebanon and Syria during a routine deployment, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Michael Mullen said Feb. 28. While the ships' presence is sure to grab Syria's attention, it is not a precursor to a military strike. Rather, the United States is signaling to Syria, Iran and Hezbollah that any bold moves to impose their will on the Lebanese government or retaliate for the death of Hezbollah commander Imad Mughniyah could have serious repercussions.



U.S. Department of Defense

The USS Nassau (LHA-4) Amphibious Assault Ship

Analysis

At least a portion of the USS Nassau Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) will pause off the coast of Lebanon and Syria during a routine deployment, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen announced Feb. 28. The Nassau is set to join the [USS Cole \(DDG-67\)](#), and the ships will probably remain over the horizon and largely unseen from the coast (although the Nassau has a much more imposing silhouette than the Cole).

RELATED SPECIAL TOPIC PAGE

[Tracking U.S. Naval Power](#)

The total number of U.S. warships in the eastern Mediterranean will thus likely rise above three — something that is sure to get Syrian President Bashar al Assad to sit upright in his seat. U.S. naval presence off the Syrian coast could grow even more in only two weeks or so if other ships in the ESG arrive.

Syria is already facing [mounting pressure](#) from multiple sides to back down on its aggressive campaign in Lebanon. While Washington and the Gulf Arab states, led by Saudi Arabia, are pressuring Syria to strike a deal over the Lebanese presidency to pull that country out of political stagnation, Israel is strongly hinting that it is preparing for a rematch with Hezbollah. The prospect of a coordinated U.S.-Israeli military operation against Hezbollah in Lebanon is a signal to the Syria-Hezbollah-Iran axis that any bold moves to force its political demands in Lebanon or retaliate for the Feb. 12 assassination of Hezbollah top commander Imad Mughniyah will likely be met with a heavy blow to Hezbollah.

The Nassau ESG had been expected to deploy with the North Carolina-based 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), but those Marines were [recently retasked](#) for a last-minute deployment to Afghanistan. Thus, despite rumors circulating in the press, there are few if any Marines deployed with this particular ESG. In addition, various components of the ESG have left in a staggered manner, meaning that portions of the group have not yet joined up with the Nassau.

When fully assembled, the Nassau ESG will include some 2,800 sailors and will comprise:

- . The Nassau (LHA-4), a Tarawa-class amphibious assault ship that is larger than a World War II aircraft carrier and normally carries more than 1,500 Marines and some 50 helicopters and fighter aircraft;
- . The Ashland (LSD-48), a dock landing ship that can carry as many as four air-cushion landing craft;
- . The Nashville (LPD-13), an amphibious transport dockship whose sister ship, the Trenton (LPD-14), was involved in the evacuation of some 3,500 U.S. nationals from Beirut in 2006 before it was transferred to the Indian Navy in 2007;

- . The Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser Philippine Sea (CG-58);
- . The Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyers Ross (DDG-71) and Bulkeley (DDG-84), which have the same capabilities as the Cole, with the exception that the Bulkeley is a later Flight IIA variant that likely carries two helicopters; and
- . The attack submarine Albany (SSN-753), an Improved Los Angeles class variant with 12 vertical launch tubes for Tomahawk cruise missiles (it might carry more internally).

Even without the MEU aboard, this would represent an impressive naval force unlike anything the United States has parked off the Levant in some time. In addition to the Albany's capabilities, the surface combatants soon to arrive off the Syrian coast are equipped with Aegis, Harpoon anti-ship and Tomahawk cruise missiles, as well as 5-inch guns. That represents the most naval hitting power currently positioned in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Kosovo: Is the United Nations Ignoring Russia?

February 28, 2008 | 1645 GMT

Summary

The U.N. Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is drafting a plan to hand over power to the local government and the European Union's planned mission for Kosovo, UNMIK Press Secretary Alexander Ivanko announced late Feb. 27. If true, this means that not only is the European Union ignoring Russia's wishes regarding Kosovo, but the United Nations is bypassing one of its most important members.

Analysis

The U.N. Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is drafting a plan to hand over power to the European Union's planned mission for Kosovo and the local government, UNMIK Press Secretary Alexander Ivanko said late Feb. 27.

The European Union force for Kosovo (called EULux) is supposed to comprise 1,800 police and judicial professionals who will help reassert the rule of law in the new country in the short term, and build judicial and law enforcement institutions in the long term so the Kosovars can run things themselves. Most members of the EU force already have experience with such operations, having done similar work in Macedonia and Bosnia.

The plan is highly controversial, as it has been condemned by Serbia and Russia, who do not accept Kosovar independence. Both Belgrade and Moscow see the EU force as an effort to remove the issue from the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) — where Russia wields a veto and still is pushing for the United Nations to reject Kosovar independence. There is some truth to this view of EULux, since the force basically means the Europeans will take control in Kosovo without U.N. approval, bypassing Russia's objections.

But if it is true that UNMIK has plans to pass the torch to EULux, then it is not just the Europeans bypassing the Russians; there is the larger issue of the United Nations ignoring one of its pivotal members. It must be noted that UNMIK is specifically made up of Europeans and thus works more like an unofficial EU force without considering the dynamics of the United Nations.

But the Russians have already taken note of the shift and have condemned UNMIK's statement and the EULux mission, calling the mission "illegitimate" and insisting that the United Nations must keep its hand in any mission in Kosovo. The Russians will not take being ignored within the UNSC lightly. Russia has already started to direct its anger over Kosovo toward Europe, and Moscow will not tolerate being pushed aside or humiliated on an even larger scale.



DIMITAR DILKOFF/AFP/Getty Images

A U.N. Mission in Kosovo policeman standing guard during a protest

RELATED SPECIAL TOPIC PAGE

[Kosovo, Russia and the West](#)

Geopolitical Diary: Russian Rhetoric and Inaction on Kosovo

February 25, 2008 | 0329 GMT

The Kosovo situation has neither settled down nor flared up. In the aftermath of demonstrations and a riot that set the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade on fire last week, U.S. Ambassador to Serbia Cameron Munter demanded that the Serbian government take responsibility for protecting U.S. facilities, while the Serbs demanded that the United States reverse its recognition of Kosovo as an independent state. Further demonstrations took place in Vienna, Austria, along with an attempted attack on the U.S. Embassy that was blocked by the police. The Commonwealth of Independent States summit ended in Moscow and the Russians made no major attempt (publicly at least) to squeeze pro-Western countries like Georgia or the Baltics.



At the same time, the Russians have not let go of the issue. A Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Sunday that U.S. backing for an independent Kosovo was an act of “flagrant cynicism.” He went on to ask, “Is it not cynical to openly humiliate the Serbian people and tie Belgrade’s Euro-Atlantic prospects to their agreeing to Serbia’s dismemberment?” This was Russia’s answer to U.S. State Department claims that Russia was aggravating tensions over Kosovo.

On Monday, Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will go to Belgrade for talks with Serbian leaders. Medvedev is the expected successor to Russian President Vladimir Putin, so this means that some big guns are heading to Serbia. Given the statements made on Sunday about American cynicism, we can assume that this is not an attempt to mediate between the Kosovo and the West. The Russians have to provide some show of support for Belgrade. Perhaps most important, given U.S. displeasure with Moscow, the simple act of sending big guns to Belgrade is a gesture of defiance against the United States.

It is interesting to note the extent to which the Serbs and Russians have focused on the United States in this dispute. The Europeans, particularly the United Kingdom, Germany and France were at least as heavily involved in the independence decision — the Europeans more so than the Americans, in fact, because they were the ones who offered to send a peacekeeping force to administer an independent Kosovo. The Russians at one point tried to reach over the Europeans’ heads, appealing to the United States not to participate in recognition. But at this point, the rhetoric in Moscow and Belgrade treats the situation as if the United States were the primary actor. This could be due to the fact that both Russia and Serbia have more important economic relations with the Europeans than with the United States, or it might have to do with their belief that Europe is merely acting on Washington’s wishes. Either way, both the Russians and Serbs have chosen to focus on the United States as the main actor.

The Russians continue to intrude, carefully and deliberately. Medvedev’s and Lavrov’s visit to Belgrade, framed in the language used by Russia over the weekend, continues to raise the question of what the Russian intention is. Without the rhetoric about American cynicism, there would be some possibility that the purpose of the trip was to calm things down. But the rhetoric is there.

The question that faces the Kremlin is this: Having declared Serbia to be an ally and proclaimed that the Serbians have been mistreated, what exactly do the Russians plan to do about it? If they simply wanted to back off, they could have taken any number of opportunities to shift their position. We have to assume that they have a plan. It is possible that they will offer Belgrade weapons — that would be provocative without direct action taken. They already have excellent economic relations with Serbia. They might sweeten the pot to show the Europeans that Serbia, and others, have alternatives besides the European Union.

Either way, the Russians now have to put up or shut up. They either have to show what the consequence will be for the United States and Europe for having disregarded Russian wishes, or Moscow will simply be seen as engaged in empty posturing. The latter is not something Russia, Putin or Medvedev can afford. But then we keep seeing critical moments passing with only words from the Russians.

It will be hard for them to leave Belgrade after tomorrow's visit without some concrete action.

[Click Here to Send Stratfor Your Comments](#)

Geopolitical Diary: Riots and the Political Rift in Serbia

February 22, 2008 | 0302 GMT

A major protest of Kosovar independence took place in Belgrade, Serbia, on Thursday. Though the exact number of participants is unclear, approximately 1,000 appear to have taken part. Amid the clamor, one group attacked the U.S. Embassy, penetrating the building and setting a fire. One person — apparently a demonstrator — was killed. Other attacks were reported against the guardhouse on the perimeter of the German Embassy and a car outside the Canadian Embassy. In addition, stones and flares were thrown at the Turkish, Belgian, Croatian and Bosnian embassies. A McDonald's and a Levi's store also had small fires set inside.



The important question about these attacks — particularly the one against the U.S. Embassy — is whether this was simply some of the demonstrators getting out of control or some group planning the violence. There were rumors of coups flying in Belgrade, but Belgrade is always full of rumors, and it is not clear that there is anyone with an interest in or the capability of staging a coup. The army appears to be on the sideline — and the army would stop the national police.

Nevertheless, there is a political rift in Serbia. The rift isn't over Kosovo; there is a strong consensus that Kosovar independence should be opposed. It is between those who want to oppose Kosovo's independence without opening a massive breach with the European Union in particular and those who see the organization — and the United States — as a fundamental threat to Serbian sovereignty. Put a bit differently, there are those who want Serbia to become integrated with Europe and therefore see issues of national sovereignty as needing to be managed in this context, and there are those who see the union as a threat to national sovereignty and are happy to force a breach. Obviously, the Serbs are distributed along a spectrum in between, but these are the stark choices. Yet Serbia is polarized, with the greatest passion — if not the greatest number — on the side of the nationalists.

If the attack against the U.S. Embassy simply was spur-of-the-moment mob action, that is one thing. If it was a planned assault, then the question of who planned it and to what end becomes critical. If it was a small group of friends, that is one thing. But if it represents a concerted attempt by Serbian nationalists to destabilize the Serbian government, paving the way for regime and policy changes, that is another matter. By attacking the U.S. Embassy, the perpetrators have put the Serbian government in a difficult position. Belgrade does not want to show any more weakness in the face of the Americans. The United States is going to have to condemn the government for failing to protect the embassy. If Belgrade apologizes to Washington, it will be portrayed as toadying to the enemy. If it doesn't, Serbia will experience even greater ostracism and pressure than before.

By itself, this action does not change the dynamics of Serbia. But if this is a concerted campaign against a Western presence in Serbia, it could very well lead to a political crisis inside the country and a deeper confrontation with the West. And that, in turn, could change Belgrade's behavior toward Kosovo. So far, the government has condemned independence but has not taken any action. A destabilized, isolated or new government might move ahead with blockades and even support Serbian paramilitaries in Kosovo.

Was it a planned attack? About 1,000 people were involved, which does not make it a small circle of drinking buddies. The attackers appear to have come prepared with masks, torches and enough material to start a decent fire in at least one room. There was premeditation. But was it linked to the other attacks around town? And, most important, will it continue?

This now frames the Feb. 22 Moscow summit. The apparent resignation in Belgrade has been broken, the United States will be demanding better security from the Serbian government and the Serbs will be able to provide that security only by confronting the

crowds in the street — potentially opening the door for the use of force. If another demonstration breaks out in the next couple of days, Belgrade will be under pressure to contain it and keep it away from Western facilities, and that means clashes. The Serbs will need help. The question is: Who will offer it, and what it will consist of?

[Click Here to Send Stratfor Your Comments](#)

Geopolitical Diary: Franco-German Fault Lines Re-emerge

February 26, 2008 | 0251 GMT

The Russians appear to have made their move on the Kosovo issue. They have supported the idea of the mainly Serbian region of northern Kosovo breaking away from Kosovo and rejoining Serbia proper if the region wishes. The Russians also warned NATO and its members not to try to seal the border between this region and Serbia or to try to force NATO authority on the Serbs. The Russians remained vague about what else they might do in response to Kosovo's secession, but they did refer to the possibility of another frozen war in Europe — which we would rephrase as a Cold War.



The Russian strategy is to establish the principle that if one ethnic area can secede, any other ethnic area can split as well. In that case, the principle that Europe's boundaries cannot be changed goes by the wayside. Whether this will evolve into anything more substantial is uncertain, but the door is open.

While this was happening, another crisis — quieter and smaller, but not necessarily insignificant — blew up. French President Nicolas Sarkozy was supposed to meet with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Feb. 26 to discuss Paris' idea of a Mediterranean Union. Twenty-four hours before the meeting was to occur, it was canceled. Sarkozy's office said the summit was called off because of the French president's busy agenda. Busy or not, Franco-German summits are not normally canceled at the last minute because one side is too busy to attend.

The French envision the creation of a Mediterranean Union that in some ways would be analogous to the European Union. This would tie together countries in southern Europe with North African countries, and would include Israel and Turkey. Creating an economic zone in the Mediterranean means some countries — like France — would be members of both the Mediterranean Union and the European Union. These countries would have special relationships in the Mediterranean basin. We also assume the proposed union would create an entryway for doing business in the European Union for non-EU countries that belong to the Mediterranean Union.

Berlin obviously is less enthusiastic than Paris about the idea. Germany is not a Mediterranean country, and therefore would not enjoy the direct benefits of such a grouping that France would. In fact, it is not clear what benefits non-Mediterranean EU countries would derive from this relationship. Since Sarkozy wanted an agreement on this, and Merkel was clearly unhappy, the summit was canceled at the last moment and delayed three months. Very little effort was made to hide how divided France and Germany are over the issue.

France is a northern European and Mediterranean country located on the plain that runs from the Pyrenees into Russia. It has extensive interests in North Africa and the Mediterranean basin in general. It looks at the world very differently than does Germany, which is entirely a northern European country. Until now, French and German interests harmonized. Now, the French are pressing to reorient themselves away from an exclusive focus on the European Union toward a bifurcated position within the union and in the Mediterranean world. France is in effect trying to redefine Europe, and in doing so is touching every hot button in Europe — from trade to immigration. Indeed, in thinking in terms of the eastern Mediterranean, it is trying to bring Turkey into Europe through the back door and tie Europe to the Israelis. Not surprisingly, the Germans are balking.

It is unclear just how far Sarkozy is prepared to go with this idea, which has been kicking around for a while. Canceling a summit

at the last minute because he wasn't getting German agreement on his plan is going pretty far. But the cancellation is far from a signal of a major split between Germany and France. Therefore, we think there is nothing here that won't be papered over.

Nevertheless, fault lines are appearing in Europe. Some are gaping, like Kosovo, while others are barely visible like this contretemps between France and Germany. What is interesting about them is that these are old geopolitical fault lines that divide the French and German approach to geopolitics and that draw Russia into the Balkans in response to Russia's own geopolitical vision. Taken as a whole, these are small matters — but the trajectory is still interesting.

[Click Here to Send Stratfor Your Comments](#)

Geopolitical Diary: The Start of Cold War II?

March 21, 2008 | 0202 GMT

Legislators in the Georgian breakaway republic of Abkhazia signed a statement on Thursday accusing Georgia of aggression and warning of the possibility of war in the Caucasus. In Moscow, the Russian parliament urged the government to send additional peacekeepers to both Abkhazia and Georgia's other breakaway republic, South Ossetia. Elsewhere, the Kremlin's NATO envoy said Russia wants an emergency meeting with the Western military alliance to discuss the March 19 move by U.S. President George W. Bush to establish Kosovar eligibility for military assistance from the United States.



These developments follow a series of similar events in the past few weeks, underscoring an escalation of tensions between the United States and Russia in the wake of Kosovo's Feb. 17 declaration of independence. The flurry of activity includes moves to expand NATO, violent reactions from Kosovar Serbs, the U.S. attempt to construct ballistic missile defense installations in Eastern Europe, and Russia's apprehension of Western spies in Moscow. All these events clearly underscore that the Cold War is back.

Cold War II is different than the original Cold War, which was a Soviet-U.S. confrontation that lasted from the end of World War II to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Nuclear-armed ideological rivals Washington and Moscow competed for global influence, and a divided Europe was a key theater in which this war played out. Cold War II is being waged by a far more powerful United States and a vastly weakened Russia — an emasculated successor to the Soviet Union.

Another key difference between the new and old Cold War is that Europe no longer is just a theater in which the Americans and Russians are playing geopolitical chess. The Europeans are playing major roles as independent actors in this new Cold War. This time around, Europe as a continent is not exactly occupied and has recovered from both World War II and the first Cold War. But the European Union is an increasingly incoherent entity, with the three principal state actors — Germany, France and the United Kingdom — not interested in confronting Russia.

Berlin made this very clear when it expressed a lack of interest in NATO expansion, the independence of Kosovo and the Ukraine gas issue. This is not surprising, given that the Germans are dependent upon Moscow for energy. Beyond energy, Germany's wider economic relationship with and its proximity to Russia inform its lack of appetite for confrontation with the Kremlin. But this does not mean that Berlin won't take on Moscow when it deems necessary. Germany is re-emerging on its own to again become an international power player.

France is even further removed from the new Cold War dynamics. Paris has its own ideas about how it wishes to advance itself as an international player, which has very little to do with West vs. Russia competition. Geographically far more insulated, it wants no part in this new Cold War.

As for the British, they have enough domestic political issues to sort out, which is why they also are out of the game. That said, given London's historic role as a major U.S. ally, the United Kingdom cannot avoid the issues that the United States is dealing with. Therefore, at best the British will maintain a low-key role in the U.S. moves to continue its geopolitical push against Russia.

The United States — considering that it has the luxury of waging a geopolitical assault against Russia from afar — is not bothered by the lack of European involvement. But the European position is not tenable in the long run. Europe's geography —

and the fact that, unlike during the original Cold War, there isn't an iron curtain in place — will force the Europeans to jump in or at least choose sides.

[Click Here to Send Stratfor Your Comments](#)



ADVERTISEMENT

advertisement

Every Investor Should Read This Now!

Download the latest copy of "The Eight Biggest Mistakes Investors Make and How to Avoid Them" by *Forbes* columnist Ken Fisher.[Click Here to Download Your Report!](#)

www.fi.com

FISHER INVESTMENTS™
Feedback - Ads by Google

Home Blog NRO NRO
Row Radio TV Subscribe Search NR / Digital Classifieds Shop! Donate Media Kit Appearances Contact

Victor Davis Hanson

NRO Contributor

February 22, 2008 4:00 AM



E-mail Author
Author Archive
Send to a Friend
Print Version

Yippy Ti Yi Yo, Europe!

Neuroticism abroad.

By Victor Davis Hanson

In the last few days, we've been reminded yet again that Europe's radical secularism, atheism, socialism, multiculturalism, childlessness, and aging population make a fascinating but unstable mix — a lovely, fragile orchid in a thinly protected greenhouse.

Kosovo has just declared its independence from Serbia, and what follows could be nightmarish. An oil-rich, bellicose, and rearming Russia doesn't much like the new breakaway state. But France, Germany, and most of the European Union — other than its Orthodox members and those in close proximity to Vladimir Putin — encouraged it. To paraphrase Joseph Stalin, "How many divisions does the EU have?"

↓ [Keep reading this article](#) ↓

ADVERTISEMENT

NEW ON NRO

Eight costly investment mistakes (and how to avoid them)

Making money isn't just about picking stocks. It's also about avoiding mistakes that can harm your portfolio. A brand new report by *Forbes* columnist and money manager, Ken Fisher is called "The Eight Biggest Mistakes Investors Make And How To Avoid Them." Read it now before problems start. You've got nothing to lose but your profits.

[Click Here to Download Your Report!](#)

www.fi.com

Ads by Google

Zalenski: February 24, 2008	Hegseth: Golden Moments
Tollefsen: Civil Engagement	McQuillan: Terminating Fiscal Conservatism
McCarthy: McCain's Missed Opportunity	Nugent: Who's Flying This Helicopter Anyway?
Hibbs: Divorced from Reality	Editors: Lady's Shades of Gray
Blyth: Seeing Trouble	Herzlinger: Running for the Exits
Kahane: There's Something About that Grin ...	Hood: Premature Post-Mortem
Murdock: Is He Dead? Is Alive	Spruiell: One-Candidate Debate
Hemingway: Swiftboating the Swiftboaters	Nordlinger: Notes on India, Part IV

We're Celebrating 35 Years and Counting...

Edwin Meese III

With Reagan

The Inside Story

Let Heritage Count on You!

Join Us—and Get a Free Copy of Ed Meese's Book on What Reagan Actually *Did!*

The Heritage Foundation
LEADERSHIP FOR AMERICA

Recently Turkey's prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, speaking on German soil, told cheering Turkish workers and Germans of Turkish ancestry that assimilation is "a crime against humanity" — in between demands that the European Union admit his increasingly Islamicized Turkey to full membership. The American press passed over Erdogan's broadside, but it was a revolutionary, nationalist appeal to German residents of Turkish backgrounds, over the head of, and contrary to, the German government itself—eerily like, *mutatis mutandis*, Hitler's appeal in the late 1930s to the supposedly oppressed Germans of Czechoslovakia. Meanwhile Norway is about to request 100,000 Turkish guest workers for its cash-rich but labor-poor economy. The French, however, are sighing "been there, done that," as police sweep public housing projects in the Paris suburbs looking for Muslim immigrants

implicated in past riots.

The British press claims that Muslim immigrants committed over 17,000 acts of “honor” violence in Britain last year. Perhaps in response, the Archbishop of Canterbury conceded that imposition of a parallel system of sharia law in the United Kingdom might be “unavoidable.” Iran just warned Denmark to silence its newspapers, which once again are republishing caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed.

Meanwhile, many European NATO troops in Afghanistan rarely venture into combat zones, even as U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates pleads in vain for Europe to send over a few more thousand from its nearly two-million-man standing army. A recent Pew poll revealed that in many European countries only about 30-40 percent of those surveyed have a positive opinion of the United States.

How do all these diverse narratives and agendas add up? The vaunted European multicultural, multilateral, utopian and pacifist worldview is now on its own and thus will get hammered as never before in the unrelenting forge of history. Very soon there will be no more George W. Bush to dump on, hide behind, and blame for the widening cracks in the Atlantic alliance. Instead Europeans may well have to call on the old pro, Commander-in-Chief Barack Obama, to lead them in negotiating sessions with jihadists, Iran, and Russia.

Consider Kosovo again. Europe is invested, quite rightly I think, in promoting its independence. But it is a Muslim country in a post-9/11 landscape, with a history of drawing not only Albanian but also Middle Eastern jihadists to its defense. Russia and Serbia together have the military wherewithal to invade it tomorrow — Serbia by land, Russia by air — and end its breakaway experiment — to the relief of some Eastern European and Orthodox European states, and to the humiliation of the EU. What stops them is not a few NATO peacekeepers but the commitment of the United States to use its vast resources to further the European agenda of stopping Serbian ethnic cleansing and aggression.

Yet consider our dilemma. Why would we intervene abroad in a third war when our allies have lectured us *ad nauseam* about the amorality of military intercession, have shown little interest in fighting jihadism in Afghanistan or Iraq, and have made clear that they want very little to do with the United States? And after 9/11, why would the United States rush to the aid of a Muslim country in a war whose earlier incarnation, under Bill Clinton, was never authorized by the U.S. Congress or the U.N.?

CONTINUED 1 2 [Next >](#)

advertisement

Eight Costly Investment Mistakes (and How to Avoid Them)

Making money isn't just about picking stocks. It's also about avoiding mistakes that can harm your portfolio. A brand new report by *Forbes* columnist and money manager Ken Fisher is called **"The Eight Biggest Mistakes Investors Make and How to Avoid Them."** Read it now before problems start. You've got nothing to lose but your profits.

[Click Here to Download Your Report!](#)

FISHER INVESTMENTS™
www.fi.com
Ads by Google



NOT A SUBSCRIBER TO NATIONAL REVIEW? Sign up right now! It's easy: You can subscribe to *National Review* [here](#), or NR / Digital [here](#). Or, you order a subscription as a gift: [print](#) or [digital](#)!

© National Review Online 2008. All Rights Reserved.

[Home](#) | [Search](#) | [NR / Digital](#) | [Donate](#) | [Media Kit](#) | [Contact Us](#)

This page loaded in 0.004849 seconds.

Herald Sun

Australia's biggest selling daily newspaper

Herald Sun (/heraldsun)

FROM 9 JULY • REGENT THEATRE
TICKETS ON SALE MONDAY
wickedthemusical.com.au

Kosovo independence 'terrible precedent'

- Font size: **Decrease** (#) **Increase** (#)
- Email article: **Email** (/heraldsun/email/popup/0,21993,23262552-5005961,00.html)
- Print article: **Print** (javascript:print();)

Article from: Agence France-Presse

From correspondents in Moscow

February 23, 2008 09:02am

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin today described the declaration of independence by Kosovo as a "terrible precedent" that will come back to hit the West "in the face."

The comments came as Moscow ratcheted up its condemnation of Western powers' support for the province's secession from Serbia, with a Russian envoy warning NATO and the European Union against "brute force" in Kosovo.

Russia has vehemently opposed Kosovo's independence declaration, reflecting Moscow's historical ties with Orthodox Christian Serbia, which continues to claim Kosovo as a Serbian province.

"The precedent of Kosovo is a terrible precedent, which will de facto blow apart the whole system of international relations, developed not over decades, but over centuries," Putin told a Moscow meeting of regional leaders.

"They have not thought through the results of what they are doing. At the end of the day it is a two-ended stick and the second end will come back and hit them in the face," Putin said, in comments later broadcast on state television.

In recent weeks Russian officials have suggested that Kosovo's declaration could boost the independence claims of separatist regions in Western Europe.

Since Kosovo's ethnic-Albanian majority declared independence on Sunday, Russia has used its position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to try to get the body to declare the move null and void.

Moscow has also taken to supporting Serbia with a string of verbal broadsides and veiled threats.

Russia's newly-appointed representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin said today that support for Kosovo from the European Union or NATO would in turn give Russia the right to use its own "brute force" in future scenarios.

"If the European Union works out a common position, or if NATO breaches its mandate in Kosovo, these organisations will be in conflict with the United Nations," Mr Rogozin was quoted as saying in a video link-up from Brussels.

"We too would then have to proceed from the view that in order to be respected we must use brute force, in other words armed force," Mr Rogozin said, Interfax news agency reported.

European Commission spokesman Johannes Laitenberger condemned the remarks by saying that "speculation over the use of force is certainly not helpful in this situation".

The Kremlin later downplayed the threat of military intervention with Putin's special representative for European affairs Sergei Yastrzhembsky saying the Kosovo problem "could not have a military solution," Interfax news agency reported.

Share this article [What is this?](#) (#)

- [Digg this](#) (#)
- [Post to del.icio.us](#)
(`javascript:location.href='http://del.icio.us/post?v=4;url='+encodeURIComponent(location.href)+';title='+encodeURIComponent`)
- [Post to Newsvine](#) (#)
- Font size: [Decrease](#) (#) [Increase](#) (#)
- Email article: [Email](#) (`/heraldsun/email/popup/0,21993,23262552-5005961,00.html`)
- Print article: [Print](#) (`javascript:print();`)

Ads By Google

- [Albanian Ringtone](#)

Free Ringtones You Want! Get Free Ringtones With 9.99/m Subscription.

Free.RingRingMobile.com

(`http://pagead2.googlesyndication.com/pagead/iclk?sa=l&ai=B_NIQi1y_R9PHD4PAjASdhJHVDqb0jDi9-mvBMCNtw`)

© Herald and Weekly Times. All times AEDT (GMT + 10).

(`http://mercury.tiser.com.au/ADCLICK/CID=ffffffcffffffcffffffc/acc_random=84739650/SITE=HWT/AREA=NEWS.ROS/AA`)

Kosovar Independence and the Russian Reaction

February 20, 2008 | 1902 GMT

By **George Friedman**

Kosovo declared independence from Serbia on Sunday. The United States and many, but not all, European countries recognized it. The Serbian government did not impose an economic blockade on — or take any military action against — Kosovo, although it declared the Albanian leadership of Kosovo traitors to Serbia. The Russians vehemently repeated their objection to an independent Kosovo but did not take any overt action. An informal summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was announced last week; it will take place in Moscow on Feb. 21. With Kosovo's declaration, a river was crossed. We will now see whether that river was the Rubicon.

Kosovo's independence declaration is an important event for two main reasons. First, it potentially creates a precedent that could lead to redrawn borders in Europe and around the world. Second, it puts the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany in the position of challenging what Russia has defined as a fundamental national interest — and this at a time when the Russians have been seeking to assert their power and authority. Taken together, each of these makes this a geopolitically significant event.

Begin with the precedent. Kosovo historically has been part of Serbia; indeed, Serbs consider it the cradle of their country. Over the course of the 20th century, it has become predominantly Albanian and Muslim (though the Albanian version of Islam is about as secular as one can get). The Serbian Orthodox Christian community has become a minority. During the 1990s, Serbia — then the heart of the now-defunct Yugoslavia — carried out a program of repression against the Albanians. Whether the repression rose to the level of genocide has been debated. In any case, the United States and other members of NATO conducted an air campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999 until the Yugoslavians capitulated, allowing the entry of NATO troops into the province of Kosovo. Since then, Kosovo, for all practical purposes, has been a protectorate of a consortium of NATO countries but has formally remained a province of Serbia. After the Kosovo war, wartime Yugoslavian leader Slobodan Milosevic died in The Hague in the course of his trial for war crimes; a new leadership took over; and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia itself ultimately dissolved, giving way to a new Republic of Serbia.

The United Nations did not sanction the war in Kosovo. Russian opposition in the U.N. Security Council prevented any U.N. diplomatic cover for the Western military action. Following the war — in a similar process to what happened with regard to Iraq — the Security Council authorized the administration of Kosovo by the occupying powers, but it never clearly authorized independence for Kosovo. The powers administering Kosovo included the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany and other European states, organized as the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

While the logic of the situation pointed toward an independent Kosovo, the mechanism envisioned for the province's independence was a negotiated agreement with Serbia. The general view was that the new government and personalities in Belgrade would be far more interested in the benefits of EU membership than they would be in retaining control of Kosovo. Over nearly a decade, the expectation therefore was that the Serbian government would accede to an independent Kosovo in exchange for being put on a course for EU membership. As frequently happens — and amazes people for reasons we have never understood — nationalism trumped economic interests. The majority of Serbs never accepted secession. The United States and the Europeans, therefore, decided to create an independent Kosovo without Serbian acquiescence. The military and



RELATED SPECIAL TOPIC PAGES

- [Kosovo, Russia and the West](#)
- [The Russian Resurgence](#)

ethnic reality thus was converted into a political reality.

Those recognizing Kosovo's independence have gone out of their way specifically to argue that this decision in no way constitutes a precedent. They argue that the Serbian oppression of the late 1990s, which necessitated intervention by outside military forces to protect the Kosovars, made returning Kosovo to Serbian rule impossible. The argument therefore goes that Kosovo's independence must be viewed as an idiosyncratic event related to the behavior of the Serbs, not as a model for the future.

Other European countries, including Spain, Romania, Slovakia and Cyprus, have expressly rejected this reasoning. So have Russia and China. Each of these countries has a specific, well-defined area dominated by a specific ethnic minority group. In these countries and others like them, these ethnic groups have demanded, are demanding or potentially will demand autonomy, secession or integration with a neighboring country. Such ethnic groups could claim, and have claimed, oppression by the majority group. And each country facing this scenario fears that if Kosovo can be taken from Serbia, a precedent for secession will be created.

The Spanish have Basque separatists. Romania and Slovakia each contain large numbers of Hungarians concentrated in certain areas. The Cypriots — backed by the Greeks — are worried that the Turkish region of Cyprus, which already is under a separate government, might proclaim formal independence. The Chinese are concerned about potential separatist movements in Muslim Xinjiang and, above all, fear potential Taiwanese independence. And the Russians are concerned about independence movements in Chechnya and elsewhere. All of these countries see the Kosovo decision as setting a precedent, and they therefore oppose it.

Europe is a case in point. Prior to World War II, Europe's borders constantly remained in violent flux. One of the principles of a stable Europe has been the inviolability of borders from outside interference, as well as the principle that borders cannot be redefined except with mutual agreement. This principle repeatedly was reinforced by international consensus, most notably at Yalta in 1945 and Helsinki in 1973.

Thus, the Czech Republic and Slovakia could agree to separate, and the Soviet Union could dissolve itself into its component republics, but the Germans cannot demand the return of Silesia from Poland; outsiders cannot demand a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland; and the Russians cannot be forced to give up Chechnya. The principle that outside powers can't redefine boundaries, and that secessionist movements can't create new nations unilaterally, has been a pillar of European stability.

The critics of Kosovo's independence believe that larger powers can't redraw the boundaries of smaller ones without recourse to the United Nations. They view the claim that Yugoslavia's crimes in Kosovo justify doing so as unreasonable; Yugoslavia has dissolved, and the Serbian state is run by different people. The Russians view the major European powers and the Americans as arrogating rights that international law does not grant them, and they see the West as setting itself up as judge and jury without right of appeal.

This debate is not trivial. But there is a more immediate geopolitical issue that we have discussed before: the Russian response. The Russians have turned Kosovo into a significant issue. Moscow has objected to Kosovo's independence on all of the diplomatic and legal grounds discussed. But behind that is a significant challenge to Russia's strategic position. Russia wants to be seen as a great power and the dominant power in the former Soviet Union (FSU). Serbia is a Russian ally. Russia is trying to convince countries in the FSU, such as Ukraine, that looking to the West for help is futile because Russian power can block Western power. It wants to make the Russian return to great power status seem irresistible.

The decision to recognize Kosovo's independence in the face of Russian opposition undermines Russian credibility. That is doubly the case because Russia can make a credible argument that the Western decision flies in the face of international law — and certainly of the conventions that have governed Europe for decades. Moscow also is asking for something that would not be difficult for the Americans and Europeans to give. The resources being devoted to Kosovo are not going to decline dramatically because of independence. Putting off independence until the last possible moment — which is to say forever, considering the utter inability of Kosovo to care for itself — thus certainly would have been something the West could have done with little effort.

But it didn't. The reason for this is unclear. It does not appear that anyone was intent on challenging the Russians. The Kosovo situation was embedded in a process in which the endgame was going to be independence, and all of the military force and the bureaucratic inertia of the European Union was committed to this process. Russian displeasure was noted, but in the end, it was

not taken seriously. This was simply because no one believed the Russians could or would do anything about Kosovo independence beyond issuing impotent protestations. Simply put, the nations that decided to recognize Kosovo were aware of Russian objections but viewed Moscow as they did in 1999: a weak power whose wishes are heard but discarded as irrelevant. Serbia was an ally of Russia. Russia intervened diplomatically on its behalf. Russia was ignored.

If Russia simply walks away from this, its growing reputation as a great power will be badly hurt in the one arena that matters to Moscow the most: the FSU. A Europe that dismisses Russian power is one that has little compunction about working with the Americans to whittle away at Russian power in Russia's own backyard. Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko — who, in many ways, is more anti-Western than Russian President Vladimir Putin and is highly critical of Putin as well — has said it is too late to “sing songs” about Kosovo. He maintains that the time to stop the partition of Kosovo was in 1999, in effect arguing that Putin's attempts to stop it were ineffective because it was a lost cause. Translation: Putin and Russia are not the powers they pretend to be.

That is not something that Putin in particular can easily tolerate. Russian grand strategy calls for Russia to base its economy on the export of primary commodities. To succeed at this, Russia must align its production and exports with those of other FSU countries. For reasons of both national security and economics, being the regional hegemon in the FSU is crucial to Russia's strategy and to Putin's personal credibility. He is giving up the presidency on the assumption that his personal power will remain intact. That assumption is based on his effectiveness and decisiveness. The way he deals with the West — and the way the West deals with him — is a measure of his personal power. Being completely disregarded by the West will cost him. He needs to react.

The Russians are therefore hosting an “informal” CIS summit in Moscow on Friday. This is not the first such summit, by any means, and one was supposed to be held before this but was postponed. On Feb. 11, however, after it became clear that Kosovo would declare independence, the decision to hold the summit was announced. If Putin has a response to the West on Kosovo, it should reveal itself at the summit.

There are three basic strategies the Russians can pursue. One is to try to create a coalition of CIS countries to aid Serbia. This is complex in that Serbia may have no appetite for this move, and the other CIS countries may not even symbolically want to play.

The second option is opening the wider issue of altering borders. This could be aimed at sticking it to the Europeans by backing Serbian secessionist efforts in bifurcated Bosnia-Herzegovina. It also could involve announcing Russia's plans to annex Russian-friendly separatist regions on its borders — most notably the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and perhaps even eastern Ukraine and the Crimea. (Annexation would be preferred over recognizing independence, since it would reduce the chances of Russia's own separatist regions agitating for secession.) Russia thus would argue that Kosovo's independence opens the door for Russia to shift its borders, too. That would make the summit exciting, particularly with regard to the Georgians, who are allied with the United States and at odds with Russia on Abkhazia and other issues.

The third option involves creating problems for the West elsewhere. An Iranian delegation will be attending the summit as “observers.” That creates the option for Russia to signal to Washington that the price it will pay for Kosovo will be extracted elsewhere. Apart from increased Russian support for Iran — which would complicate matters in Iraq for Washington — there are issues concerning Azerbaijan, which is sandwiched between Russia and Iran. In the course of discussions with Iranians, the Russians could create problems for Azerbaijan. The Russians also could increase pressure on the Baltic states, which recognized Kosovo and whose NATO membership is a challenge to the Russians. During the Cold War, the Russians were masters of linkage. They responded not where they were weak but where the West was weak. There are many venues for that.

What is the hardest to believe — but is, of course, possible — is that Putin simply will allow the Kosovo issue to pass. He clearly knew this was coming. He maintained vocal opposition to it beforehand and reiterated his opposition afterward. The more he talks and the less he does, the weaker he appears to be. He personally can't afford that, and neither can Russia. He had opportunities to cut his losses before Kosovo's independence was declared. He didn't. That means either he has blundered badly or he has something on his mind. Our experience with Putin is that the latter is more likely, and this suddenly called summit may be where we see his plans play out.

[Tell George what you think](#)

search this site:

recommended sites:
choose a site:

[Home](#) [About](#) [Archive](#) [Search](#) [Contact](#) [RSS Feed](#)

recently published

[Envoy? How About Speechwriter?](#)
June 25, 2007, The Guardian

[Guantanamo and Colin Powell](#)
June 14, 2007, The Guardian

[Blair Through American Eyes](#)
May 10, 2007, The Guardian

[Bush's Kitchen-Sink Address](#)
January 24, 2007, The National Interest Online

[Waiving Visitor Visas Would Help U.S. Business, Innovation](#)
December 1, 2006, FoxNews.com

[Return of the Realists](#)
November 10, 2006, The Australian


[Waiving Visitor Visas Would Help U.S. Business, Innovation](#)
December 1, 2006, FoxNews.com

[Return of the Realists](#)
November 10, 2006, The Australian

[more articles / transcripts](#)

advertisers

TOM BIHN
Briefcases and Laptop Bags
1-800-729-9807 www.tombihn.com



MADE IN U.S.A. 美国制造

[Read more...](#)

Liberal Headlines

ADVERTISE LIBERALLY
BLOGGERS NETWORK

[Read more...](#)

[Advertise here](#)

The Washington Note is now a member of the **Political Insiders** advertising network:
[Find out more...](#)



[VA Loan](#) and VA Refinance
Information from [VA Mortgage Center](#)

Subscribe to The Washington Note RSS feed!

Enter your Email

[Preview the feed](#)
Powered by [FeedBlitz](#)



ADVERTISE LIBERALLY

America Plays Poker While Iran Plays Chess

[« Middle East Realities Discussion Today -- Live on C-Span 2](#) | [Main](#) | [Bipartisan Foreign Policy Type? One of the Fru](#)

August 24, 2006
America Plays Poker While Iran Plays Chess



UPI Editor Emeritus [Martin Walker](#) has [put out a useful essay](#) on a Royal Institute of International Affairs report on Iran. The Chatham House/RIIA report can be downloaded as a [pdf here](#).

I love the line about American poker players and Iran's chess strategy.

Walker writes:

A detailed new report issued this week from Britain's top foreign policy think tank, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, says "Iran's influence in Iraq has superseded that of the United States, and is increasingly rivaling the main actor at the crossroads between the Middle East and Asia."

Moreover, the report says, the Bush administration has directly helped strengthen Iran to become a major regional power.

"The war on terror removed the Taliban and Saddam Hussein -- Iran's two greatest regional rivals -- and strengthened Iran's regional leverage in doing so," it says, adding that "Israel's failure to defeat Hezbollah has reinforced Iran as the region's focal point against U.S.-led policy."

Iran's role within other embattled areas in the region like Afghanistan and southern Lebanon has now increased, says the report, which was prepared with considerable input from British officials and diplomats, as well as academic regional experts.

"While the U.S. has been playing poker in the region, Iran has been playing chess. Iran is playing a longer, more patient game and has been far more successful at winning hearts and minds," says Nadim Shehadi, one of the report's authors and a fellow of the Institute's Middle East department.

The report stresses that the Bush administration and its allies have yet to appreciate the extent of Iran's regional relationships and standing -- a dynamic which is the key to understanding Iran's newly found confidence and influence towards the West. As a result, the U.S.-led agenda for confronting Iran is "severely compromised by the confidence with which Iran sits in its region."

"While the U.S. may have the upper hand in 'hard' power projection, Iran has proved far more effective through 'soft' power," the report says. "The Bush administration has shown little ability to use politics and culture to pursue its strategic interests while Iran's knowledge of the region, its fluency in the languages and culture, strong historical administrative skills have given it a strong advantage over the West."

What worries me about Iran's perceptions of American weakness -- and America *has* become weaker in the region at that -- is that superpowers with swagger and considerable ego don't usually acknowledge their failings. In desperation and at that their resolve is solid and military strength robust, big nations having a bad time strike out to prove a point.

George W. Bush may strike Iran not only because of a military rationale that his advisors assembled but because he is the world that America still has the backbone and capacity to hit other countries -- ironically undermining the very power he is trying to transmit.

The combination of a weakened U.S. and pretentious Iran is highly dangerous, despite many who think that rationality prevails at the end of the day.

But bottom line is America better not only start playing chess but better get to mastering the three-dimensional version.

-- **Steve Clemons**

Posted by steve at August 24, 2006 10:01 PM
Comments

I actually first heard this metaphor during the cold war. It was some ex-CIA hand's chronicle of the Angola screw up that the Americans were poker players, raising each hand until they won or folded, and then looking around for the Russians were chess players, moving pieces around in a grand super-strategy.

The appeal of poker is that you don't need to know anything. Poker is a game founded on ignorance. You don't know what the other guy has until the game is over. All you can do is guess. All you really know is the cards that you are holding.

The dynamics of Poker call for intuitive and character skills. Observation, reading the other guy, intuitiveness, guesswork, steadfastness, courage and bluffing. The big poker moment in American legend and folklore is all about the bluff, and pit steely will against the villain's faint heart.

Here's the problem with the metaphor. The Iranians know all your cards. They've seen your hand. And they've got a good idea of who you are, how you think and how you'll play.

America, on the other hand, knows crap about what the Iranians might or might not have. The intelligence is for show, obvious in the last day or two. Also, the Americans are so obsessed with their mythic good vs evil narrative that they pay attention to who the Iranians really are or how the Americans think.

So if this is a poker game, America is the retarded lug who is holding all his cards backwards.

[Skip to comments.](#)

In Kosovo, sacrificing principles for oil

[Tribune Democrat](#) ^ | February 22, 2008 | ZACHARY HUBBARD

Posted on **02/24/2008 6:45:42 PM PST** by [Bokababe](#)

Once again the Bush administration is sacrificing its conservative principles to satisfy our nation's seeming insatiable thirst for foreign oil.

The latest victims of our oil lust are the ethnic Serbs living in Kosovo. Until Feb. 18, Kosovo was part of Serbia. That changed overnight when Kosovo unilaterally declared independence.

The United States, Germany and the United Kingdom were quick to recognize Kosovo's declaration. Russia and Serbia flatly rejected it.

Yes, folks, Kosovo's independence is all about oil – at least from a Western perspective.

In a press release that gleaned little media attention in the United States, Switzerland's Manas Petroleum Corp. announced on Jan. 10 that "Independent resource evaluation confirms existence of giant oil and gas prospects on Manas Petroleum's Albanian exploration blocks."

The announcement indicated that there are potentially 3 billion barrels of oil and 3 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the areas explored. Some of these areas lie near Albania's border with Kosovo.

Kosovo's population is about 90 percent ethnic Albanian. The remaining 10 percent are nearly all ethnic Serbs. Under Tito, in the former Yugoslavia, Kosovo was a semi-autonomous region which enjoyed special political privileges in the Yugoslav system.

During the breakup of Yugoslavia, Serbia's President Slobodon Milosevic stripped Kosovo of its autonomy and kept a tight grip on the ethnic Albanians through an internal security force composed almost exclusively of Serbs.

Serb domination of Kosovo ended when a NATO occupation force, the Kosovo Force (KFOR), forcibly interposed itself between the ethnic Albanians and Serb forces.

For the Serbs, Kosovo is a place of religious history and national pride. If the Serbs had an Alamo, it would be located in Kosovo. There, in an area that has become known as the Field of Blackbirds, thousands of Serbian "warrior saints" stood their ground in the 1389 Battle of Kosovo Polje, only to be slaughtered by the invading Ottoman Turks.

The Serbs continued to resist the Turks during the ensuing five centuries of Ottoman domination, which did not end until 1912, when Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Bulgaria defeated the Ottomans in the First Balkans War. To this day, the Serbs view themselves as defenders of Christianity who held the line against the incursion of Islam into Western Europe.

During that famous battle, ethnic Albanians fought side by side with the Serbs against the Ottoman invaders. But during the subsequent years of Turkish rule, most Albanians adopted Islam, while the Serbs clung to their Orthodox Christian tradition. Today, Kosovo is the historical seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

During the aftermath of the breakup of Yugoslavia, rampaging ethnic Albanians reportedly destroyed more than 100 Orthodox monasteries and churches in Kosovo, some of which were nearly 1,000 years old. The UK Independent reported in November 1999 that the Albanian destruction of Serb holy sites in Kosovo continued even after NATO's KFOR arrived.

Kosovo's neighbor, Albania, is currently struggling to integrate with Western Europe. Islam in Albania today is something less than radical. In fact, the number of Christians in Albania may be nearly even with the number of Muslims.

However, the Brussels-based International Crisis Group (ICG), a nonprofit, independent, nongovernmental organization that works to resolve world conflicts through diplomacy, reported in July 2006 that "a tiny but growing minority (in Albania) is turning toward Wahhabi Islam."

This could spell future trouble for the West. The Wahhabis are a violent, extremist sect of Islam that originated in Saudi Arabia in the 18th century. It has been argued that Osama bin Laden had gravitated toward Wahhabi beliefs prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

It appears the West sold out the Kosovo Serbs in order to gain assured access to Albania's newly discovered petroleum reserves. Albania's strategic location on the Adriatic Sea guarantees the West easy access to Albanian oil, without having to deal with unsavory governments.

In the coming months, look for a growing political support for Kosovo's union with Albania to form a Greater Albania, something that would have been unimaginable only a few years ago.

The West will sit idly by as Albania expands its borders, knowing that a Greater Albania will be inclined to sell oil to the West and is not likely to be influenced by the Serbs and Russians.

After Kosovo, the next target for Albania will probably be its neighbor, the Republic of Macedonia. Ethnic Albanians make up nearly a third of the Macedonian population.

While it is doubtful that a Greater Albania could gobble up all of Macedonia, it may attempt to annex the ethnic Albanian areas of Macedonia contiguous to the Albania-Macedonia border.

Macedonia might just allow this to occur in order to hasten its admission to the European Union.

Zachary Hubbard is a retired Army officer residing in Upper Yoder Township. He served as the chief of intelligence assessments and senior Balkans intelligence analyst for the NATO Stabilization Force in the former Yugoslavia. Hubbard is a member of The Tribune-Democrat's Readership Advisory Committee.

TOPICS: [Editorial](#); [Foreign Affairs](#); [War on Terror](#)

KEYWORDS: [bush](#); [islam](#); [kosovo](#); [oil](#)

<http://www.newkosovareport.com/20080110426/Region/Vast-oil-reserves-found-in-northern-Albania.html>

What do you bet that they have already more found oil & gas in Kosovo?

1 posted on **02/24/2008 6:45:45 PM PST** by **Bokababe**

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **joan**; **Smartass**; **zagor-te-nej**; **Lion in Winter**; **Honorary Serb**; **jb6**; **Incorrigible**; **DTA**; **vooch**; ...



2 posted on **02/24/2008 6:47:42 PM PST** by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

Yes, folks, Kosovo's independence is all about oil – at least from a Western perspective.

If true.....this is sickening.

3 posted on 02/24/2008 6:48:27 PM PST by **ThisLittleLightofMine**
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

I have read of multiple mines of minerals and coal. Tons of coal, but never anything about Oil and gas deposits in Kosovo. The knowledge of these deposits had to have been confirmed at least in the mid '90's for what has happened since, and until now.

This will be interesting to watch.

4 posted on 02/24/2008 6:53:24 PM PST by **rockingsranch** (Dems, Libs, Socialists...call 'em what you will...They ALL have fairies livin' in their trees.)
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **rockingsranch**

There's some interesting info on [this link](#)

5 posted on 02/24/2008 6:56:28 PM PST by **shuckmaster**
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 4](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **ThisLittleLightofMine**

It is absolutely true that they discovered oil & gas in “Northern Albania”, along the Kosovo border <http://www.newkosovareport.com/20080110426/Region/Vast-oil-reserves-found-in-northern-Albania.html>
I have little doubt that it is Kosovo. Rebecca West, in the late 1930's mentioned that “oil was bubbling out of the ground” where she sat.

6 posted on 02/24/2008 6:59:12 PM PST by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 3](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

the Brussels-based International Crisis Group (ICG), a nonprofit, independent, nongovernmental organization that works to resolve world conflicts through diplomacy, reported in July 2006 that “a tiny but growing minority (in Albania) is turning toward Wahhabi Islam.”

ICG is a Soros org. So we should listen to Soros propaganda as long as it is anti-Albanian, right?

7 posted on 02/24/2008 6:59:22 PM PST by **Tailgunner Joe**
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **ThisLittleLightofMine**

And of course the same 'Anti-War' folks who chant 'no blood for oil' were just thrilled when the blood being shed as Serbian, shed by NATO bombs.

Our local "Campaign for Peace and Justice" which has opposed every US military action made an exception for murdering Orthodox Christian from 15,000 feet.

8 posted on **02/24/2008 7:00:38 PM PST** by **The_Reader_David** (And when they behead your own people in the wars which are to come, then you will know. . .)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 3](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

The announcement indicated that there are potentially 3 billion barrels of oil and 3 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the areas explored. Some of these areas lie near Albania's border with Kosovo.

Drop in the Bucket

ANWR is estimated to have 15 Billion bbls

9 posted on **02/24/2008 7:03:48 PM PST** by **Species8472** (John Kerry was a war hero too....)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

I am getting very tired of reading about Bush at the root of all that is wrong with the world. I suspect this is the same BS that says that the only reason we are in Iraq is for the oil. I thought that the Iraqis were selling it on the world market, how dumb can I be.

10 posted on **02/24/2008 7:05:23 PM PST** by **ANGGAPO** (is for the oil.)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Tailgunner Joe**

The rest of the story there bub: they used that little piece of propaganda to demand independence for Kosovo—

NO independecce more wahhabi...Blackmail!!

And we got both.

11 posted on **02/24/2008 7:07:40 PM PST** by **eleni121** (+ En Touto Nika! By this sign conquer! + Constantine the Great)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 7](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Tailgunner Joe**

"ICG is a Soros org. So we should listen to Soros propaganda as long as it is anti-Albanian, right?"

Soros wants Kosovo Independence. Soros pushed for it, financed it. This guys isn't speaking FOR Soros. The ICG quote says "a tiny but growing minority (in Albania) is turning toward Wahhabi Islam." It's likely that it is not so "tiny".

12 posted on **02/24/2008 7:09:24 PM PST** by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 7](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

Maybe you should get a better source than a commie NGO which has George Soros on the Executive Committee.

13 posted on **02/24/2008 7:12:38 PM PST** by **Tailgunner Joe**

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 12](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

“Moscow argued that those nations supporting the Kosovo split should have foreseen an angry Serb backlash. ... improved, with giant Gazprom buying Serbia’s main oil company NIS last month. The two countries have ... reservoir and the other on building a pipeline through Serbia to pump Russian gas to ...” IT IS NOT ABOUT SERBIA, IT IS ABOUT RUSSIA, AND THEIR ATTEMPT TO BUILD A PIPELINE THROUGH SERBIA.

14 posted on **02/24/2008 7:12:50 PM PST** by **richardtavor** (Pray for the peace of Jerusalem in the name of the G-d of Jacob)
 [[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **ANGGAPO**

Agreed. Although I disagree with our current policy in that area I’m pretty sick and tired of having some left wing org imply that everything is about oil. If these groups had the courage of their rhetoric they would be calling for the US to exploit it’s own reserves. The fact that they oppose that tells me it’s just propoganda.

15 posted on **02/24/2008 7:13:27 PM PST** by **saganite** (Lust type what you what in the “tagline” space)
 [[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 10](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Species8472**

"Drop in the Bucket. ANWR is estimated to have 15 Billion bbls"

And we will drill there soon? Not likely.

16 posted on **02/24/2008 7:13:34 PM PST** by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)
 [[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 9](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **ThisLittleLightofMine**

Absolutely not true—Gazprom wants a pipeline through Kosovo—there is no exploration in Kosovo as far as I know..

17 posted on **02/24/2008 7:14:23 PM PST** by **richardtavor** (Pray for the peace of Jerusalem in the name of the G-d of Jacob)
 [[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 3](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

You mean like Jed Clampett

18 posted on **02/24/2008 7:15:23 PM PST** by **richardtavor** (Pray for the peace of Jerusalem in the name of the G-d of Jacob)
 [[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 6](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Tailgunner Joe**

"Zachary Hubbard is a retired Army officer residing in Upper Yoder Township. He served as the chief of intelligence assessments and senior Balkans intelligence analyst for the NATO Stabilization Force in the former Yugoslavi a."

And THIS makes the guy "a commie". You took one tiny quote out of a retired Army officer's article re "Wahhabi Albanians" and turned into he's a Soros "commie"? You've got a screw loose.

19 posted on 02/24/2008 7:18:04 PM PST by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 13](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

Believe propaganda from Soros NGO's all you want. Just don't expect the rest of us to side with foreigners against our own country just because you and Soros say we should.

20 posted on 02/24/2008 7:24:25 PM PST by **Tailgunner Joe**
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 19](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **richardtavor**

"You mean like Jed Clampett"

Yes, in the book , "Black Lamb, Grey Falcon" that is pretty much how Rebecca West described it. The entire book was about her travels as an English woman through pre-WWII Yugoslavia.

21 posted on 02/24/2008 7:25:56 PM PST by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 18](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Tailgunner Joe**

"Believe propaganda from Soros NGO's all you want. Just don't expect the rest of us to side with foreigners against our own country just because you and Soros say we should."

Who funds John McCain's Reform Institute?

Can you say "Soros"?

22 posted on 02/24/2008 7:29:30 PM PST by **Catulus**
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 20](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Tailgunner Joe**

"Believe propaganda from Soros NGO's all you want. Just don't expect the rest of us to side with foreigners against our own country just because you and Soros say we should."

The Soros slime is coming out of your mouth, not the author's and not mine.

You can take out your prayer rug now.

23 posted on 02/24/2008 7:35:35 PM PST by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 20](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **dynachrome; SpaceBar**

Wasn't Savage talking about this a few nights ago? Something about pipelines thru Kosovo???

24 posted on 02/24/2008 7:36:31 PM PST by **do not press 2 for spanish**
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

You are the one who posted this article which uses Soros org propaganda.

Please stop promoting George Soros talking points at FR in defense of your anti-American foreign agenda.

While you're at it, please stop stinking up America with your treason. Put your money where your mouth is. Go to Serbia where your allegiance lies and don't come back.

25 posted on **02/24/2008 7:38:49 PM PST** by **Tailgunner Joe**
 [[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 23](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **shuckmaster**

Thanks for the link. I read all the key words that tell me the link is to an alarmist, Leftist, BS site. "Halliburton", "Kellog etc.", "Gunboat Diplomacy", "War for Oil", etc., yet when I visit site after site in random search pattern I cannot find any other information about this supposed camp being anything other than what it apparently is. A military camp.

I'll keep looking around to see if I can find anymore information about this as it is truly interesting to me to know why in the "H" we got involved in fighting over there in the first place. I just don't trust much of the opinion I see coming from the Left, or the Right. Somewhere, somehow I will find out the truth of WHY.

26 posted on **02/24/2008 7:42:36 PM PST** by **rockinqsranch** (Dems, Libs, Socialists...call 'em what you will...They ALL have fairies livin' in their trees.)
 [[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 5](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

Once again the Bush administration is sacrificing its conservative principles to satisfy our nation's seeming insatiable thirst for foreign oil.

Patently untrue leftist propaganda.

Not enough oil to worry about.

We never are in it for, or ever get, the oil of the left's standard Marxist accusation.

The Bush Administration, and Bush, is not conservative.

The Bush Administration sacrifices conservative principles for no reason, not horse manure like this.

Our economy will run just fine on any oil, only the leftie envirowackos insatiably thirst for FOREIGN oil.

27 posted on **02/24/2008 7:49:14 PM PST** by **Navy Patriot** (John McCain, the Manchurian Candidate.)
 [[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Tailgunner Joe**

"Put your money where your mouth is. Go to Serbia where your allegiance lies and don't come back."

I've never set foot in Serbia. I am an American and my family never came from Serbia. My allegiance lies with America & what she once stood for in the world --truth, decency & values that were worthy of respect. But she has been hijacked by some very ruthless global interests, and as American patriots, it is our job to point out where she has gone wrong to put her right. It's a messy thankless job, but we all bring what we have to the job. I have knowledge of the Balkans. I don't claim to know a rat's behind about Iraq or Afghanistan, so I don't talk about it. I talk about this because this is what I know because I have studied it from many sides.

Got a problem with that, take it up with the management.

28 posted on **02/24/2008 7:49:46 PM PST** by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)
 [[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 25](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **do not press 2 for spanish**

"Wasn't Savage talking about this a few nights ago? Something about pipelines thru Kosovo???"

Yes, [Michael Savage](#)

has known that something has not been right about all of this for a long time. Guess that makes Michael Savage a "Soros commie" in TGJ's pro-Albanian book

29 posted on **02/24/2008 7:59:48 PM PST** by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 24](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **do not press 2 for spanish**

Wasn't Savage talking about this a few nights ago? Something about pipelines thru Kosovo???

Surely you don't mean...

[The Oily Tracks Running Through Kosovo](#)

[by Michael Savage](#)

[\(Originally published 11/20/99 by Newsmax.com\)](#)

?

30 posted on **02/24/2008 8:21:45 PM PST** by **SpaceBar**

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 24](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

... and then I climbed on the gook's anti-aircraft cannon to show that i love my country oh am I in the wrong fairy tail ?

31 posted on **02/24/2008 8:24:39 PM PST** by **h2ny2**

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 28](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Species8472; Bokababe**

I'd have to do some digging but IIRC the breakup of the Milosevic regime was in part due to globalists desire of oil/gas PIPELINE stability and privatization.

32 posted on **02/24/2008 9:07:51 PM PST** by **endthematrix** (He was shouting 'Allah!' but I didn't hear that. It just sounded like a lot of crap to me.)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 9](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

If there is oil there then my guess is that this is about keeping it OFF the market in order to keep prices high enough to fund our enemies.

I know that sounds weird, but that's how it works NWO.

33 posted on **02/24/2008 9:16:52 PM PST** by **Carry_Okie** (Grovelnator Schwarzenkaiser, fashionable fascism one charade at a time.)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Carry_Okie; Bokababe**

The Trans Balkan AMBO Pipeline, the President of Albania, and Kosovo

<http://www.freerepublic.com/forum/a3793a582649e.htm>

34 posted on **02/24/2008 9:36:34 PM PST** by **endthematix** (He was shouting 'Allah!' but I didn't hear that. It just sounded like a lot of crap to me.)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 33](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **endthematix**; **Tailgunner Joe**

<http://www.freerepublic.com/forum/a39a045bc5406.htm>

I may find the whole thread revealing.

TGJ, IMO the plan for Kosovo independence is a bastard child of our communist infested DOS. Just because the Russians don't like it doesn't mean it's in our interest.

35 posted on **02/24/2008 9:47:17 PM PST** by **Carry_Okie** (Grovelnator Schwarzenkaiser, fashionable fascism one charade at a time.)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 34](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

"Islam in Albania today is something less than radical."

Yet in the article it lists the "Greater Albanian" plan of swallowing up Kosovo and Macedonia.

36 posted on **02/24/2008 10:54:52 PM PST** by **endthematix** (He was shouting 'Allah!' but I didn't hear that. It just sounded like a lot of crap to me.)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

Thanks for the post. I don't buy into these oil/Saudi connections yet, maybe for lack of understanding. I do try to be on the right side of every matter. Until some information says otherwise, what's happening to the Serbs is wrong. Nobody's stepped up to articulate some justification for the gutting of Serbia.

Until I learn otherwise, I'll follow my instincts, driven by the information available and common sense, and fight hard (within legal limits) for the Serbs.

37 posted on **02/24/2008 11:00:07 PM PST** by **fire and forget**

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 2](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Tailgunner Joe**

...treason...

That's a very inflammatory charge you're making there chief.

38 posted on **02/24/2008 11:10:17 PM PST** by **LjubivojeRadosavljevic**

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 25](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **h2ny2**

"... and then I climbed on the gook's anti-aircraft cannon to show that i love my country oh am I in the wrong fairy tail ?"

You've been here for what -- two days? Use terms like "tribal monkeys" & "shovel heads", and start insulting people. Think that you might want to learn some manners when introducing yourself. Or is this your "best behavior" and highest level of contribution & it's downhill from here?

39 posted on **02/24/2008 11:52:52 PM PST** by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 31](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **endthematrix**

"Islam in Albania today is something less than radical."

"Yet in the article it lists the "Greater Albanian" plan of swallowing up Kosovo and Macedonia.

And they have [destroyed over 150 Christian churches](#) So if this is "less than radical", then what?

40 posted on **02/24/2008 11:57:07 PM PST** by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 36](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **richardtavor**

"Absolutely not true—Gazprom wants a pipeline through Kosovo—there is no exploration in Kosovo as far as I know.."

The [Gazprom pipeline deal was already sealed with Serbia](#) proper a month ago to go through Bulgaria and Nis, Serbia, NOT through Kosovo.

41 posted on **02/25/2008 12:04:58 AM PST** by **Bokababe** (<http://www.savekosovo.org>)

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 17](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

sorry if I hurt your feelings,

why don't you suggest some appropriate name for

those "humanoids" that we saw on the TV couple days ago and I will use it

I have very little respect for people who don't respect me and my country,

so I find gooks, towel heads or your tribal monkeys appropriate.

42 posted on **02/25/2008 12:09:19 AM PST** by **h2ny2**

[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 39](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

I know.

On the energy front:

Clinton, Stoyanov announce Southeast Europe Action Plan (1998)

"They also have a common interest in expanding mutual trade and investment and encouraging the development of multiple routes for energy from the Caspian Basin."

On the Globalism/EU/NATO front:

"These bilateral and multilateral initiatives will advance our shared goal of a **Europe whole, free and at peace**. They will also promote the integration of Bulgaria and the other stable democracies of Southeastern Europe into the European and transatlantic mainstream."

On the military front:

Rice Signs U.S. Shared-Base Agreement with Bulgaria (2006)

SECRETARY OF STATE CONDOLEEZZA RICE
AFTER NATO MINISTERIAL MEETING
Sofia, Bulgaria in 2006

“We are always reminded of what a tremendously successful alliance NATO has been, an alliance that was, of course, born of the Cold War, born at a time when Europe faced a threat of Soviet Union and Soviet Communism, but an alliance that has made the transition at the end of the Cold War to an institution that has played a very large part in conjunction with, for instance, the European Union in providing an umbrella for the democratic transitions that have taken place throughout Eastern and Central Europe and has contributed, therefore, mightily to the development of a **Europe that is whole and free and at peace.**”

43 posted on **02/25/2008 12:19:45 AM PST** by **endthematrix** (He was shouting 'Allah!' but I didn't hear that. It just sounded like a lot of crap to me.)
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 40](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

If conservatives said Taiwan should remain China the author would have a point.

44 posted on **02/25/2008 3:21:38 AM PST** by **NoLibZone** (If the Clinton years were so great for the libs why is Obama doing so well?)
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 1](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **SpaceBar**

Yes. Once again, he calls it.

45 posted on **02/25/2008 4:31:04 AM PST** by **do not press 2 for spanish**
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 30](#) | [View Replies](#)]

To: **Bokababe**

Whoa; missed your “line of reasoning” completely. He’s the anti-Soros if this Nation has one...

46 posted on **02/25/2008 4:32:40 AM PST** by **do not press 2 for spanish**
[[Post Reply](#) | [Private Reply](#) | [To 29](#) | [View Replies](#)]

Disclaimer: Opinions posted on Free Republic are those of the individual posters and do not necessarily represent the opinion of Free Republic or its management. All materials posted herein are protected by copyright law and the exemption for fair use of copyrighted works.

[Free Republic](#)
[Home](#) · [Browse](#) · [Search](#)

[News/Activism](#)
[Topics](#) · [Post Article](#)

FreeRepublic, LLC, PO BOX 9771, FRESNO, CA 93794

FreeRepublic.com is powered by software copyright 2000-2003 Robinson-DeFehr Consulting, LLC.



Search the web for videos

limit to **website**
 or **category**
Powered by **TRUVEO**

<< Back to Results

Serbia During The WW2 / Hitler's Most Catastrophic Mistake

By saying "No!" - straight to Hitler's face the Serbs made a decisive contribution to the defeat of Nazis in World War II. Excerpt from: "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich" A History of Nazi Germany by William L. Shirer Simon and Schuster, New York, 1960 Page 824: ...During the delirious celebrations in Belgrade, in which a crowd spat on the German minister's car, the Serbs had shown where their sympathies lay. The coup in Belgrade threw Adolf Hitler into one of the wildest rages of his entire life. He took it as a personal affront and in his fury made sudden decisions which would prove utterly disastrous to the fortunes of the Third Reich. He hurriedly summoned his military chieftans to the Chancellery in the Berlin on March 27 - the meeting was so hastily called that Brauchitsch, Halder and Ribbentrop arrived late - and raged about the revenge he would take on Yugoslavs... He was therefore determined,... "to destroy Yugoslavia militarily and as a nation. No diplomatic inquiries will be made," he ordered, "and no ultimatums presented." Yugoslavia, he added, would be crushed with "unmerciful harshness." He ordered Goering then and there to "destroy Belgrade in attacks by waves," with bombers operating from Hungarian air bases. He issued Directive No. 25 for the immediate invasion of Yugoslavia and told Keitel and Jodl to work out that very evening the military plans. He instructed Ribentrop to advise [the German allies] Hungary, Rumania and Italy that they would all get a slice of Yugoslavia, which would be divided up among them, except for a Croatian state. And then, according to an underlined passage in the top-secret OKW notes of the meeting (1), Hitler announced the most fateful decision of all. "The beginning of the Barbarossa operation [attack on Russia]," he told his generals, "will have to be postponed up to four weeks." (It had originally been set for May 15 in the directive of December 18, 1940). This postponement of the attack on Russia in order that the Nazi warlord might vent his personal spite against a small Balkan country which had dared to defy him was probably the most catastrophic single decision in Hitler's career. It is hardly too much to say that by making it that March afternoon in the Chancellery in Berlin during a moment of convulsive rage he tossed away his last golden opportunity to win the war and to make of the Third Reich, which he had created with such stunning if barbarous genius, the greatest empire in German history and himself the master of Europe. Field Marshal von Brauchitsch, the Commander in Chief of the German Army, and General Halder, the gifted Chief of the General Staff, were to recall it with deep bitterness but also with more understanding of its consequences than they showed at the moment of its making, when later the deep snow and subzero temperatures of Russia hit them three or four weeks short of what they thought they needed for final victory. For ever afterward they and their fellow generals would blame that hastily, ill-advised decision of vain and infuriated man for all the disasters that ensued. (End quote) Today, the fueheres of the Newest "New World Order", Imperial America and their German helpers, show the same fury toward the disobedient Serb people. In 1991, just like in 1941, the Serbs dare challenge Mighty Fascist Rullers of the Universe. Because, if it was not clear from the above text who were the "Yugoslavs"; who dared say "No!" to Hitler - it is crystal clear from all other literature. It were the Serbs! The Croats (and their Muslim helpers) eagerly awaited the "liberating" troops of the New World Order. Germans did not forget or forgive the Serbs for their role in destroying the beloved Third Reich. The price of more than one million lives that the small but brave Serbian nation have payed was not enough for the blood thirsty Germans. They rage for more today. It is shocking to what detail the history repeat itself. Once again, Croats and Muslims are servants of a "World Order", once again Serbs are labelled "thugs, criminals and bandits" just like in 1941. The difference is that the Americans (the new Masters of the Planet) "forgot" that during the last gigantic struggle the Serbs sacrificed their own lives in order to rescue more than 500 American Airmen. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fD3CXtcr4yw> This was the largest rescue of American lives from behind enemy lines in American history.

Prepare to be Shocked

Millions have already taken this amazing test. What's your RealAge?
www.RealAge.com

Criminal Video

Check out the Show That Examines the Minds of Famous Criminals.
www.Biography.com

World war 2

Browse a huge selection now. Find exactly what you want today.
www.eBay.com

Swords/WWII Items Wanted

Vermont Collector Buys & Appraises, Japanese/German Swords, items, etc
www.militaryitemswanted.com

Ads by Google

Related Video



Serbian Chetniks Nazi collaborators
YouTube



Gregory Freeman On How The Serbs Saved US Airmen In WW2
YouTube



Ivo Fabijan Mrvelj - Strice Ivane
YouTube



Serbian Warriors IV
YouTube



Yul Brynner & Fabijan Sovagovic: Preko vode do slobode
YouTube



Yul Brynner & Marjane, Marjane - Battle of the river Neretva
YouTube



Truth about Serbia & Serbian forces in ww2
YouTube



Yugoslav war conflict Croatia Serbia Tudjman Milosevic
Google Video



serbia - srbija 1941
YouTube



Serbian Children from Kuzana



Share this Video

Link:

Video Info

Duration: / Runtime: 5:20 Added: Oct 23, 2007 Views: 61 Category: By: YouTube

Tags: [Hitler](#), [Nazi](#), [Croatia](#), [Cetnik](#), [Draza](#), [Germany](#), [Chetniks](#), [US](#), [EU](#), [NATO](#), [Jewish](#), [Israeli](#), [Islam](#), [Orthodox](#), [Serbian](#), [Srbija](#), [Kosovo](#), [Bosnia](#)

[Ww2 Posters](#)

Great deals on everything Ww2 Posters themed.
Yahoo.com

[Hitlers Soldiers](#)

Find great deals and save! Compare products, prices & stores
www.Shopping.com

[World War Two Dive Bomber](#)

Real Stories of WW Two Experiences Aircraft Carriers and
Kamikazes
www.navy-tailhooker.com

[Prepare to be Shocked](#)

Millions have already taken this amazing test. What's your
RealAge?
www.RealAge.com

Ads by Google

[Hannah's Blog](#)

[« Thanksgiving](#) | [Main](#) | [Iraqi Neighborhood »](#)

November 25, 2005

Camp Bond-steel in Kosovo

Is this another Guantanamo in the pristine mountains of Kosovo? What's the 21st Century term for "gunboat diplomacy?"



Camp Bondsteel and America's plans to control Caspian oil

By Paul Stuart

29 April 2002

Camp Bondsteel, the biggest 'from scratch' foreign US military base since the Vietnam War is near completion in the Yugoslav province of Kosovo. It is located close to vital oil pipelines and energy corridors presently under construction, such as the US sponsored Trans-Balkan oil pipeline. As a result defence contractors'in particular Halliburton Oil subsidiary Brown & Root Services'are making a fortune.

In June 1999, in the immediate aftermath of the bombing of Yugoslavia, US forces seized 1,000 acres of farmland in southeast Kosovo at Uresevic, near the Macedonian border, and began the construction of a camp.

Camp Bondsteel is known as the 'grand dame' in a network of US bases running both sides of the border between Kosovo and Macedonia. In less than three years it has been transformed from an encampment of tents to a self sufficient, high tech base-camp housing nearly 7,000 troops'three quarters of all the US troops stationed in Kosovo.

There are 25 kilometres of roads and over 300 buildings at Camp Bondsteel, surrounded by 14 kilometres of earth and concrete barriers, 84 kilometres of concertina wire and 11 watch towers. It is so big that it has downtown, midtown and uptown districts, retail outlets, 24-hour sports halls, a chapel, library and the best-equipped hospital anywhere in Europe. At present there are 55 Black Hawk and Apache helicopters based at Bondsteel and although it has no aircraft landing strip the location was chosen for its capacity to expand. There are suggestions that it could replace the US airforce base at Aviano in Italy.

According to Colonel Robert L. McClure, writing in the engineers professional Bulletin, 'Engineer planning for operations in Kosovo began months before the first bomb was dropped. At the outset, planners wanted to use the lessons learned in Bosnia and convinced decision makers to reach base-camp 'end state' as quickly as possible.'

Initially US military engineers took control of 320 kilometres of roads and 75 bridges in the surrounding area for military use and laid out a base camp template involving soldiers living quarters, helicopter flight paths, ammunition holding areas and so on.

McClure explains how the Engineer Brigade were instructed 'to merge construction assets and integrate them with the contractor, Brown & Root Services Corporation, to build not one but two base camps [the other is Camp Monteith] for a total of 7,000 troops.'

According to McClure, 'At the height of the effort, about 1,000 former US military personnel, hired by Brown & Root, along with more than 7,000 Albanian local nationals, joined the 1,700 military engineers. From early July and into October [1999], construction at both camps continued 24 hours a day, seven days a week.'

Brown & Root Services provides all the support services to Camp Bondsteel. This includes 600,000 gallons of water per-day, enough electricity to supply a city of 25,000 and a supply centre with 14,000 product lines. It washes 1,200 bags of laundry, supplies 18,000 meals per day and operates 95 percent of the rail and airfield facilities. It also provides the camps firefighting service. Brown & Root are now the largest employers in Kosovo, with more than 5,000 local Kosovan Albanians and another 15,000 on its books.

Staff at Camp Bondsteel rarely venture outside the compound and their activities are secretive. Whilst other KFOR patrols are small and mobile with soldiers wearing soft caps and instructed to integrate with the local population, US military personnel leave Bondsteel in either helicopters or as part of infrequent but large heavily armed convoys.

In unnamed interviews US troops complain that hostility to their presence is growing as local inhabitants compare the investment in Camp Bondsteel with the continuing decline in their own living standards.

Those visiting Camp Bondsteel describe it as a journey through 100 years in time. The area surrounding the camp is extremely poor with an unemployment rate of 80 percent. Then Bondsteel appears on the horizon with its mass of communication satellites, antennae and menacing attack helicopters circling above. Brown & Root pay Kosova workers between \$1 and \$3 per hour. The local manager said wages were so low because, 'We can't inflate the wages because we don't want to over inflate the local economy.'

The escalating US presence at Bondsteel was accompanied by increased activity by the Kosovo Liberation Army

(KLA). Since its appearance most Serbs, Roma and Albanians opposed to the KLA have been murdered or driven out. Those remaining dare not leave their houses to buy food at the local stores and the need for military escorts stretch from children's swimming pools to tractors taken away for repair. According to observers the KLA continue to act with virtual impunity in the US sector despite the high tech military intelligence facilities at Bondsteel.

When US troops arrive at Camp Bondsteel, they are more likely to be met by a Brown & Root employee directing them to their accommodation and equipment areas. According to G. Cahlink in *Government Executive Magazine* (February 2002), "Army peace keepers joke that they're missing a patch on their camouflage fatigues. "We need one that says Sponsored by Brown & Root," says a staff sergeant, who, like more than nearly 10,000 soldiers in the region, has come to rely on Brown and Root Services, a Houston based contractor, for everything from breakfast to spare parts for armoured Humvees."

The contract to service Camp Bondsteel is the latest in a string of military contracts awarded to Brown & Root Services. Its fortunes have grown as US militarism has escalated. The company is part of the Halliburton Corporation, the largest supplier of products and services to the oil industry.

In 1992 Dick Cheney, as Secretary of Defence in the senior Bush administration, awarded the company a contract providing support for the US army's global operations. Cheney left politics and joined Halliburton as CEO between 1995 and 2000. He is now US vice president in the junior Bush administration. In 1992 Brown & Root built and maintained US army bases in Somalia earning \$62 million. In 1994 Brown & Root built bases and support systems for 18,000 troops in Haiti doubling its earnings to \$133 million. The company received a five-year support contract in 1999 worth \$180 million per-year to build military facilities in Hungary, Croatia and Bosnia. It was Camp Bondsteel, however, that was dubbed "the mother of all contracts" by the Washington based Contract Services Association of America. There, "We do everything that does not require us to carry a gun," said Brown & Root's director David Capouya.

The aim of outsourcing military support and services to private contractors has been to free up more soldiers for combat duties. A US Department of Defence (DoD) review in 2001 insisted that the use of contractors would escalate: "Only those functions that must be done at DoD should be kept at DoD."

In sectors controlled by other Western powers, KFOR soldiers who are living in bombed out apartment blocks and old factories joke, "What are the two things that can be seen from space? One is the Great Wall of China, the other is Camp Bondsteel."

More seriously a senior British military officer told the *Washington Post*, "It is an obvious sign that the Americans are making a major commitment to the Balkan region and plan to stay." One analyst described the US as having taken advantage of favourable circumstances to create a base that would be large enough to accommodate future military plans.

Camp Bondsteel has become a key venue for important policy speeches by leading officials of the Bush administration.

On June 5, 2001 US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld explained to troops at Camp Bondsteel what role they played in the new administration's economic strategy. He declared, "How much should we spend on the armed services? ...My view is we don't spend on you, we invest in you. The men and women in the armed services are not a drain on our economic strength. Indeed you safeguard it. You're not a burden on our economy, you are the critical foundation for growth."

One month later, President George W. Bush made his first trip abroad to see US troops at the camp. He traveled directly from the Rome G8 summit, where tensions with European governments had come to the fore. In a speech described as a "retrenching" of the US in Europe, he insisted that US troops were in Kosovo to stay, had gone in together and would "leave together". In a break from normal procedure, in front of cheering troops, Bush signed into law a Congress-approved increase in military spending of \$1.9 billion.

Since then Camp Bondsteel has continued to grow, as it spearheads the first phase in a realignment of US military

bases in Europe and eastward. The Bondsteel template is now being applied in Afghanistan and the new bases in the former Soviet Republics.

According to leaked comments to the press, European politicians now believe that the US used the bombing of Yugoslavia specifically in order to establish Camp Bondsteel. Before the start of the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, the Washington Post insisted, "With the Middle-East increasingly fragile, we will need bases and fly over rights in the Balkans to protect Caspian Sea oil."

The scale of US oil corporations investment in the exploitation of Caspian oil fields and the US government demand for the economy to be less dependent on imported oil, particularly from the Middle-East, demands a long term solution to the transportation of oil to European and US markets. The US Trade & Development Agency (TDA) has financed initial feasibility studies, with large grants, and more recently advanced technical studies for the New York based AMBO (Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria Oil) Trans-Balkan pipeline.

Announcing a grant for an advanced technical study in 1999 for the AMBO oil pipeline through Bulgaria, Macedonia and Albania, TDA director J. Joseph Grandmaison declared, "The competition is fierce to tap energy resources in the Caspian region....Over the last year [1999], TDA has been actively promoting the development of multiple pipelines to connect these vast resources with Western markets. This grant represents a significant step forward for this policy and for US business interests in the Caspian region."

The \$1.3 billion trans-Balkan AMBO pipeline is one of the most important of these multiple pipelines. It will pump oil from the tankers that bring it across the Black Sea to the Bulgarian oil terminus at Burgas, through Macedonia to the Albanian Adriatic port of Vlore. From there it will be pumped on to huge 300,000 ton tankers and sent on to Europe and the US, bypassing the Bosphorus Straits—the congested and only route out of the Black Sea where tankers are restricted to 150,000 tons.

The initial feasibility study for AMBO was conducted in 1995 by none other than Brown & Root, as was an updated feasibility study in 1999. In another twist, the former director of Oil & Gas Development for Europe and Africa for Brown & Root Energy Services, Ted Ferguson, was appointed as the new president of AMBO [1997] after the death of former president and founder of AMBO, Macedonian born Mr Vuko Tashkovikj.

According to a recent Reuters article, Ferguson declared that Exxon-Mobil and Chevron, two of the worlds largest oil corporations, are preparing to finance the AMBO project.

The building of AMBO risks antagonising Turkey, the US's main ally in the region. According to the Reagan Information Interchange, "While the United States is making an advantageous economic decision, it is overlooking its crucial strategic relationship with Turkey."

The US is also antagonising its European allies and Russia with Camp Bondsteel and other smaller military bases run alongside the proposed AMBO pipeline route. It has been built near the mouth of the Presevo valley and energy Corridor 8, which the European Union has sponsored since 1994 and regards as a strategic route east-west for global trade.

In April 1999, British General Michael Jackson, the commander in Macedonia during the NATO bombing of Serbia, explained to the Italian paper Sole 24 Ore "Today, the circumstances which we have created here have changed. Today, it is absolutely necessary to guarantee the stability of Macedonia and its entry into NATO. But we will certainly remain here a long time so that we can also guarantee the security of the energy corridors which traverse this country."

The newspaper added, "It is clear that Jackson is referring to the 8th corridor, the East-West axis which ought to be combined to the pipeline bringing energy resources from Central Asia to terminals in the Black Sea and in the Adriatic, connecting Europe with Central Asia. That explains why the great and medium sized powers, and first of all Russia, don't want to be excluded from the settling of scores that will take place over the next few months in the Balkans."

Diego Garcia: Paradise Isle or Britain's shame?

Gordon Thomas, investigative journalist and author of *Gideon's Spies: the Secret History of the Mossad* asserts that "high level leaders and operatives of Al Qaida and the Taliban are held there (on Diego Garcia)" and "none are being protected by the Geneva Conventions".

Thomas claims: "the interrogation techniques used on Diego Garcia are contained in a secret CIA manual on coercive questioning. It contains sections headed 'Threats and Fear', 'Pain', 'Narcosis' and 'Heightened Suggestibility and Hypnosis'."

He further suggests "the presence of the prisoners on Diego Garcia is so secret that a counter-terrorism official in Washington said President Bush 'had informed the CIA he did not want to know where they were'."

A recent report by Human Rights First entitled "Ending Secret Detentions" cites Diego Garcia as a suspected site for the detention of individuals, including the leader of the Jemaah Islamiyah, Hambali, otherwise known as Riduan Isamuddin.

Thomas suggests that private Lear jets regularly fly into the island with a new batch of prisoners, which, he says, have included Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Ramzi Bin Al Shibh and Abu Zubaydah, kidnapped from Pakistan. He says this is done with the knowledge of US Defence Secretary Rumsfeld and often with the approval of the White House.

It seems that the US administration realizes the Guantanamo experiment has failed. Rumsfeld has already admitted to "ghost" detainees who don't show up in any official documents and who have no name. How many of these are being tortured on Paradise Isle, I wonder. According to various reports, others are being held on two US prison ships - the USS Bataan and the USS Peleliu.

Ibrahim Habaci and Arif Ulusam, both Turkish; Saudi citizen Faha al Bahli; Mahmud Sardar Issa from Sudan; and Kenyan national Khalifa Abdi

Posted by Hannah at November 25, 2005 06:12 AM

Comments

DEBKAFfile - We start where the media stop

Palestinians and a Kosovo Pipe Dream

DEBKAFfile Special Report

February 20, 2008, 1:59 PM (GMT+02:00)



Yasser Abd Rabbo makes wave with his Kosovo headline

The proposal by senior Palestinian negotiator Yasser Abed Rabbo put forward Wed Feb. 20 to copy the Kosovo example if Israel continued to mark time in talks for a Palestinian state was quickly knocked down by his colleagues, but eyed with interest by Israel.

Tuesday, prime minister Ehud Olmert and foreign minister Tzipi Livni held another round of negotiations with Palestinian leaders Mahmoud Abbas and Ahmed Qureia.

DEBKAFfile's Middle East sources commented: Nothing has stopped the Palestinians from going ahead and declaring the West Bank independent, any more than Hamas was prevented from seizing control of and governing the Gaza Strip. But Abbas and his Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority circle know that the moment unilateral independence is declared, the violent Al Aqsa Brigades faction of Fatah, Hamas, Jihad Islami and the rest of the Palestinian terrorist groups will move in and sweep them out.

In fact, if the Kosovo model were seriously applicable to the Palestinians, Israel might profit in three ways.

1. It would put a stop to the tedious biweekly charade of "peace negotiations" between and Israeli and Palestinian leaders and the meaningless statements issuing from both sides to cover their lack of content.

Livni assured the Knesset Monday, Feb. 18, that whenever she sits down to talk with Palestinian leaders, "the tears of Israeli paratroops at the Western Wall are before her eyes." Nonetheless, she went on to say, the talks must go on to save Israel from being caught up in a religious war.

She used the future tense when, on that very day, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards publication Sobh-e Sadeqh (Dawn of Truth), discussing the death of Imad Mughniyeh editorially, called on believers "to kill the infidels everywhere, trap them and hold them to torture and ambush."

The founder of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Republic Ruhollah Khomeini left his successors in Tehran a clear definition of the term infidels: "Contemporary Jews and Christians are unbelievers because they falsified the Torah and the New Testament and do not live according to the precepts of Moses or Jesus."

Holy jihad was the theme of many of the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's speeches for eight years when he tried to justify the long Palestinian war against Israel.

2. Abd Rabbo explained that the independent Palestinian state he proposes would treat Israel's military counter-terror operations in the West Bank as an attack on the Palestinian state. It would be up to the Palestinian military to fight the terrorists. That would take the burden off Israel's back – except that **DEBKAFfile's** military sources report that Abd Rabbo was talking through his hat. The Palestinian Authority can barely deploy 400 trained military men for the daunting mission of bringing thousands of terrorists under control, despite the many years and vast efforts invested by the US to bring an effective Palestinian force up to scratch.

3. Israel would gain substantially if the Palestinian government would finally stand on its own feet and start looking after its citizens, using the billions of dollars donated by the international community to start creating jobs, build roads and infrastructure, provide proper education and medical services, construct industries and regulate commerce.

The Palestinian rulers of the West Bank and Gaza Strip have never been prevented from behaving like proper governments. But while taking receipt of huge donations from all over the world, including Israel, the Palestinian Authority has not put the money into projects for the good of the people – any more than Hamas invested the suitcases of smuggled cash to provide clean streets free of sewage.

So where does the money go? It is diverted to two destinations.

One

- into the pockets of Palestinian Authority and Fatah leaders, whose fabled corrupt practices did much to boost Hamas' credibility with the Palestinian voter.

Two - into the war chests of Palestinian terrorist organizations to fund their arsenals and anti-Israel operations.

Therefore, Palestinian leaders may talk big about creating an independent state but when it comes to the point, their willingness to come out from under the American and Israeli umbrella, leave the gravy train and walk without external crutches is questionable.

Abd Rabbo's colleagues therefore lost no time in disowning his Kosovo vision in case it was accepted. They picked up the comment from some Israeli circles: Let them create another Kosovo; let's see how long they manage to survive on their own.

Copyright 2000-2008 DEBKAFfile. All Rights Reserved.

Deal with Serbia gives Russia victory in 'pipeline war' with EU

Reuters

Published: January 25, 2008

MOSCOW: Russia won the right Friday to direct a major supply route for natural gas through its ally Serbia to Europe, a deal that analysts described as a Kremlin victory in a "pipeline war" with the European Union.

The agreement, signed in the Kremlin before President Vladimir Putin and visiting Serbian leaders, increased Moscow's control over energy supplies to Europe and could undermine a rival EU project.

Strong Russian opposition to independence for the Serbian province of Kosovo was a key bargaining chip in the negotiations that resulted in Serbia joining the project, the South Stream natural gas pipeline. Belgrade also agreed to sell a majority stake in Serbia's state-owned oil monopoly, NIS, to the Russian natural gas giant, Gazprom, at a favorable price.

South Stream is a project worth a projected €10 billion, or \$14.7 billion, organized jointly by Gazprom and the Italian energy giant ENI to carry Siberian gas to Europe via the Black Sea.

"Our close political relations were today converted into economic results," Putin's chosen successor, First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, told reporters. "This is a great breakthrough."

Today in Business with Reuters

Crude oil closes above \$100

Liechtenstein defends its banks in German tax-evasion inquiry

U.S. stocks turn down after oil spikes



with the European Union."

The agreements signed Friday by Tadic and Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica of Serbia, gave Gazprom a 51 percent stake in Serbia's NIS oil and natural gas company, for €400 million and a pledge to invest €500 million more by 2012.

Some analysts described the price as well below market value, giving estimates of €1 billion to €2 billion, although others said the NIS plant needed heavy reconstruction.

NIS dominates the Serbian market, with a monopoly on refining and a network of almost 500 gas stations. The NIS deal gives Gazprom its first refinery outside Russia.

Gazprom gets OMV stake

Gazprom will acquire a stake of 50 percent in OMV's natural gas hub in Austria, giving it greater access to the Continent's customers, under an agreement signed Friday, Bloomberg News reported.

The two will sell to Germany and Italy through the Baumgarten hub, located near a trunk pipeline from west Siberian natural gas fields.

[Home](#) > [Business with Reuters](#)

[Back to top](#)

- E-Mail Article
- Listen to Article
- Printer-Friendly
- 3-Column Format
- Translate
- Share Article
- Text Size - +

Video

[See all videos >](#)



Delta, Northwest reported near deal

A new leader in the global airline industry may be on the horizon as Delta Air Lines and Northwest Airlines ne...

WE UNDERSTAND THAT BOTH PEOPLE AND LICENSE PLATES CAN BE ATTACHED TO CARS.

Responsibility. What's your policy?™

Liberty Mutual

[▶ GET AN AUTO INSURANCE QUOTE TODAY.](#)

Most E-Mailed

24 Hours | 7 Days | 30 Days

1. [With India's new affluence comes the divorce generation](#)
2. [Obama wins support from Japanese town: Obama](#)
3. [In Turkey, is tension about religion? Class rivalry? Or both?](#)
4. [Fidel Castro steps down as president of Cuba](#)
5. [Chinese inflation rises to highest rate in 11 years](#)
6. [Gentlemen, 5 easy steps to living long and well](#)
7. [Kosovo is recognized by some, rebuked by others](#)
8. [Researchers puzzled by rise in midlife suicide rate in U.S.](#)
9. [Credit Suisse jolts investors with \\$2.8 billion write-down](#)
10. [Clinton's struggle vexes feminists](#)

INTERNATIONAL
Herald Tribune [ihrt.com/biz](#)

Global insights from Business with Reuters

More from Reuters' top analysts:
[James Saft: Inside World Markets](#)
[Paul Taylor: Inside Europe](#)
[Wei Gu: Asia Economic Insight](#)
[Alan Wheatley: Inside Asia](#)

Blogs: Managing Globalization

Join the IHT's Daniel Altman in a lively discussion of the day's economic news with an eye on globalization.



Latest News

[IHT.com Home >](#)



Enrique De La Osa/Reuters

Fidel Castro steps down as president of Cuba after long tenure

The announcement put Raúl Castro in position to be selected as the head of state when the National Assembly meets Sunday, cementing the power structure that has run the country since Castro fell ill.

More Headlines

- [Serbs torch border posts in northern Kosovo](#)
- [Chinese inflation rises to highest rate in 11 years](#)
- [With India's new affluence comes the divorce generation](#)

In Opinion: [Taking the responsibility to protect](#)

Ads by Google

Interactive Map of Serbia
Zoom in and out of Serbia Great vacation planning tool
[www.raileurope.com](#)

The Oil "War Machine"
The Beginning of the Last Days of the Age of Oil. New Report.
[EnergyAndCapital.com/Oil_War_Rpt](#)

Pipeline Inspection
Corrosion. Coating. Cathodic Pro Laboratory & on-site Investigation.
[www.matcoinc.com](#)


[Education](#)
[Jobs](#)
[Travel](#)
[Gifts](#)
[Home](#) :: [Military](#) :: [Facilities](#) :: [Army Forts & Camps](#) ::

MILITARY

Camp Bondsteel

The United States agreed to provide a force of approximately 7,000 US

Units

-

Official Homepage

- [Camp Bondsteel](#)

personnel as part of the NATO KFOR to help maintain a capable military force in Kosovo and to ensure the safe return of Kosovo refugees. The US supports KFOR by providing the headquarters and troops for one of the four NATO sectors. The US also provides personnel, units and equipment to other components of the KFOR organization.

Camp Bondsteel [CBS] is quite large: 955 acres or 360,000 square meters. If you were to run the outer perimeter, it is about 7 miles. Bondsteel is located on rolling hills and farmland near the city of Ferizaj/Urosevac. There are two dining facilities at Camp Bondsteel: one in North town and one in South town. The food is very well prepared and there are always a variety of main and side dishes to choose from. There are also salad bars, potato bars and multiple dessert offerings. Due to General Order #1, only alcohol-free beverages are served, but it is better than nothing! There are set hours for meals, but each dining facility also has a 24-hour section for sandwiches, coffee, fruit, and continental breakfast items.

Soldiers live in SEA (Southeast Asia) Huts. There are about 250 SEA Huts for living quarters and [offices](#). The buildings have five living areas that house up to six soldiers each. Each building has one large bathroom with multiple shower and bathroom stalls. A few buildings have smaller bathroom facilities as well. Female and male sea huts are separate. The beds are comfortable and each room has its own heating/air conditioning unit. Soldiers get their own wall-locker for personal storage, and most opt to purchase a small set of plastic bins for additional storage. You can buy almost anything from the PX to make your living space more comfortable, such as TV, DVD players, coffee makers and sound systems. Rooms are routinely inspected to make sure they adhere to fire and safety codes. The best way to improve the safety of your room is to purchase an approved surge protector for European voltage, and plug all of your lights and equipment into that. Adaptors are also available so you can plug your 220-compatible devices, like laptops, into the European outlets.

The Bondsteel PX offers soldiers the latest CDs, DVDs, electronics, souvenirs, clothing, uniforms and everything to make your stay in Kosovo comfortable. With two stories of merchandise, the PX draws lots of multinational soldiers from throughout Kosovo. Also located at CBS are Burger King, Anthony's Pizza and a Cappuccino bar.

There are Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) buildings in North town and South town. The facilities offer billiards, ping-pong, video games, internet access and a video teleconference room. They also offer movies to check out and watch on several TVs in the facilities. There are a total of three gyms at CBS. Two gyms (north and south) have basketball/volleyball courts, exercise equipment, weight machines and free weights. The third gym is strictly a weight room.

There are two chapels on Bondsteel, North and South, and one on Camp Monteith. All Chapels offer services in several denominations. The Laura Bush education center offers a variety of college courses to suit your needs. Want to learn Albanian, Serbian, or German? Improve your computer skills? The variety of college credit and certificate courses is staggering. There are two colleges represented at US base camps: the University of Maryland and Chicago University. For those with easy access to the [Internet](#), online courses are offered too.

The US sector is in southeast Kosovo. Headquarters for US forces is located at Camp Bondsteel, built on 750 acres of former farmland near Urosevac. Bondsteel has about a 6-mile perimeter. The 1,000-acre camp was built from the ground up on a former field. Basecamps Bondsteel and Monteith were established in June 1999 in Kosovo to be used as staging points for the bulk of US forces stationed in the Multi National Brigade-East. About 4,000 US service members were stationed at Camp Bondsteel in the farm fields near Urosevac. and another 2,000 were at Camp Monteith. near Gnilane. Both camps are named after medal of honor recipients. Army

Staff Sgt. James L. Bondsteel, honored for heroism in Vietnam, and Army 1st Lt. Jimmie W. Montieth Jr, honored for heroism in France during World War II. Camp Able Sentry, located near the Skopje Airport, Macedonia, serves as a point of entry for supplies and personnel into Kosovo. Another 500 Americans support the operation from Camp Able Sentry in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The US contingent is known as Task Force Falcon. There are a number of locations within Kosovo, other than the base camps, at which US soldiers maintain a presence.

US forces entered Kosovo in June 1999 following NATO Operation Allied Force. Since then, military officials worked to rapidly improve service members' quality of life. At the outset, planners wanted to use the lessons learned in Bosnia and convinced decision makers to reach base-camp "end state" as quickly as possible. Because of uncertainty about the Bosnian mission's duration, when the Army moved across the Sava River into Bosnia in 1995, soldiers were housed first in tents – in the winter! Only years later were they moved to semipermanent Southeast Asia (SEA) huts (a theater-of-operations design that first made its debut in Vietnam) on base camp. Engineer planners knew it was much more cost effective to forego this gradual approach in Kosovo in favor of building end-state SEA huts right away, and operational commanders agreed with this approach.

In contrast to the Bosnia peacekeeping mission where troops lived in tents for many months before moving into hardened structures, DoD decided to erect the SEA huts from the start. The single-story SEA hut wooden structures were first used in Southeast Asia and then in Bosnia. The military redesigned the SEA huts specifically for Kosovo. Each wooden structure has a male and a female latrine and six rooms housing six service members each. The huts have heat, hot water, air conditioning, plumbing, electricity and [telephones](#).

Effective force protection is critical for Camp Bondsteel, which is situated on a series of rolling hills with nearby woods on several boundaries. After the 9th Engineer Battalion (Mechanized) used its armored combat earthmovers to create a hasty perimeter, the ECB(H) and Brown & Root Services Corporation jointly completed a 2.5-meter-high earthen berm around the entire perimeter. They removed trees to allow sufficient fields of fire and built nine wooden guard towers around the perimeter. Due to soil, pests, and line-of-sight requirements, the battalion modified the towers by placing each on a concrete pad and adding safer and more access entrance ladders. Five of the nine towers were placed on two MILVANS welded together to allow greater visibility. The added elevation enables soldiers to view the area from 18 feet aboveground rather than from the usual eight feet.

Because of the topography and population of the camp, it eventually had two independently serviced life-support areas, with semipermanent wooden buildings known as Davidson-style Southeast Asian huts (SEA huts) (see article). The battalion also created SOCCE huts (modified for the Special Operations Command and Control Element) and officer/senior noncommissioned officer SEA huts that have 10 rooms with separate latrine facilities for each pair of rooms.

The 94th ECB(H) created Camp Bondsteel's road system, which was critical to alleviate blinding dust storms and enable mobility. Torrential rains made the clay soil impassable. They built the hardstand for the camp's hospital, created the road to the military and civilian materials yard, and laid a double-base surface of bitumen on the camp's eastern access road. The battalion upgraded the briefing room and other areas throughout Task Force Falcon's command center. It also created a [storage system](#) for confiscated weapons and built floors for 200 tents, so soldiers would be out of the mud while SEA huts were being constructed.

To create life-support areas, the 94th ECB(H) transformed the topography of Camp Bondsteel to maximize use of the ground. The primary earthmoving mission, dubbed Operation Wolverine Mountain after the battalion's mascot, required that more than 150,000 cubic meters of earth be moved and redistributed. That is equivalent to the area of one football field that is 100 feet deep. To save time, the battalion lowered the two major hills in Camp Bondsteel and simultaneously filled the large ravine between them. Combining the efforts of all four organic companies, the battalion worked two shifts totaling 20 hours per day. At times twelve 621B scrapers, eight D7G dozers, three 130G graders, and six vibratory and sheepsfoot compactors operated on the hills. In 30 days, the battalion widened the life-support areas, created areas for the camp's wash rack and more than half of the camp's motor pools, and built a foundation for the northern access road.

Simultaneously, the battalion created the hardstand for the American logistical supply support activity. This 600- by 160-meter area, which required 70,000 cubic meters of earthen cut-and-fill operations, will eventually include a chapel, a morale and welfare tent, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, and a barbershop. Equipment and operators from nine Wolverine platoons worked around the clock to complete the project.

Shortly after site preparation began at Camp Bondsteel, a 36-inch natural-gas pipeline was discovered under the camp – right where we wanted to make a 3-foot cut! It was easier to redesign the camp around the pipeline than dig it out, and that's why today "no-construction" strip of land runs northwest to southeast among the SEA huts. The total absence of civilian sewage-treatment facilities in Kosovo forced early diversion of critical horizontal equipment to build sewage lagoons. This project is environmentally critical since there were no sewage-treatment plants in Kosovo, and local people (including those serving military units) emptied raw sewage into streams. The lagoon is a technically challenging mission that requires all four of the 200- by 300-meter areas to have depth deviation from final design grade of no more than 3 inches. Led by the 535th and 568th Engineer Companies (CSE), the first area completed has a maximum deviation of only two inches across its entire 60,000-square-meter area.

Camp Bondsteel has an improved detention facility, with a 250 by 350 foot temporary structure composed of tents with plywood sidewalls and floors, electricity, heat, and lights. The project also includes a separate shower point and [security](#) measures - perimeter fencing, triple-standard concertina wire, locking gates, and an upgraded guard tower. The facility replaced an interim holding cell at Camp Bondsteel and provides space for persons detained in incidents throughout the US sector in Kosovo.

In August 1999 the 9th Combat Engineer Battalion (Mechanized) at Camp Bondsteel altered the southwest perimeter at Camp Bondsteel to make room for the new helicopter landing zone. Engineers reworked triple-standard concertina wire to pull it out farther from the area targeted for landings. To make this change to the perimeter, engineers first had to cut down several trees both to make room and to afford proper line of sight from the guard tower. They worked with Civil Affairs to coordinate the tree removal with local

villagers whose property adjoins the area.

In August 1999 the helicopter landing area used since Camp Bondsteel opened moved from the command operations area to a site on the post's south perimeter. Five new helipads made of AM2 aluminum matting handled helicopter landings for a few months until expanded aviation area was completed with 52 helipads. The 94th Engineer Battalion also completed separate areas for landing slir loads and Chinooks (CH47s). The vacated landing site allowed engineers to expand the main access road and prepare the ground erecting four clamshells, which are temporary frame-and-fabric structures. The plan was to transition all aircraft from Camp Able Sentry, Macedonia, to Camp Bondsteel as a home base.



Camp Bondsteel, 15 June 1999



Camp Bondsteel, 15 October 1999



Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo
March 2000



[Advertise with Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [GlobalSecurity.org In the News](#) | [Internships](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Privacy](#)

[Copyright](#) © 2000-2008 GlobalSecurity.org All rights reserved.

Site maintained by: [John Pike](#)

Page last modified: 20-10-2006 22:50:29 ZULU



[Home](#) [News](#) [Sport](#) [Radio](#) [TV](#) [Weather](#) [Languages](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

UK version **International version** | [About the versions](#)

[Low graphics](#) | [Accessibility help](#)



One-Minute World News

News services
Your news when you want it



[News Front Page](#)



[Africa](#)

[Americas](#)

[Asia-Pacific](#)

[Europe](#)

[Middle East](#)

[South Asia](#)

[UK](#)

[Business](#)

[Health](#)

[Science/Nature](#)

[Technology](#)

[Entertainment](#)

[Also in the news](#)

[Video and Audio](#)

[Have Your Say](#)

[In Pictures](#)

[Country Profiles](#)

[Special Reports](#)

RELATED BBC SITES

[SPORT](#)

[WEATHER](#)

[ON THIS DAY](#)

[EDITORS' BLOG](#)

LANGUAGES

Last Updated: Saturday, 23 February 2008, 09:52 GMT

Serbs enact plan to sabotage Kosovo

By Nick Thorpe
BBC News, Pristina

One week since the declaration of independence, Serb authorities in north-western Kosovo are pushing hard to eradicate all institutions with any connection to the new state.



Serbs have turned against those who recognise the new Kosovo

And they are telling a cautious and already weakened UN mission, in its last months in office, that it should allow this - or face dire consequences.

There is genuine Serb grief over the loss of Kosovo, but there is also a carefully calibrated plan to win important parts of it back, and to sabotage Kosovo as an independent state.

The tools available include violence against property - grenades thrown at UN, EU, and Kosovan justice ministry buildings, and the carefully planned and executed burning down of two border and customs posts on 19 February.

[See a map of Kosovo's ethnic breakdown](#)

Privately, Serb leaders in the north say this is just the beginning.

United Serb front

The UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is awaiting instructions from the UN secretary general in New York, and from the so-called "Contact Group" - the US, UK, Germany, France, Russia, the European Commission - as well as the new EU mission in Kosovo, the International Civilian Office (ICO).

UNMIK is hesitating. The line **The aim is to portray**

VIDEO AND AUDIO NEWS

Footage of a burning crossing point on the border

KOSOVO INDEPENDENCE

KEY STORIES

- [US starts evacuation from Serbia](#)
- [Nato troops close Kosovo border](#)
- [Kosovo declares independence](#)
- [In quotes: Leaders' reaction](#)

FEATURES AND ANALYSIS



Diplomatic tussle
Countries delay recognition amid separatism fears

- [Serbia faces crossroads](#)
- [Viewpoint: EU's toughest mission](#)
- [Could Balkan break-up continue?](#)
- [UK troop challenge](#)
- ['Dream come true'](#)
- [East-West divide](#)
- [Legal furore](#)

[Hopes for stability](#)

BACKGROUND



Vanished name
From kingdom to Kosovo split in 80 years

- [Q&A: Kosovo's future](#)
- [Your memories of a conflict](#)
- [Flashback to Kosovo's war](#)

ARCHIVE SPECIAL REPORTS

- [2000: An uneasy peace](#)
- [1999: Nato strikes timeline](#)

HAVE YOUR SAY

- [Should Kosovo be recognised?](#)
- [Serb and Albanian readers' views](#)

VIDEO AND AUDIO

from New York is that the UN is "status-neutral" - neither recognising nor opposing an independent Kosovo.

Kosovo as a state of criminals

Slobodan Samardzic
Minister for Kosovo,
Serbian government

Serbs in the north-west say they have nothing against UNMIK continuing its work there - provided it does nothing to nurture or protect Kosovan institutions.

A united Serb front, made up of hard-line Serb leaders, is trying to dictate policy to the UN.

As in Croatia and Bosnia in the 1990s, the UN is caught on the horns of a dilemma - whether or not to stand up to radical Serb nationalism. The precedents are not good.

New enemy

What is different about Serb nationalism today, compared with the 1990s, is that for the moment its enemy is not the other nations of the Balkans.

The enemy is instead those countries which recognise an independent Kosovo.

The attacks on foreign embassies in Belgrade and on UN property in Kosovo confirm this.

There are several thousand ethnic Albanians and other minorities living among about 40,000 Serbs in northern Kosovo.



Police were not guarding the US embassy at the time of the attack

Buses still run each day, with a police escort, taking them to work places and schools in the south.

Some also cross by a footbridge over the River Ibar. Despite the growth in tension in the north, there have been no atrocities against them.

The following are points of contention:

Customs posts

Serb leaders say they will not tolerate their continued operation, as the institutions of a sovereign state.

Slobodan Samardzic, the minister for Kosovo in the Serbian government, described their destruction this week by mobs as "legitimate".

Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica is not sponsoring paramilitaries today, as the government did during the 1990s, but they are sponsoring violence



Northern Kosovo is a haven for organised crime and smuggling

WATCH [Independence declared](#)

RELATED INTERNET LINKS

[White House](#)
[Serbian government](#)
[UN mission \(UNMIK\)](#)
[Organisation for Security and Co-operation](#)

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external internet sites

TOP EUROPE STORIES

[Iraq warns Turkey over incursion](#)
[Armenian leader warns protesters](#)
[French head meets hostage family](#)

 [News feeds](#)

MOST POPULAR STORIES NOW

[MOST E-MAILED](#) [MOST READ](#)

[Antarctic glaciers surge to ocean](#)
[Lohan and Murphy dominate Razzies](#)
[Wannabe first daughters woo youth vote](#)
[Iraq warns Turkey over incursion](#)
[Estonia's view of Kremlin 'meddling'](#)

[Most popular now, in detail](#)

against UN and Kosovan government property.

Interestingly, Serbian customs posts just across the border were also torched.

Northern Kosovo is a haven for organised crime, with no number plates on cars, and major smuggling operations.

"The aim is to portray Kosovo as a state of criminals," Mr Samardzic says.

The Kosovo Police Service (KPS)

The KPS is 7,200-strong and multi-ethnic. About 10% of its officers are Serbs.

In much of the country, there are still multi-ethnic patrols, but no longer in the north-west. Albanian KPS officers have been withdrawn for safety reasons.

Serb KPS officers are under huge pressure from hard-liners, with threats to their homes and family members.



The River Ibar could form a new frontier between Serbia and Kosovo

They remain in uniform, but warn they will quit if forced to take orders from KPS commanders in Pristina. They now only accept orders from UNMIK police.

The court and prison in Mitrovica

The Serbs are demanding that Albanian staff who normally work there should not be allowed to return.

There are daily demonstrations by pre-1999 staff demanding their jobs back.

“ If independence is undermined, a violent Albanian response would become more likely

”

They say they will only accept UNMIK control, not Pristina control.

The International Civilian Office

The ICO building is close to the main KPS police station in northern Mitrovica. The Serbs say they will not tolerate it.

The International Civilian Representative, Pieter Feith, has advocated a gradual approach to winning over such implacable opposition.

But he has also hinted that Belgrade's progress towards the EU might in future become conditional on how they and the Kosovan Serbs treat the EU mission.

This is the dilemma facing



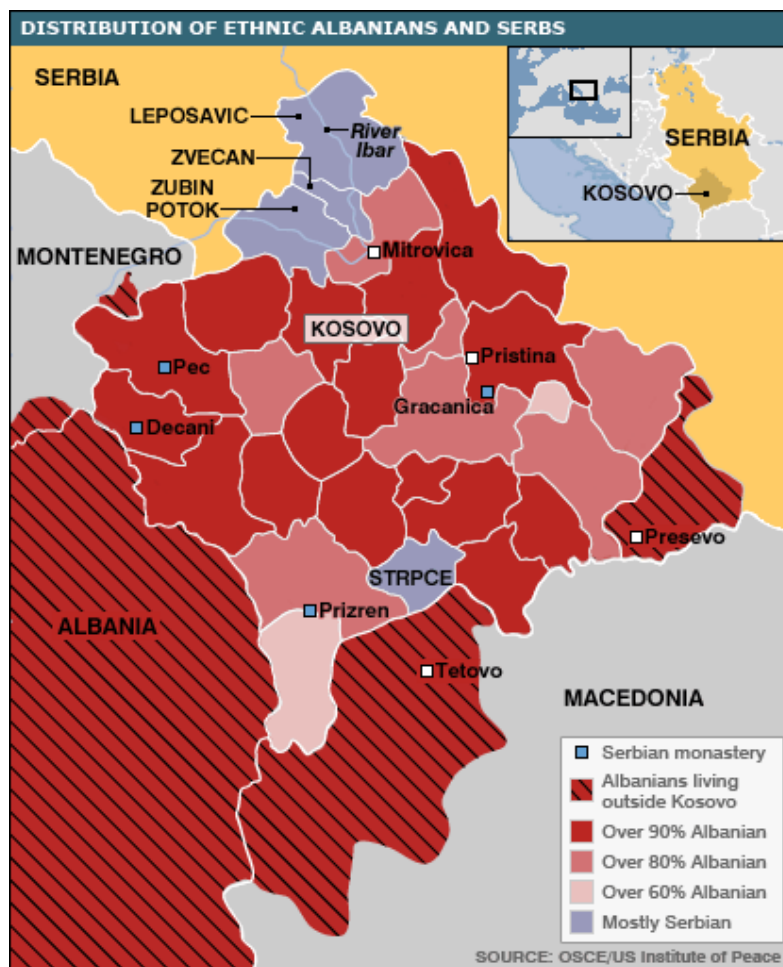
UNMIK - if they stand firm, and call in Nato ground support, they will lose their neutral status and become parties to the conflict.

If they cave in, the Serbs will have achieved the de facto partition of Kosovo, along the line of the Ibar.

If that is then combined with the strengthened operation of parallel Serb institutions in enclaves elsewhere in Kosovo, Kosovan independence would then begin to look very patchy indeed.

If independence is undermined, a violent Albanian response would become more likely.

This may also be the Belgrade government's hope, as this would discredit Pristina's position in the eyes of the international community.



[Back to link](#)

[E-mail this to a friend](#)

[Printable version](#)

Bookmark with:

[What are these?](#)

[Delicious](#)

[Digg](#)

[reddit](#)

[Facebook](#)

[StumbleUpon](#)

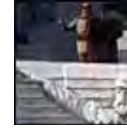
FEATURES, VIEWS, ANALYSIS



Smaller neighbour
Why the Estonian president refuses to speak Russian



Campaigning kids
The would-be first daughters wooing America's youth vote



Following Fidel
Will Raul Castro take a step into his big brother's shoes?

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

[E-mail news](#)

[Mobiles](#)

[Alerts](#)

[News feeds](#)

[Podcasts](#)

MMVIII

Most Popular Now | 23,871 people are reading stories on the site right now.

[Back to top](#) ^^

[Help](#) | [Privacy and cookies policy](#) | [News sources](#) | [About the BBC](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Advertise with us](#)

Russia could use force in Kosovo

Russia's ambassador to Nato, Dmitry Rogozin, has warned that Russia could use military force if the Kosovo independence dispute escalates.

"If the EU develops a unified position or if Nato exceeds its mandate set by the UN, then these organisations will be in conflict with the UN," he said.

In that case Russia would "proceed on the basis that in order to be respected we need to use brute force", he said.

Many EU members have recognised Kosovo, but several oppose recognition.

Russia, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, backs Serbia, which has condemned the independence declaration issued by the Kosovo parliament on 17 February.

On Tuesday members of the Serb minority in Kosovo attacked two border posts staffed by UN personnel and Kosovo police.

The violence led the Nato troops in Kosovo - known as K-For - to reinforce the border with Serbia.

Kosovo's majority ethnic Albanians are following a plan drawn up by UN special envoy Martti Ahtisaari for "supervised independence", which was rejected by Serbia.

Russian media outcry

The EU will soon deploy 2,000 officials to strengthen law and order in Kosovo, which has a population of about two million. Russia argues that the mission has no legal basis.

There has been a furious reaction in some Russian media to Kosovo's declaration of independence.

A commentary in the Vesti Plus analytical programme, on state-run television, called the assassinated former Serbian Prime Minister, Zoran Djindjic, a Western puppet who had "received a well-deserved bullet".

It said Djindjic had sold national heroes to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

The programme concluded that Serbia - and not only Serbia - must now decide whether to acquiesce in what has happened, or resist.

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/7258801.stm>

Published: 2008/02/22 13:01:35 GMT

© BBC MMVIII



NEW We now have lower prices! Try us for FREE [Click here](#)

Blues Brothers

Join Frank Lampard and Gianluca Vialli in the Game podcast

TIMES ONLINE

NEWS COMMENT BUSINESS SPORT LIFE & STYLE ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

COLUMNISTS LETTERS OBITUARIES BLOGS CARTOON FAITH RELATED REPORTS

Where am I? Home Comment **Leading Article**

From The Times

February 23, 2008

Balkan Belligerence

Serbia must come to terms with Milosevic's legacy

America and other Western nations issued a sharp rebuke to the Serbian Government yesterday, after the worst riots in Belgrade since the fall of Milosevic led to the burning of the US Embassy and attacks on those belonging to Britain, Germany, Croatia and Turkey. The European Union promptly froze all further discussion of a new partnership with Serbia until the situation had calmed down, and US missions across the Balkans were put on high alert. The riots, prompted by anger at the West's recognition of Kosovo's independence, were blamed by the Serbian authorities on "hooligan elements", but were clearly incited by nationalist politicians. Vojislav Kostunica, the Prime Minister, had earlier called a rally against independence a "magnificent" demonstration of Serb feeling.

Russia, which has fiercely opposed the independence declaration, blamed the West for not anticipating the reaction. Its envoy to Nato said in frustration that Moscow might have to turn to "brute military force" to make itself heard if Nato overstepped its authority in Kosovo. Much of this is probably bluff. Western governments anticipated trouble, must remain on alert in the Balkans and will need to hold their nerve in the coming weeks. What matters is that the Serbian Army remains in barracks, and that Russia has made it clear it would not become involved in any armed conflict over the breakaway province.

The flashpoint is in Kosovo itself. Thousands of Kosovan Serbs, swelled by kinsmen from across the border, clashed with United Nations police yesterday in Mitrovica, the main town in the three northern Kosovo provinces where most of the 100,000 ethnic Serbs live. They are hoping to thwart any attempts by the Albanian majority Government in Pristina to exercise authority over them, swearing continued allegiance still to Belgrade. Their case may indeed find support not only in Russia: those European Union countries worried by the Kosovan precedent may argue that if the province's independence is accepted as a special case, the logic of the Serb provinces joining Serbia should also be accepted.

Such arguments may challenge international lawyers; in practice, they are wholly impractical. To reopen the debate about the status of Kosovo risks unravelling the decision reached after months of consultation by the EU special negotiator. Nato's 16,000 peacekeepers cannot be asked to police Pristina's inevitable attempts to stop the Serb provinces' secession. Of course, it would have been better had Kosovo's status been decided immediately after the defeat of the Serb forces in 1999. The link between Milosevic's repression and Albanian rejection of rule by Belgrade would have been clearer; and the consequences of their disastrous nationalist adventurism would have been easier for the chastened Serbs to accept. But that moment has passed.

Now the West must understand Serb petulance and attempt to forestall a further descent into nationalist isolationism. EU engagement of Serbia will bring the political and economic changes that, especially for a frustrated younger generation, can make the loss of the historic sites less painful. Within an EU framework, national boundaries become less important and less divisive. As anger subsides, Serbs and Kosovans may resume



“Why are the public deemed unfit to decide the significance of a piece of public art?” Michael Gove

OUR PAPERS AUDIO / VIDEO JOBS & CLASSIFIEDS

[MY PROFILE](#) | [SHOP](#) | [SITEMAP](#)

[MOST READ](#) | [MOST COMMENTED](#) | [MOST CURIOUS](#)

TODAY

Hillary Clinton hints at defeat after being...
US athletes plan to boycott Olympic food
Obama: is America ready for this dangerous...
Britain needs DNA database, says officer who...

TOOLS AND SERVICES

Credit Clinic
Restaurant Booking
Encounters
Business City Guides
Financial Brochures
Car Route Planner
Books

Times Letters

Letters for publication on the letters page of *The Times* should be emailed [here](#)

Sunday Times Letters

Letters for publication on the letters page of *The Sunday Times* should be emailed [here](#)

FEEDBACK



Sally Baker

Our Feedback Editor answers your queries

HIDE THE FORM

HAVE YOUR SAY

* Your View

1000 characters left

* Name

* Email

* Town / City

Country / State

* Required Field

Remember me

[Terms and conditions](#)

SUBMIT

[PRINT](#)

[EMAIL](#)

[POST TO DELICIOUS](#)

[POST TO FARK](#)

[POST TO YAHOO!](#)

[POST TO DIGG](#)

ALSO IN LEADING ARTICLE

- [Slimmer and Smarter](#)
- [Balkan Belligerence](#)
- [Cafe Society](#)

ALSO IN COMMENT

- [Charities and the law](#)

[Ads by Google](#)

[Serbia Ringtones](#)

Send Complimentary Ringtones to your cell.
BestTones4U.net

[Body of Evidence on truTV](#)

Go inside the mind of a killer. All New Episodes
Saturdays @9pm
www.truTV.com

[Software Expert Witness](#)

Testified more than 25 times on computer systems and software
ComputerExpertWitness.com



CLASSIFIEDS

CARS JOBS

PROPERTY TRAVEL

HOLIDAYS

Visit Australia & Singapore with Singapore Airlines

Singapore Airlines to Australia from £430 + £255 tax
Stopovers from £20pp
Luxury Queensland escape from £215

Leisure Breaks from only £59.95 per room

Includes Accommodation, 3 Course Evening Meal, Full English Breakfast and FREE ROOM UPGRADE!

Continental Airlines Vacation

Business First SALE
Save up to 50%

Travel Insurance

Great travel insurance deals online

Search for more holidays

Search Ad Reference:

SEARCH

Where am I? Home Comment **Leading Article**

CONTACT US | BACK TO TOP

[NEWS](#) | [COMMENT](#) | [BUSINESS](#) | [SPORT](#) | [LIFE & STYLE](#) | [ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT](#) |

SEARCH

Contact our [advertising team](#) for advertising and sponsorship in Times Online, The Times and The Sunday Times. Search [globrix.com](#) to buy or rent UK property.
© Copyright 2008 Times Newspapers Ltd.

This service is provided on Times Newspapers' [standard Terms and Conditions](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#). To inquire about a licence to reproduce material from Times Online, The Times or The Sunday Times, click [here](#). This website is published by a member of the News International Group. News International Limited, 1 Virginia St, London E 98 1XY, is the holding company for the News International group and is registered in England No 81701. VAT number GB 243 8054 69.



We



to beat your existing business current account deal



Terms & Conditions Apply

United Press International

100 YEARS OF JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE



Energy - Analysis

Analysis: Europe's pipeline war

Published: Feb. 5, 2008 at 7:42 PM

By STEFAN NICOLA

UPI Energy Correspondent

BERLIN, Feb. 5 (UPI) --

The European Union and Russia are battling over the future of a pipeline aimed at diversifying Europe's energy imports.

The so-called Nabucco pipeline, first planned in 2004, would transport natural gas to Austria from the Caspian region via Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary. Stretching more than 2,000 miles, it will run from Erzurum, Turkey, to Baumgarten an der March, a major natural gas hub in Austria. Thus, Nabucco could be supplied with gas from Iran, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Egypt and Syria.

The EU and the United States back the project because it represents a diversion from the current methods of importing natural gas solely from Russia.

Yet Russia has presented its own pipeline project: South Stream. The 550-mile, \$15 billion South Stream pipeline would run under the Black Sea from Russia to Bulgaria, where it could branch off in several directions. The memorandum of understanding to build South Stream was signed in Rome in June 2007 by officials from Italy's Eni and Russia's Gazprom.

Since the beginning of the year, Russia has taken aggressive steps to have other partners join the South Stream project.

On Jan. 18, Bulgaria joined South Stream through its state-owned company Bulgargaz; European officials are especially irritated by the fact Bulgaria, a NATO and very recent EU member, received offers to join Nabucco but chose the Russian project instead. A week later, Serbia and Russia signed an agreement to route a northern branch of South Stream through Serbia. The accord also gave Gazprom a 51-percent stake in NIS, the Serbian oil monopolist, for an undisclosed price.

The pipeline, which is aimed at bringing Siberian gas to southern Europe, branches off in Bulgaria, with a southern spur supplying Greece and southern Italy and a northern branch running through Romania and Serbia toward northern Italy.

The project undermines the hopes for the prospective U.S.- and EU-backed Nabucco pipeline designed to ease Europe's reliance on Russia. Ever since Russia temporarily shut gas to Ukraine until it agreed to pay higher prices, Europe has been looking to diversify its energy imports. However, Nabucco has run into problems because Iran and Syria remain politically unstable, and the Central Asian countries have promised huge amounts of gas to China as well as Russia. Turkmenistan agreed to supply Gazprom with 50 billion cubic meters per year, along with a contract to build a pipeline to China, scheduled to go into operation in 2009, to provide 30 billion cubic meters annually. While Turkmenistan says it can provide the extra 30 billion cubic meters for Nabucco, observers have in the past doubted they can shoulder the export burden.

A senior Russian official said Wednesday in Berlin the latest deals with Bulgaria and Serbia and the limited gas in Central Asia render Nabucco a project without a future.

"This is the death of Nabucco," Duma Deputy Speaker Valery Yazev said last week in Berlin. "I don't think there will be gas left for another pipeline."

Europe, however, is not willing to surrender just yet.

"Nabucco is far away from being handed the final blow," Reinhard Mitschek, the head of the Nabucco consortium, told Austrian newspaper Die Presse. "Besides RWE, further interested parties are knocking at our doors. They want to join the project because it has a lot of future potential," he said.

Nabucco, held by Romania's Transgaz, Bulgaria's Bulgargaz, Austria's OMV, Turkey's Botas and MOL, on Tuesday took on a sixth partner, Germany's RWE, forming a powerful team that may be joined soon by France's Gaz de France.

"We believe that both RWE and Gaz de France represent a high additional value to the Nabucco project that proved its need for very strong economic and political support from the European companies and governments," Benjamin Lakatos, director of MOL Gas Midstream, said in a statement.

© 2008 United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

This material may not be reproduced, redistributed, or manipulated in any form.

the independent florida

alligator

Opinion > Letters To The Editor

Friday, February 22, 2008

U.S. should not have recognized Kosovo

Print Page

By Christopher Jurich, 4BA

Friday, February 22, 2008 12:32 AM EST

I am Serbian-American, but I speak as an American, not as a Serb, when I say America and other Western nations have made a grave mistake supporting the independence of Kosovo. Not only is Kosovo illegal under international law, but the U.S. is also helping establish a dangerous Islamic state in the heart of Europe as we fight the war on terror.

The Kosovo Liberation Army that fought the regime of Slobodan Milosevic was hailed as a heroic force by the American media, but nothing could be further from the truth. A recent Washington Times article stated the "KLA was among the first international terrorist groups linked to al-Qaida in the late 1990s. Western intelligence agencies observed its members training at al-Qaida terror camps a decade ago and more."

Just as America supported the mujahedeen in Afghanistan during the 80s and paid dearly for it, I fear the same may happen with Kosovo. Former members of the KLA are now in the highest positions in the new government of Kosovo. Kosovo is extremely poor, with 50 percent unemployment and an illegal sex and drug trade. This hotbed of discontent lends itself to terrorism. Kosovo is pro-West now, but as riots in 2004 showed, Albanians were quick to turn on the NATO troops there to protect them.

Serbians and Americans are on the same side in the war on terror. An independent Kosovo will allow former KLA members now in government to oppress the Christian Serbian minority.

The Independent Florida Alligator

[X] CLOSE WINDOW

Tuesday, 19 February 2008



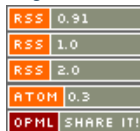
Home

Main Menu

Home
 News
 News Headline
 Contact Us
 Search
 New Media Alliance
 Site Map
 About Us
 Copyright
 Submit Opt-Ed
 Letters to the editor
 Write The Editor
 Link To Us
 Links

NMA-Staff-Writers

Bob Parks
 Erik Rush
 Thomas Lindaman
 Daniel Clark
 Christopher G. Adamo
 Sher Zieve
 Carey Roberts
 Nancy Salvato
 Robert E. Meyer
 Thomas E. Brewton
 Warner Todd Huston
 Ken Marrero
 Frank Hyland

Syndicate**Archives**

January 2008

February 2008

**There's Something Rotten in Kosovo**

Tuesday, 19 February 2008

There's Something Rotten in Kosovo

By Thomas Lindaman

Today is a day of celebration in Kosovo, as the ethnic Albanians declared independence from Kosovo this past weekend. World reaction has been mixed. Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States have all supported the move towards independence, while Russia, China, and Spain have all rejected it. That should make us feel pretty good that we're on the right side of this situation, right?



Not so much, at least not in my case.

It wasn't so long ago that American-lead NATO forces went into Kosovo to try to drive out Serbians who were accused of "ethnic cleansing" and other atrocities against the ethnic Albanians there. Our actions lead to Serbian troops being driven out of Kosovo and the eventual unseating of Slobodan Milosevic. At the time, it was generally thought that we were the good guys, a sentiment many share today when (or rather if) they remember the Kosovo situation.

There's one tiny problem with that line of thinking, however. It doesn't quite match up with reality. One of the justifications given for going into Kosovo was the existence of mass graves, proving that the Serbs were killing the Albanians. Yet, when journalists and others went to Kosovo to review the magnitude of the "ethnic cleansing," they didn't find any of the mass graves that we said were there. In fact, two American journalists came back and admitted that they moved what few bodies were there to give the impression that there were more bodies than there actually were.

So, if there weren't any mass graves as had been thought, why would American forces have been put into harm's way? You can thank Bill Clinton for that. Conventional wisdom has it that we went into Kosovo to divert attention away from impeachment proceedings pertaining to the Monica Lewinsky affair (if you'll pardon the expression), but it's only part of the equation. There was a story from a major news magazine from January 1998 that showed Clinton as obsessed with his legacy, including a statement to the effect that he wanted to go to war so he could be seen as a great President.

Also, Kosovo gave Clinton a chance to appear to be a world leader instead of a fluke. At NATO's 50th anniversary celebration, it's been reported that the reaction of world leaders to Clinton was rather cold, as though they didn't really consider him to be that great. Consider, also, that it was European countries who wanted NATO to go into Kosovo in the first place, accusing Milosevic of being "the next Hitler." With that, Clinton had the perfect scenario to take action. Kosovo allowed Clinton to go to war, impress the Europeans, and push aside his impeachment.

Yet, as international as Clinton wanted to be, he was woefully inept on the world stage, especially when it came to handling the Middle East and international terrorism. Whether it was treating the first World Trade Center bombing as a criminal affair instead of a matter of national security or forcing Secretary of State Madeline Albright down the throats of Middle Eastern countries, Clinton's foreign policy was not about doing what was right for the country, but what was right for him personally. This short-sighted approach to policy made it possible for our actions to inadvertently help al Qaeda, but I'll talk about that later.

There are other troubling aspects to our Kosovo exercise that didn't get as much media play as others. For example, Slobodan Milosevic was detained at an airport in Europe in January 1999 and was not allowed to speak to his lawyer. America knew it happened and allowed it to occur without so much as a raised eyebrow. From a country that fought a war or two to protect the rights of individuals, this is utterly disgusting.

News Correspondents

Foreign News Report
 Jim Kouri CPP
 Commentary

Alan Caruba
 Chuck Baldwin
 Dan Howard
 Frosty Wooldridge
 John LeBoutillier
 John W. Lillpop
 John W. Whitehead
 Michael W. Cutler
 Guest Authors

Who's Online

We have 2 guests online

First:
 Last:
 Email:
 Zip:

JOIN RON!



Tim Rafferty: RidersUSA Will Host An Immigration 101 Educational Event For The Family in Mesa, AZ Find out about the educational seminar discussing the impact of legal immigratio...

Guzzardi Talks Primaries & Where Hillary, Obama, Romney, McCain & Paul Stand on Immigration Discover where the remaining candidates are on enforcing the border from one of ...

Then, there's the whole "ethnic cleansing" and mass graves talk. Whenever people mention Kosovo, one of the points that keeps coming up is how Milosevic was killing Albanians in mass graves. Yet, when journalists and investigators went to Kosovo, they couldn't find any mass graves. Furthermore, two American journalists came back and said they moved bodies for photographs to give the impression that there were more bodies in the graves than there were.

But at least we brought peace and stability to the region after we drove out the Serbs, right? Nope. As soon as we drove out the Serbs, the same rapes, murders, and "ethnic cleansing" went on as before, this time with the Albanians doing it. And with NATO troops doing nothing to stop it. A story that came out after we "won" in Kosovo showed that Serbs pelted NATO troops with rocks and snowballs to protest how badly they were now being treated by the Albanians.

I don't bring up this information to bash Clinton's actions. Instead, I do it to establish a pattern that I've seen come up time and time again in discussing Kosovo with others, a pattern that is again at work with Kosovo's declaration of independence. We don't have the whole story because no one's bothering to do the digging to find it out. Oh, we have a story, but it's one that has been scrubbed for public consumption and has a ton of lies designed to keep our attention away from the truth.

Here's a statistic that probably won't make the evening news and hasn't even been referenced in the foreign press. Most of the ethnic Albanians are Muslim. The Serbs, on the other hand, are predominantly Christian. Now, consider the fact that Kosovo has a 90-10 split in favor of the Albanians. We're supposed to believe the Serbs were the ones who were oppressing the Albanians?

But let's bring this discussion into the current day. Although Kosovo has said it will make concessions for the Serbs in Kosovo, I can't help but think the old animosity will rear its ugly head as soon as nobody's looking, just like it did after the US bailed out of Kosovo with a "victory." The fighting between these two groups have been going on for centuries, and the Albanians declaring independence from Serbia won't change that. I sincerely hope I'm wrong in that analysis, but I don't think I am.

Now, consider the fact I mentioned earlier about the Albanians being mostly Muslim for a moment. What isn't so well known by many Americans is that al Qaeda had connections in Kosovo when we were there in the 90s. In fact, Kosovo was a major hub for drug running for al Qaeda. By running out the Serbs, who were fighting to shut down al Qaeda's drug trade, we helped the terrorists who came after us on our soil, in Afghanistan, and in Iraq. And it's a good bet that there are some Albanians who will be more than happy to give our enemies safe haven, which may give them an ideal spot to hit Eastern Europe, where some of our staunches allies in the world right now are.

And France, Germany, England, and America don't even see it.

One of the reasons we may not see the danger just yet is our attachment to the concept of independence. Americans value freedom and independence like no other country in the world because we were founded on the notion of man being free. So, when a country declares independence, we feel our chests swell a bit because we're reminded of what makes America great. However, we should not let these feelings cloud our judgment, as they appear to have done with us. Whether it's optimism, ignorance, or suspension of disbelief at work matters not. What matters is that we look at Kosovo's independence with from as wide a perspective as possible.

As much as I like independence, I also understand the costs involved. Let's say for example that Kosovo is allowed to be independent, but things start to go wrong for them, like their economy doesn't take off like expected. When you have a number of negative experiences without much to speak of on the positive side, people will look to anyone who will deliver hope and success. It happened in the former Soviet Union. It happened in Germany after World War I. It's happening in America right now. And it may happen in Kosovo. In each of the cases I mentioned (save for America right now because the jury's still out on it), the change lead to something catastrophic. Whether Kosovo winds up the same way is yet to be seen, but given what we've seen out of Kosovo in the past decade, I can't say I'm overly optimistic.

For the sake of the world, I pray I'm wrong.

Thomas Lindaman is a Staff Writer for the New Media Alliance, Inc. and NewsBull.com. The New Media Alliance is a non-profit (501c3) national coalition of writers, journalists and grass-roots media outlets. He is also Publisher of CommonConservative.com.

[Thomas Lindaman Authors Page and Archives](#)

The opinions expressed in this column represent those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions, views, or philosophy of Borderfire Report.
[New Media Alliance Television](#)

New Media Alliance Blogs



» No Comments

There are no comments up to now.

» Post Comment

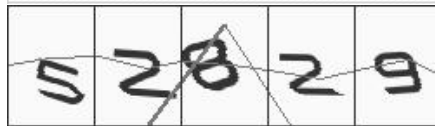
Email (will not be published)

Name

Title

Comment

500 remaining characters



[Post](#) ➔

[Next >](#)

[\[Back \]](#)

 **Border Fire Report**

Ovo je print verzija stranice <http://nacional.hr/hr/articles/view/29168/> na siteu nacional.hr

English edition

Piše: [Ivo Pukanić](#), 24.10.2006. | [br. 571](#)

SECRET DIPLOMATIC WARM-UP

The US needs Croatia over an agreement between Iran and Serbia

The sudden improvement in relations between Croatia and the US has a very interesting and, until now, unknown global dimension: the result was last week's visit by Premier Ivo Sanader to Washington, where he was received like no one before him from Croatia



The sudden improvement in relations between Croatia and the US has a very interesting and, until now, unknown dimension that proves that the region of the former Yugoslavia is of exceptional strategic importance to the US due to new secretive processes ongoing there. This new global dimension also explains why Croatian Premier Sanader was received at such a high level in Washington last week—like no one ever before him. He was received by President Bush, Vice-President Cheney, State Secretary Rice and Defence Minister Rumsfeld, the four most powerful people in the US and the world. They were all very

interested to speak with Sanader, as the American administration has assessed that Croatia could soon play a pivotal role in the stabilization of security in the former Yugoslavia. The US assesses that this region may again be on the brink of instability due to the Iran situation. Washington fears that the Western Balkans could again become the site of a war conflict and is seeking a reliable partner. And the only possible reliable partner in the problematic region is Croatia.

The US holds that Croatia is in an advanced phase of reforms and is the only stable country in the former Yugoslavia still to undergo Euro-Atlantic integrations. Croatia is also sufficiently economically stable to be the foothold for US policy in this region. The American military and intelligence analysts have assessed that there is a certain risk of a new war conflict in the Balkans based on seemingly unusual, though in fact logical alliances that have begun to form. Few have spoke out about it, but nine months ago, an exceptionally significant news article came out, perhaps recklessly, which was then vehemently denied.

On Monday 23 January of this year, the Iranian state news agency IRNA released an interesting and – obviously to the US – very important news article from Teheran. The article, in its entirety, reads:

“SECURITY AGREEMENT WITH SERBIA

TEHRAN, Jan. 22—First Vice President Parviz Davoudi on Sunday authorized the signing of a temporary

agreement on security cooperation between Iran and Serbia-Montenegro, IRNA reported. In response to the Interior Ministry's proposal, the cabinet authorized the Intelligence Ministry to temporarily ink such an agreement. The move is in accordance with Article 2 of the bylaw on drawing up and signing international contracts approved in 1992."

This news aroused substantial interest within the intelligence community, revealing that Serbia and Iran had worked out a secret security arrangement at the time the American pressures against Iran were increasing over that country's nuclear program and when western countries were beginning to organize a political blockage and announce the possibility of military pressures. The article does not reveal the type of security agreement, whether this refers only to the exchange of intelligence, the supply of arms or a stronger military alliance. There have been some suspicions that Iran was in particular interested in the Serbia's experiences from the 1999 Kosovo War, particularly concerning the attack of NATO air force, though this could be part of a much wider and stronger agreement.

This news was very awkward for the government in Belgrade, as it was obvious that Belgrade and Teheran had conducted secret talks on their security cooperation, while Teheran let the cat out of the bag. The government in Belgrade reacted nervously to the article via its own press agency Tanjug, denying the signing of an agreement.

"NO FOUNDATION TO CLAIMS OF SECURITY AGREEMENT BETWEEN IRAN AND SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

26 January 2006 16:59 Belgrade (Tanjug)—The Foreign Ministry of Serbia & Montenegro announced today that the claims released by the Iranian state news agency IRNA that the governments of Iran and the Council of Ministers of Serbia & Montenegro had signed an agreement in the field of security are unfounded.

"The only document that has been signed, and that was back in December 2001, is the Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation in Combating the Illegal Trade of Drugs, Illicit Substances and Raw Materials," announced the Ministry.

Analysts have been quick to note that Tanjug only denied claims that the two governments had signed such a security agreement which, perhaps, may not have been signed by the Belgrade time at the time of the press release, but does not deny that the talks had been held and an informal agreement reached on the basis of those talks. This possible agreement worries Washington, as the question must be posed as to the kind of security arrangement reached. An earlier news report from IRNA from June 2005 proves that there were in fact talks held.

At that time, the IRNA released an article on the visit by Deputy Foreign Minister of Serbia & Montenegro Predrag Boskovic to Iran, where he was received by Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi. IRNA cites Boskovic's official statement on behalf of his government, stating that the "position of Iran on regional and international issues is positive and constructive." According to IRNA, Boskovic informed Kharrazi "of the situation in the Western Balkans, which has entered into a new phase". During the two day visit, Boskovic signed two agreements of understanding with the Iranian officials, though at that time there was no news as to what these agreements concerned.

It is interesting that this news report also aroused interest in the US and on certain American internet forums dealing with global military issues, this was already interpreted to be the start of Iranian-Serbian talks on broader military cooperation concerning Kosovo. Proof that the international relations between the countries has since intensified was seen in a recent news piece. A large trade delegation from Iran visited Belgrade last month in order to finalize an agreement for Iran to grant Serbia a trade loan of 39 million dollars. The IRNA also released this news.

American intelligence services have certainly closely analysed the relations between Serbia and Iran in an attempt

to conclude what they could mean. Their conclusion was that an entire range of scenarios in the future of Serbian-Iranian cooperation is possible, including certain malicious outcomes in the region of the former Yugoslavia. According to information Nacional has received from persons close to the US State Department, after the news report by IRNA, Washington has become increasingly concerned over the threats to peace throughout the entire region, particularly in the relations between Serbia and Kosovo.

Washington has even assessed the possibility that this agreement refers to joint military operations between Iran and Serbia in the event the US launches a military campaign against Iran in order to prevent that country's nuclear armament. In this drastic and malicious scenario, the danger of war would again hang over the eastern part of the former Yugoslavia as in such a situation, Serbia could take advantage of the US's engagement in Iran to launch a military intervention in Kosovo in order to regain military control over it. This would benefit Iran, as the US would be faced with yet another crisis spot, thereby reducing US pressures against Iran.

At the current time, the US military forces are maximally engaged in various parts of the world. Alongside the massive engagement of the US in both Iraq and Afghanistan, there is also the threat of an escalation in the crisis over North Korea and Iran over their attempts to produce nuclear weapons. Stopping these countries from doing so is one of the top American foreign policy objectives and military doctrines. If the US is to face Iran and North Korea in the near future, it would in no way be able to take on yet another battlefield – Kosovo. The US has a large military base in Kosovo, "Bondsteel", one of the largest in Europe, but this alone would be unable to protect Kosovo without military reinforcements.

Washington is taking the agreement between Belgrade and Teheran – as cited by the IRNA – very seriously. As such, the American government is aiming to create a new security structure in this part of the world as a preventative measure, as well as to strengthen its position in military terms. Therefore, it needs a reliable partner in the region, and Croatia is the only possible country that fits the bill. Building a strong security system, for the time being, has a predominantly political dimension, as these possible threats in the region are still of a political nature. Washington is most concerned about the Serbian radicals, who have threatened to take power in Serbia in the near future after winning parliamentary elections. Their leader has openly stated that Kosovo should be defended using military means.

In such a situation, Washington needs Croatia as a reliable partner via which it can politically influence the development of events in the region. For the time being, the basic request is that Zagreb keep out of the relations between Serbia and Kosovo, and to leave this to the international community. The community believes that a solution for Kosovo is possible by year's end, or rather, by the decision that Kosovo is to become an independent country with limited sovereignty and a grace period of several years. This request from Washington, that Zagreb stay out of the Kosovo issue, primarily refers to President Stjepan Mesic, who has always made it clear that he has very good relations with the Albanian authorities in both Tirana and Pristina.

Najčitaniji

- [Goran Ivanišević i Vanja Halilović - njihova ljubav više nije tajna](#)
- [VIDEO: Goran Ivanišević uhvaćen na sastanku s Vanjom Halilović](#)
- [Ivanišević golf palicom napao fotografa](#)
- [Fotogalerija: Zvijezde bez šminke](#)
- ['Happy End' afere Ivanišević](#)
- [Think pink](#)
- [Veliki poraz Srbije](#)

Zadnji komentari

- ["Koštunica je vratio Miloševićevu taktiku u Beograd"](#)
- [Burns: Srbija je 1999. izgubila pravo na Kosovo](#)
- [Koštunica: "SAD trebaju poništiti odluku o priznanju Kosova"](#)
- [Kalfin: "Srbija i Kosovo trebaju sjesti za stol"](#)
- [Petritsch: Moramo biti na strani Srbije](#)
- [Think pink](#)
- [Bush: U ime američkog naroda priznajem Kosovo](#)

Urednikov izbor

- [SDP je ostao sam](#)
- [Hrvati u Srbiji uznemireni pozivima za vojne vježbe](#)
- [Pročitajte underground izdanje Slobodne Dalmacije](#)
- [Milanović treba ostati](#)
- [Agrokor izgubio bitku za Migros](#)
- [Počelo rušenje Zorana Milanovića](#)
- [Hrvatska vs. Srbija za EU](#)

Najtraženiji

- [damir bajs](#)
- [TOSE PROESKI](#)
- [goran ivanišević](#)
- [horoskop](#)
- [severina](#)
- [andrijana budimir](#)
- [extra](#)

Vezani članci

KOSOVO

[Rusija: Američka potpora Albancima je očita bestidnost](#) 24.02.2008.

SRBIJA

[Koštunica: "SAD trebaju poništiti odluku o priznanju Kosova"](#) 24.02.2008.

BUGARSKA

[Kalfin: "Srbija i Kosovo trebaju sjesti za stol"](#) 24.02.2008.

KOSOVO

[Feith poziva srpsku zajednicu na suradnju](#) 23.02.2008.

BEČ

[Petritsch: Moramo biti na strani Srbije](#) 23.02.2008.

ISTAMBUL

[Turska vojska nastavlja napade u Iraku](#) 23.02.2008.

WASHINGTON

[Burns: Srbija je 1999. izgubila pravo na Kosovo](#) 23.02.2008.

BIH

[Osude najava mogućeg odcjepljenja Republike Srpske](#) 23.02.2008.

SAD

[Američki bombarder srušio se na Guamu](#) 23.02.2008.

MOSKVA

[Putin: Kosovo će se Zapadu obiti o glavu](#) 22.02.2008.

SRBIJA

[Amerikanci povlače dio osoblja iz Beograda](#) 22.02.2008.

VOJNA AKCIJA

[Turska upala u Irak](#) 22.02.2008.

SIGURNOST

[Cibona neće u Beograd, Partizan želi upisati svoju pobjedu](#) 22.02.2008.

REAKCIJE

[Svijet s oprezom promatra događaje u Srbiji](#) 22.02.2008.

SLOVENIJA

[Solana: "Nasilje ne vodi nikamo, ponašajte se odgovorno"](#) 22.02.2008.

© [NACIONAL](http://nacional.hr/) (http://nacional.hr/) | Sva prava pridržana | Site by [web.burza](http://web.burza.hr/) (http://web.burza.hr/)



uruknet.info

اوروكنت.انفو

informazione dall'iraq occupato
information from occupied iraq
أخبار من العراق المحتل

[home page] | [tutte le notizie/all news] | [download banner] | [ultimo aggiornamento/last update 25/02/2008 13:33] 41436

Importante per i lettori italiani: È stata migliorata e rinnovata la sezione in lingua italiana:
clickare sulla bandierina italiana, oppure entrare come www.uruknet.eu



We are looking for voluntary translators from Arabic into English.

Please write to the e-mail address: posta@uruknet.info

Subscribe our newsletter! - Iscriviti alla nostra newsletter!

Now it is possible to post comments to the articles. Register here to get the password!

:: contact

:: Uruknet on
GoogleNews

:: Uruknet su
GoogleNews Italia



End Gaza Siege

uruknet:
il nostro progetto
our project

:: Segnala Uruknet
agli amici. Clicka
qui.

:: Invite your
friends to Uruknet.
Click here.

:: links

:: Segnalaci un
articolo

:: Tell us of an
article



www.beppegrillo.it

:: If you find this
site informative,
please donate -
every donation
helps us keep up
with costs.
Thanks.

The Oil factor in Kosovo independence

Abdus Sattar Ghazali

February 24, 2008

On February 17, Kosovo broke away from Serbia and declared its independence. Not surprisingly it was instantly recognized as a state by the U.S., Germany, Britain and France. With 4203 square miles area, Kosovo may be a tiny territory but in the great game of oil politics it holds great importance which is in inverse proportion to its size.

Kosovo does not have oil but its location is strategic as the trans-Balkan pipeline - known as AMBO pipeline after its builder and operator the US-registered Albanian Macedonian Bulgarian Oil Corporation - will pass through it.

The pipeline will pump Caspian oil from the Bulgarian port of Burgas via Macedonia to the Albanian port of Vlora, for transport to European countries and the United States. Specifically, the 1.1 billion dollar AMBO pipeline will permit oil companies operating in the Caspian Sea to ship their oil to Rotterdam and the East Coast of the USA at substantially less cost than they are experiencing today.

When operational by 2011, the pipeline will become a part of the region's critical East-West corridor infrastructure which includes highway, railway, gas and fiber optic telecommunications lines. This pipeline will bring oil directly to the European market by eliminating tanker traffic through the ecologically sensitive waters of the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas.

In 2000, the United States Government's Trade and Development Agency financed a feasibility study of pipeline which updated and enlarged the project's original feasibility study dating from early 1996. Brown & Root Energy Services, a wholly-owned British subsidiary of Halliburton completed the original feasibility study for this project.

The US Trade and Development Agency's paper published May 2000, which assesses that the pipeline is a US strategic interest. According to the paper, the pipeline will provide oil and gas to the US market worth \$600m a month, adding that the pipeline is necessary because the oil coming from the Caspian sea will quickly surpass the safe capacity of the Bosphorus.

new!

:: RSS updated to
2.0

RSS

:: English
:: Italiano

new!

:: Uruknet on your
mobile phone:
www.uruknet.mobi

:: What
happened in
Kurdish
Halabja?



:: Lettera del
Presidente
Saddam
Hussein al
popolo
americano
:: Letter from
President
Saddam
Hussein to the
American
People



:: Autodeterminazione e resistenza irakena
di Aldo Bernardini,
Ordinario di Diritto internazionale all'Università di Teramo

:: ONU - XX Assemblea Generale (1965): La XX Assemblea Generale dell'ONU (1965) dichiara "la legittimità della lotta da parte dei popoli sotto oppressione coloniale, per esercitare il loro diritto all'autodeterminazione e all'indipendenza". Inoltre, l'Assemblea invita "tutti gli Stati a fornire assistenza morale e materiale ai movimenti di liberazione nazionale nei territori coloniali".

:: ONU - Risoluzione 1514 "L'Assemblea Generale dichiara che: la soggezione dei popoli a dominio straniero, conquista e asservimento costituisce una negazione dei diritti umani fondamentali, è contraria alla Carta delle Nazioni Unite ed è un impedimento alla promozione della pace e della cooperazione mondiali. Tutti i popoli hanno diritto all'autodeterminazione; in virtù di tale diritto essi devono liberamente determinare il loro status politico e liberamente

The project is necessary, according to a paper, because the oil coming from the Caspian sea "will quickly surpass the safe capacity of the Bosphorus as a shipping lane". The scheme, the agency notes, will "provide a consistent source of crude oil to American refineries", "provide American companies with a key role in developing the vital east-west corridor", "advance the privatisation aspirations of the US government in the region" and "facilitate rapid integration" of the Balkans "with western Europe".

The pipeline itself, the agency says, has also been formally supported "since 1994". The first feasibility study, backed by the US, was conducted in 1996.

In November 1998, Bill Richardson, the then US energy secretary, spelt out his policy on the extraction and transport of Caspian oil. "This is about America's energy security," he explained. "It's also about preventing strategic inroads by those who don't share our values. We're trying to move these newly independent countries toward the west.

"We would like to see them reliant on western commercial and political interests rather than going another way. We've made a substantial political investment in the Caspian, and it's very important to us that both the pipeline map and the politics come out right."

Professor Michel Chossudovsky, author of America at War in Macedonia, provides a deep insight into the Albanian-Macedonian-Bulgarian-Oil Pipeline project:

"The US based AMBO pipeline consortium is directly linked to the seat of political and military power in the United States and Vice President Dick Cheney's firm Halliburton Energy. The feasibility study for AMBO's Trans-Balkan Oil Pipeline, conducted by the international engineering company of Brown & Root Ltd. [Halliburton's British subsidiary] has determined that this pipeline will become a part of the region's critical East-West corridor infrastructure which includes highway, railway, gas and fibre optic telecommunications lines.

"Coincidentally, White and Case LLT, the New York law firm that President William J. Clinton joined when he left the White House also has a stake in the AMBO pipeline deal.

"And upon completion of the feasibility study by Halliburton, a senior executive of Halliburton was appointed CEO of AMBO. Halliburton was also granted a contract to service US troops in the Balkans and build "Bondsteel" in Kosovo, which now constitutes "the largest American foreign military base constructed since Vietnam".

"The AMBO Trans-Balkans pipeline project would link up with the pipeline corridors between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea basin, which lies at the hub of the World's largest unexplored oil reserves. The militarization of these various corridors is an integral part of Washington's design.

"The US policy of "protecting the pipeline routes" out of the Caspian Sea basin (and across the Balkans) was spelled out by Clinton's Energy Secretary Bill Richardson barely a few months prior to the 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia: This is about America's energy security. It's also about preventing strategic inroads by those who don't share our values. We're trying to move these newly independent countries toward the west. We would like to see them reliant on western commercial and political interests rather than going another way. We've made a substantial political investment in the Caspian, and it's very important to us that both the pipeline map and the politics come out right.



:: Lynching Saddam by Gabriele Zamparini

The newsletter archive



L'Impero si è fermato a Baghdad, by Valeria Poletti

Modulo per ordini

:: subscribe

:: Newsletter

:: Comments

Haq Agency



perseguire il loro sviluppo economico, sociale e culturale".

:: Convenzione di Ginevra, Protocollo Addizionale I (1977):

La lotta armata può essere usata, come ultima risorsa, come mezzo per esercitare il diritto all' autodeterminazione.

:: Tribunale penale internazionale In base allo Statuto del Tribunale penale internazionale, sono definiti

"crimini di guerra":
 (1) attacchi lanciati intenzionalmente contro popolazione civili in quanto tali o contro civili che non prendano direttamente parte alle ostilità;
 (4) attacchi lanciati intenzionalmente nella consapevolezza che gli stessi avranno come conseguenza la perdita di vite umane tra la popolazione civile, e lesioni a civili o danni a proprietà civili ovvero danni diffusi duraturi e gravi all'ambiente naturale che siano manifestamente eccessivi rispetto all'insieme dei concreti e diretti i vantaggi militari previsti.

:: [Iraq anthem](#)
 (click to listen)

:: If you find this site informative, please donate - every donation

"In favour of the AMBO pipeline negotiations, the U.S. Government has been directly supportive through its Trade and Development Agency (TDA) and the South Balkan Development Initiative (SBDI). The TDI suggested the need for Albania, Macedonia, and Bulgaria to "use regional synergies to leverage new public and private capital [from U.S. companies]" while also asserting responsibility of the U.S. Government "for implementing the initiative."

And the U.S. Government has fulfilled its role in promoting the AMBO project, granting several contracts to Halliburton for servicing U.S. troops in the Balkans, including a five year contract authorized in June of 2005 by the U.S. Army at a value of \$1.25 billion, despite criminal allegations made against Halliburton that are currently being probed by the F.B.I., according to Craig A. Brannagan author of On the Political Executive: Public or Private?

This leaves little doubt that the war in the former Yugoslavia was fought solely in order to secure access to oil from new and biddable states in central Asia. It is obvious that the former Yugoslavia, especially Serbia, was a serious problem for the realization of the plan. The intervention in Kosovo and Metohija was carried out in order to please Albania, whose port of Vlore is the ultimate destination of the pipeline.

In 1998, fighting breaks out between Serbian forces and ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. President Milosevic sends in troops, and atrocities were committed. This opens the door for NATO's Operation Allied Force, occupying Kosovo in 1999 and then handing it over to the UN, with a huge American presence in the area. UN resolution 1244 is drafted stipulating that Kosovo is Serbian land, and at the same time gives Kosovars governance autonomy.

June 1999, in the immediate aftermath of the bombing of Yugoslavia, US forces seized 1,000 acres of farmland in southeast Kosovo at Uresevic, near the Macedonian border, and began the construction of Camp Bondsteel which is the biggest construction project of a US military base since the war in Vietnam. Now, why would the United States build such a massive camp in Kosovo?

In evaluating Kosovo's independence, it is also important to know that Kosovo is not gaining independence or even minimal self-government.

It will be run by an appointed High Representative and bodies appointed by the U.S., European Union and NATO. An old-style colonial viceroy and imperialist administrators will have control over foreign and domestic policy. It is similar to the absolute power held by L. Paul Bremer in the first two years of the U.S. occupation of Iraq. U.S. has merely consolidated its direct control of a totally dependent colony in the heart of the Balkans.

An International Civilian Representative (ICR) will be appointed by U.S. and E.U. officials to oversee Kosovo. This appointed official can overrule any measures, annul any laws and remove anyone from office in Kosovo. The ICR will have full and final control over the departments of Customs, Taxation, Treasury and Banking.

The E.U. will establish a European Security and Defense Policy Mission (ESDP) and NATO will establish an International Military Presence. Both these appointed bodies will have control over foreign policy, security, police, judiciary, all courts and prisons.

These bodies and the ICR will have final say over what crimes can be prosecuted and against whom; they can reverse or annul any decision



THE BRANNAGAN, THE MORGAN, THE MITCHELL, THE FRANCIS, THE WANDER, THE THOMAS, THE FLEMING, THE KIRK, THE MARSHALL, THE WENDERS, THE BERRY, THE PAUL, THE GUTTENBERG, THE CHARLES, THE BERRY

"Neoconned" and "Neoconned Again", two new collections of essays



America's "War on Terrorism", book by Michel Chossudovsky

:: If you find this site informative, please donate - every donation helps us keep up with costs. Thanks.



Uruknet on Alexa

:: Motore di ricerca / Search Engine

:: search

uruknet
 the web

powered by Google™

:: Special reports on the trial of President Saddam Hussein by Dr.

helps us keep up
with costs.
Thanks.



made. The largest prison in Kosovo is at the U.S. base, Camp Bondsteel, where prisoners are held without charges, judicial overview or representation.

US has argued the case of Kosovo is unique and that separatists in other states in Europe and the Balkans will not receive aid and welcome from major powers. "It is incorrect to view this as a precedent and it doesn't serve any purpose to view it as a precedent," said Alejandro Wolff, US deputy permanent representative to the UN. He may be right because other separatists may not have any attraction for the oil giants.

However, the Kosovo independence bolsters hopes of militants in the Indian-controlled Kashmir to achieve the same status for the disputed territory. "The world community, the European Union in particular, should play a Kosovo-like role in getting the dispute resolved in Kashmir," says Yasin Malik, chairman of pro-independence group Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front.

Although several countries have recognized Kosovo as a new state but India said it was studying the legal ramifications. India is wary of recognizing Kosovo as an independent state because of its potential implications for Kashmir, racked by a nearly two-decade freedom struggle against New Delhi's occupation that has left more than 43,000 people dead.

:: Article nr. 41436 sent on 25-feb-2008 12:21 ECT

www.uruknet.info?p=41436

Link: www.amperspective.com/html/the_oil_factor_in_kosovo.html

:: The views expressed in this article are the sole responsibility of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of Uruknet .

COMMENTS BY REGISTERED READERS OF URUKNET

The COMMENTS of our readers are the sole responsibility of their authors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of URUKNET. If you believe that any COMMENT contains pornographic, racist or otherwise objectionable or offensive content, or if the COMMENT is contrary to law in any way, please let us know. Our legal representatives will review any and all complaints and, if any complaint is deemed to be accurate, the COMMENT will be removed at once.

You can get the password for comments by clicking [HERE](#) (needed only once forever).

Once you have the password, click [HERE](#) to publish your own comment below here.

Still no comments for this article.



[[Printable version](#)] | [[Send it to a friend](#)]

Curtis F.J.
Doebbler



:: Ego te
baptizo
carpam: realtà
e misitizzazione
giuridica nella
perdurante
guerra di
aggressione
all'Iraq
di
Aldo Bernardini
(PDF)

Font size
Carattere

1 2 3

[cambia](#)

[change](#)

[Accessible](#)

:: All events

new!

:: Share this new !

[BlinkList](#)

[del.icio.us](#)

[Digg](#)

[Furl](#)

[Google Bookmarks](#)

[ma.gnolia](#)

[Netscape](#)

[Newsvine](#)

[reddit](#)

[StumbleUpon](#)

[Tailrank](#)

[[Contatto/Contact](#)] | [[Home Page](#)] | [[Tutte le notizie/All news](#)]

 Technorati

 Windows Live

 Yahoo! My Web

:: [\[uruknet\] clicka qui per una traduzione automatica in italiano](#)
 :: [\[uruknet\] cliquez ici pour une traduction automatique en français](#)
 :: [\[uruknet\] klicken Sie hier für eine automatische Übersetzung in Deutschen](#)
 :: [\[uruknet\] chasque aqui para una traducción automática en español](#)
 :: [\[uruknet\] estale aqui para uma tradução automática no português](#)
 :: [\[uruknet\] χτυπήστε εδώ για μια αυτόματη μετάφραση στα ελληνικά](#)
 :: [\[uruknet\] 日本語に自動翻訳のためにここにかちりと鳴らさない](#)
 :: [\[uruknet\] 點擊這裡為自動翻譯成漢語](#)
 :: [\[uruknet\] щелкните здесь для машинныйа перевод в русскою](#)

[[home page](#)] | [[tutte le notizie/all news](#)] | [[download banner](#)] | [[ultimo aggiornamento/last update 25/02/2008 13:33](#)]

Uruknet receives daily many hacking attempts. To prevent this, we have 10 websites on 6 servers in different places. So, if the website is slow or it does not answer, you can recall one of the other web sites: [www.uruknet.info](#) [www.uruknet.de](#) [www.uruknet.biz](#) [www.uruknet.org.uk](#) [www.uruknet.com](#) [www.uruknet.org](#) - [www.uruknet.it](#) [www.uruknet.eu](#) [www.uruknet.net](#) [www.uruknet.web.at.it](#)

Vuoi una pagina più leggera di **uruknet.info** in italiano da mettere come tua pagina iniziale? [CLICKA QUI](#).
 Would you like a lighter page of **uruknet.info** in english to set as your initial page? [CLICK HERE](#).
 Est-ce que vous aimez **uruknet.info** en français comme votre page initiale? [CLIQUEZ ICI](#).
 ¿Usted quiere **uruknet.info** como su pagina inicial en español? [CLICK AQUÍ](#).
 Você gostam de ter **uruknet.info** como sua página inicial no português? [ESTALE AQUI](#).

You are using a MS operating system! Nothing so wrong with this, but try also others (Mac, Linux, Unix)

25-Feb-2008 15:52

W

:: This site contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in our efforts to advance understanding of environmental, political, human rights, economic, democracy, scientific, and social justice issues, etc. We believe this constitutes a 'fair use' of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes. For more info go to: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml>. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.
 :: **We always mention the author and link the original site and page of every article.**

uruknet, uruklink, iraq, uruqlink, iraq, irak, irakeno, iraqi, uruk, uruqlink, saddam hussein, baghdad, mesopotamia, babilonia, uday, qusay, udai, qusai, hussein, feddayn, fedayn saddam, mujaheddin, mojahidin, tarek aziz, chalabi, iraqi, baath, ba'ht, Aljazira, aljazeera, Iraq, Saddam Hussein, Palestina, Sharon, Israele, Nasser, ahram, hayat, sharq awsat, iraqwar, irakwar All pictures



tev: hosting

www.tev.eu



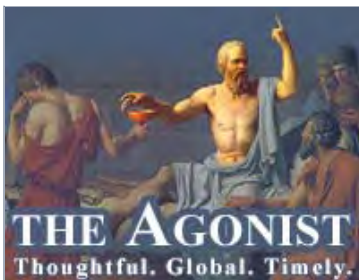
niz: news management

www.niz.it



dig it brand: ".it" domains

www.digitbrand.com



FRONT PAGE NEWS WIRE DIARIES

Home » topic sections » Russian Federation

NEWS

Serbia deal tightens Russia's grip on

European energy

Belgrade, Serbia | January 22

Search

 advanced

latest

- . posts
- . comments
- . forums
- . topic sections
 - . Afghanistan
 - . Africa
 - . Africa: North
 - . Africa: Sub-Saharan
 - . Agonist
 - . Agonist Compilation Threads
 - . Agonist Exclusives
 - . Agonist Travel Journals
 - . Radio Agonist
 - . Arabia
 - . Asia
 - . Asia: Central
 - . Asia: NE & Korea's
 - . Asia: South-East
 - . China
 - . Taiwan
 - . Asia: South-West
 - . Book Reviews
 - . Business
 - . Canada
 - . Quebec
 - . Caribbean
 - . Caucasus
 - . Economics
 - . Economics: USA
 - . Globalization
 - . The Markets
 - . Environment
 - . Europe Minus UK
 - . Balkans
 - . Baltics
 - . European Union
 - . Faith and Spirituality
 - . Global
 - . Global Energy

Reuters - Serbia agreed Tuesday to a multibillion dollar gas pipeline project as part of an energy deal with Russia that would boost Moscow's control over supplies to Europe.

A majority stake of the Serbian oil monopoly NIS will be sold to Russian energy giant Gazprom and Russia will route part of the gas pipeline through Serbia. A Serbian government statement announcing the deal did not reveal the financial terms. The deal is to be signed in Moscow on Friday.

Serbia endorsed the deal just days after Russian President Vladimir Putin won Bulgaria's support for the project, known as the South Stream pipeline, which further dashes the European Union's hopes of reducing its growing energy reliance on Russia.

Russia promised to extend the pipeline into Serbia and build a huge gas storage facility in the north of the country, to turn the Balkan nation into a major hub for Russian energy supplies to Europe.

But the pipeline deal with Serbia apparently comes at a price. Some Serbian officials said that Russia's initial offer of US\$600 million (€400 million) for a 51 percent stake in NIS represented just one-fifth of the company's market value.

Gazprom and Serbian officials have haggled over terms, triggering infighting in the Serbian Cabinet. It was not clear if Russia bettered the offer, but the small pro-Western G-17 party said Tuesday the terms of the deal are still unfavorable to Serbia.

Belgrade has turned increasingly away from the West and toward Russia, which supports Serbia's refusal to accept independence for its southern province of Kosovo.

Serbia's nationalist prime minister, Vojislav Kostunica, who pushed hard for the contract with Moscow, said the "strategic" deal with Russia will give Serbia a reliable supply of energy "for the coming decades."

Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic said in neighboring Romania on Tuesday that "it is an important strategic deal that has to do with securing energy supplies to Serbia ... and the rest of the Western Balkans."

Kostunica has denied accusations by the opposition that favorable terms for Russia in the deal amounted to payback for Moscow's support over Kosovo.

"The deal is the direct result of an agreement between Russian and Serbian politicians, with Kostunica and his people standing to make political gains over it," said Misa Brkic, a Serbian economic analyst.

More

adrena January 22, 2008 - 10:40am



Premium Advertising

The Learning Center

Support Us, Visit Our Sponsors

- . Doomed to repeat history?



Iran's democratic leader toppled by the U.S. in 1953.

An embassy taken hostage by Iranian students 26 years later. And now, American leaders threatening another armed intervention.

Watch the video. Learn how we got here and how to change course.

Read more...

Advertise here

Intermedia Group Ads

- . AMERICANS HOSTILE TO KNOWLEDGE?



Susan Jacoby brilliantly updates Hofstadter's Anti-Intellectualism in American Life, taking both left and right to task, and dissects a new American phenomenon: the culture of willful ignorance. See how religion, television and even the internet have

- . Global Politics and Culture
- . Global War on Terror
- . Global Women's Issues
- . Health Issues
 - . Bird Flu
- . Histories
- . Human Rights
- . Humor
- . Iran
- . Iraq
- . Israel and Palestine
- . Labor
- . Latin America
 - . Mexico
- . Levant
- . Liberties
- . Media Criticism
 - . Blog Criticism
 - . MSM Criticism
- . News Guidance
- . Oceania
- . Russian Federation
- . Science
- . Sports
- . Technology
 - . Net Neutrality
- . USA
 - . Congress
 - . USA: Congress: House
 - . USA: Congress: Senate
 - . Presidency
 - . Impeachment
 - . USA: Armed Forces
 - . USA: Campaign 2004
 - . USA: Campaign 2006
 - . USA: Campaign 2008
 - . USA: Domestic Issues
 - . USA: E-Voting
 - . USA: Foreign Relations
 - . USA: Homeland Security
 - . USA: Intel and Policy
 - . USA: Texas: San Antonio

printer friendly version | 

(categories: News | Russian Federation)

contributed to THE AGE OF AMERICAN UNREASON.

Read more...

- ON SALE NOW!



A thriller bound to shake the world. James Rollins, NYT bestselling author

An archaeologist in Israel finds the most important discovery in history: the diary written by the most influential figure in western civilization. Click here to buy!

A worthy debut. Steve Berry, NYT bestselling author
Read more...

Support Blogs, Buy BlogAds

Advertise Liberally

Supports Us, Click On Ads

- Liberal Headlines



Read more...

Advertise here

GO!

- . [USSR \(Former\)](#)
- . [Minus Russia](#)
- . [United Kingdom](#)
- . [Unproven Stories](#)
- . [Miscellany](#)
- . [FAQ \(help\)](#)

User login

Username:

Password:

[Create new account](#)

[Request new password](#)

Navigation

- . [post!](#)
- . [forums](#)
- . [user list](#)
- . [NewsWire](#)

Team Agonist

Editor-at-Large: Sean-Paul

Kelley

Contributing Editor: Ian Welsh

News Editor: Tina

Culture Editor: Doug

Contributing Editor: Quiet Bill

Defense Editor: Stirling

Technology Editor: Rick

Special Contributor: Numerian

Special Contributor: Brian

Downing

Publisher: Jay Campbell

Technologists: Jay, Subwolf

Thoughtful

[Abu Aardvark](#)

[ACS Blog](#)

[The Arabist](#)

[Arabisto](#)

[AT&T Blog](#)

[The Belgravia Dispatch](#)

[Blah 3](#)

[Booman Tribune](#)

[China Rises](#)

[Steve Clemons](#)

[Cliff Schecter](#)

[Corrente Wire](#)

[Cursor](#)

[Crooks and Liars](#)

[Daily Kos](#)

[Disturbing Trends](#)

[Drudge Retort](#)

[Electric Politics](#)

[Early Warning](#)

[Firedoglake](#)

[Bob Geiger](#)

[Glenn Greenwald](#)

[Nathan Hamm](#)

[The Huffington Post](#)

[Informed Comment](#)

[Intrepid Liberal](#)

Col. Patrick Lang
The Left Coaster
Vince Leibowitz
Mahablog
Taylor Marsh
Majikthise
Lance Mannion
MyDD
Open Left
Total WonKerr
Tort Deform
Seeing the Forest
The Sideshow
Skippy the Bush Kangaroo
TalkLeft
Today in Iraq
View From Iran
War and Piece
Watching America

Global

aliasBruce
All Things Conservative
Armchair Generalist
Arms Control Wonk
B & B
Bartcop
Brains & Eggs
Burnt Orange Report
Jack Cluth
Common Sense
Eye on Williamson
County
Eteraz: States of Islam
Feministing
Feet To Fire
NewsHog
Norbizness
Off The Kuff
The Reaction
Rhetoric & Rhythm
Rook's Rant
Rubber Hose
Scholars and Rogues
State of the Division
Texas Kaos
Texas Liberal
Three Wise Men
Xymphora

Timely

Mixed Bag of Candy:
BAGnewsNotes
PKU News
St Martin Private Eye
Scoop.com.nz
Lazy Laces

Rick's Picks:
Final Girl
Waiter Rant
Security Focus
Zero Day
Americana Roots

Quiet Bill's Corner:
Effect Measure

Doug's Dugout:
I Miss Fablog, Spot!
Raw Story
Black Listed News

Who's online

There are currently 11 users and 714 guests online.

Online users:

- Ian Welsh
- LJ
- Raja
- pihwht
- StrangerOnFire
- BuddhaSixFour
- Sean-Paul Kelley
- steelhead
- Lesly
- Zuma
- petrichor

Syndicate



Copyright© 2002-2006 Some rights reserved by Sean Paul Kelley, Agonist Intermedia, Inc. or the writers contained herein. Our writers own their own words, email them for permissions.
Credit Cards | Personal Car Finance | Debt Consolidation | Car Loan | Infrared Sauna

washingtonpost.com

Seize the Opportunity with Russia on Kosovo

Advertisement

By Janusz Bugajski and Edward P. Joseph
Special to washingtonpost.com's Think Tank Town
Wednesday, October 24, 2007; 12:00 AM

They tried to put a good face on it, but the truth is that Russian President Vladimir Putin publicly humiliated Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates during their recent meeting in Moscow. Before even hearing the Administration's latest pitch on missile defense, Putin heaped scorn, even raising serious new objections.

Whatever one thinks of missile defense, the dressing down of Rice and Gates marks a new low in U.S.-Russian relations. Appeals to shared values-- and those aimed at shared interests -- are falling on deaf Russian ears.

It is now unmistakably clear that getting Russia's attention on the Iranian threat and a host of other issues will require action, not talk.

Fortunately, Putin has created an ideal opportunity for Washington to score a victory and re-orient Moscow toward cooperation. The opportunity is Kosovo.

President Putin has seized the dispute over Kosovo's final status as one more means of reasserting Russia's global authority. But he has overplayed his hand, snubbing not only the U.S., but the UN, whose Secretary General has endorsed a compromise plan for supervised independence of the former Serbian province, along with near-autonomy for Kosovo's Serbian minority. So far, Putin has exploited perennial European divisions over the Balkans that put strong U.S. allies such as Britain and France against those European capitals who are either sympathetic to the Serb position or worried about a messy situation that would ensue without a UN blessing for independence.

But these concerns pale next to the threat that the Russian challenge poses not only for Kosovo, but for the overall Western strategy to calm the still-troublesome region. Beyond asserting Russia's voice on behalf of its client, Putin is also intent on transforming Serbia into a bulwark against European Union and NATO enlargement. Indeed, the obedient Serbian prime minister now advocates a "third way" between West and East and scorns the need for Belgrade to join NATO, raising the prospect of a fundamental reorientation away from Euro-Atlantic integration.

Belgrade's position has severe consequences for Europe since its grand strategy is for all the former Yugoslav states to narrow their differences through accession to the EU and NATO. But thus far not one former Yugoslav state which suffered major conflict has entered either organization. And the most fractious of all, Bosnia, has had serious setbacks over the past year, with its Serbian and Muslim leaders engaging in incendiary rhetoric not seen since the end of the war in part because of the Kosovo issue.

Three key errors by the Administration have permitted Kosovo to fester to Russia's advantage. First, Washington failed to see how Russian objectives were evolving under Putin. Like many allies in Europe, Washington believed Moscow would bark its objections over plans to grant Kosovo independence, but incorrectly assumed that Russia, as in years past, would eventually fall into line with a few face-saving concessions.

Second, the White House repeated the core mistake of the early 1990s, when the Yugoslav crisis threatened to tear apart trans-Atlantic relations. It allowed disputes in Europe to postpone concerted action.

Instead of seizing on a broad consensus among the major powers that the status quo in Kosovo had to change, and move swiftly toward supervised independence on the basis of the UN plan, persistent delays have actually deepened Europe's divisions. Each postponement signaled to Belgrade and to Moscow that the West lacked resolve, and this has enhanced Russia's assertiveness. As a result, the inevitable reckoning over Kosovo has become even more complex and conflictive.

Third, the Administration continues to participate in utterly fruitless diplomacy. As is clear to all informed observers, there is zero possibility of a negotiated solution between Kosovo's independence-demanding Albanians (who comprise over 90 percent of the population) and Serbia (which continues to claim a territory over which it lost control eight years

ago following a NATO intervention provoked by the mass expulsion of Albanians.) Another "deadline" looms, but it is likely that Russia will demand yet another extension for more "negotiations."

After the recent humiliation in Moscow, it is crucial for Washington to take the lead on Kosovo, galvanized by the understanding that what happens in the Balkans matters not only for the people of that region, but also for the West's relationship with Russia. There are allies in Europe who grasp that the last chance to deal with Kosovo is rapidly approaching. And many allies also realize that Europe's energy dependence on Russia makes it more important to show mettle and unity on threats to core European security interests. With American leadership the EU can be mobilized into concerted action as witnessed during the NATO interventions that ended the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo. At the same time, Washington must work closely with allies to develop follow-on plans for the enhanced EU and NATO missions in the new state.

Dealing conclusively with Kosovo is no longer simply about successful U.S.-European involvement in the Balkans. It is now about our relationship with Russia and whether Moscow acquires veto rights over Euro-Atlantic security. Vladimir Putin has created an opportunity to show the world that shared values still prevail across the Atlantic and across Europe. It's time to seize it.

Janusz Bugajski is Director of the New European Democracies Project at CSIS in Washington. Edward Joseph is visiting scholar and adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

Post a Comment

[View all comments](#) that have been posted about this article.

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

Submit

Comments that include profanity or personal attacks or other inappropriate comments or material will be removed from the site. Additionally, entries that are unsigned or contain "signatures" by someone other than the actual author will be removed. Finally, we will take steps to block users who violate any of our posting standards, terms of use or privacy policies or any other policies governing this site. Please review the [full rules](#) governing commentaries and discussions. You are fully responsible for the content that you post.

© 2007 Washingtonpost.Newsweek Interactive

Ads by Google

[Putin Man of the Year](#)

TIME selects Putin Russian Life digs deeper
www.russianlife.com

[Meet Russia Girls](#)

Russian Dating And Personals Site. 273,000 Members. Join 100% Free!
www.RussianEuro.com

[Russian Women](#)

For serious relationship only. Join now (it's free).
TAU2.com

NEWS

February 22, 2008, 19:26

Russia's "brute force" is ready: Moscow's NATO envoy

The significance of Kosovo's independence has gone beyond the diplomatic sphere - that's the message from Russia's envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin. In a world where the principle 'he who has the power, has the right' rules, Russia has "the brute force" necessary to protect its interests.



Dmitry Rogozin, Russia's envoy to NATO

"Those states that supported Pristina find that they are making up an absolute minority. That means that today the European Union, if its members find common ground, and NATO, if it oversteps the bounds of its mandate, both will enter a conflict with the United Nations. And this is serious," he said.

With the authority of the United Nations undermined, there is no strict and universal international law to safeguard global security, the Russian official believes.

"This is not only between Russia and NATO. This is a conflict of the whole system of international security. This is not a diplomatic, but a political issue. An issue of the future, about whether there are any proprieties in interstate relations or that one can follow the policy of 'he who has the power has the right,'" he said.

In this new world Russia has to rely on force to protect itself, Rogozin believes.

"Then it has its own conclusions for Russia. We too would understand that we need brutal physical force to make sure we are respected, understood and that others acknowledge our right to our own point of view - and the name of that force is military force," he said.

Dmitry Rogozin was quick to qualify his words on the use of military force, saying it would only be used to protect direct national interests.

"Obviously, Russia will not take part in any kind of military operations in Kosovo, in the Balkans or outside its borders in general. Russia has enough political and moral authority to defend international law, and that's what it's doing. But when the issue touches its own national interests, its borders and attempts to repeat the Kosovo scenario on Russian territory, it will defend not only international law, but also its own sovereignty," Rogozin said.

Post this story to del.icio.us



Shop 24/7 at ULTA.com

BARE ESSENTIALS
The Healthiest Makeup on Earth



NEW and EXCLUSIVE Items

Buy now!
Free Shipping on orders over \$50

MILITARY



Russia's Balkan Power Play

By Brian Whitmore

Serbs go to the polls this weekend to elect a new president in a hotly contested election. But a looming low-intensity struggle between Russia and the West for influence in the country is casting a long shadow over the vote.

Belgrade is barring observers from the United States and Britain from monitoring the poll. A leading presidential candidate is vowing to scuttle a key pre-membership agreement between Serbia and the European Union. And alarming, albeit unconfirmed, media reports allege that Russia is drawing up plans to eventually set up military bases in the country.

Serbia's incumbent president, Boris Tadic, has long sought to steer his country into Europe's mainstream. But mounting anger over the imminent prospect of an independent Kosovo, lingering resentment from the 1999 NATO bombing campaign against Serbia, and growing impatience about the slow pace of Serbia's EU bid have all converged into an anti-Western backlash.

The most visible result of the new national mood has been the dramatic rise of Radical Party leader Tomislav Nikolic, a blunt nationalist who is Tadic's main rival in the January 20 election. The two are widely expected to advance to a runoff on February 3.

But in a broader geopolitical sense, Russia is also turning out to be a major beneficiary. Moscow has long had a close cultural and religious bond with predominantly Orthodox Christian Serbia. It has also been a staunch opponent of Kosovo's independence. And now the Kremlin is trying to parlay this into greater political and economic influence.

A deeper Russian footprint in Serbia would have major implications, particularly for European energy policy. Serbia is a key transit corridor and Russia is trying to gain a stranglehold over its energy [infrastructure](#). If successful, this would frustrate Western plans to diversify its energy suppliers, leaving the continent even more dependent on Russia's state-controlled natural gas monopoly Gazprom.

The inking of a Stabilization and Association Agreement between Belgrade and the EU has been perpetually delayed over Belgrade's failure to arrest key war crimes indictees like Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. Tensions between Serbia and the EU are also growing over the issue of Kosovo's independence, which Brussels supports. Pristina is expected to make its announcement as early as February.

"I think that the Russian strategy is to let the West disappoint Serbia. And then, where else does Serbia have to go?" says Nicholas Gvosdev, a Russia expert at the Washington-based Nixon Center and editor of the journal "National Interest." "If you have strong control over the infrastructure of Serbia, you have control over one of the major corridors of European commerce and transport."

Energy Grab

Two days before Serbs vote for a new president, Russian President Vladimir Putin travels to Bulgaria to prepare an agreement to build the South Stream gas pipeline. A joint project of Gazprom and Italy's ENI, the pipeline would stretch from Russia under the Black Sea to Bulgaria. It would then fork, with one branch going west to Greece and Italy, and another going north through Serbia to Central Europe.

Serbia, which suffers from chronic gas shortages, is keen to be part of the project -- but there are strings attached. Russia is insisting that, as part of the deal, Belgrade also sell a 51-percent stake in the Serbian oil company NIS -- which controls most of Serbia's distribution [networks](#) -- to Gazprom's oil subsidiary, Gazpromneft.

The European Union was pressing Serbia to hold a competitive international tender for shares in NIS; Serbia had been planning to privatize the company in 25-percent share packages. Among those planning to participate were some of the continent's leading energy companies: Austria's OMV, Poland's PKN Orlen, Hungary's MOL, and Romania's Rompetrol.

But Russia has reportedly informed Belgrade that if it wants the South Stream pipeline to run through Serbia, then selling NIS to Gazprom part of the package. It has also indicated that other diplomatic favors -- like its firm opposition to Kosovo independence in talks at the UN Security Council -- could dry up if the energy deal falls through.

Federico Bordonaro, a Rome-based energy politics analyst with the Power and Interest News Report, says Moscow appears to be "linking their diplomatic support on the Kosovo question to guarantees for a future enhancement of Gazprom's interests and presence in Serbia

energy market."

NIS has a market value of approximately 2 billion euros, but Gazprom has offered a bargain-basement price of only 400 million euros in cash and 500 million euros in investment over five years. Belgrade is reportedly holding out for more and the two sides are still negotiating -- Moscow is pressing for the deal to be closed by this week.

Moscow's plans in Serbia don't stop with NIS. As part of South Stream, Gazprom is pressing another state-owned company, Serbian Gas, to form a joint venture to build the pipeline and to grant Russia a 30-year supply and transit monopoly. Gazprom, which would hold a major stake in the joint venture, is also demanding that it take over the transmission [network](#) of Serbian Gas.

Gazprom is also seeking to form another joint venture with Serbian Gas to build underground natural gas [storage](#) facilities in the country.

For Russia-watchers, it's a standard game of Kremlin hardball. "It would be strange if Russia, which is actively defending Serbia politically wouldn't try to convert that political support into economic advantage," says Fyodor Lukyanov, editor of the Moscow-based journal "Russia in Global Affairs."

Banks, Not Tanks

If Russia is able to gain control of these energy assets in Serbia, it would severely hamper plans, pushed by the EU and the United States, to diversify the continent's energy supply. It would, for example, effectively block the EU-backed Nabucco project, which seeks to transport gas from the Caspian region to Europe via Turkey and the Balkans -- circumventing Russia.

Russia's foray into Serbia has become an issue in the presidential campaign. The nationalist Nikolic has, not surprisingly, played the Slav unity card and offered Moscow the warmest embrace -- even offering to station Russian military bases in Serbia.

Poorly sourced newspaper reports have even claimed that plans were already in the works to put a Russian base on the border of Bosnia-Herzegovina's Republika Srpska. Analysts, however, are highly skeptical that Russia is aiming to create a military alliance with Belgrade.

"I don't see any objective possibility how Serbia -- given where it is located, and given that it is surrounded by countries that are going to be EU and NATO members -- could become part of some Russian bloc," Lukyanov said. "It isn't realistic. Sooner or later, Serbia will be in European orbit."

Many observers say Moscow's strategy in Serbia -- and in Europe as a whole -- is best summed up by the phrase "banks not tanks." Russia is seeking to use its energy-fueled economic muscle to insinuate its way deep into Europe, first commercially, and then politically.

"I think it is part of a larger plan or strategy to redevelop a Russian sphere [of influence], not just simply in the Balkans, but in Europe as a whole," Gvosdev says. "And part of this strategy is predicated on having nodal points in various parts of Europe that are receptive to Russian [business](#), economic, and political influence."

Gvosdev adds that Moscow wants to "embed itself in the European economy in such a way that it will be very difficult to dislodge," which would effectively make Russia an "honorary member" of the EU.

"They would be connected in that you wouldn't be able to have this nice, neat dividing line where you can say this is European and that Russian." That, says Gvosdev, is "the long-term goal."

Russia, for example, is seeking to build underground natural gas storage facilities in Hungary and Belgium. Gazprom has also recently secured a license to operate in the Irish energy market -- and plans to begin supplying customers there by the end of this year.

The Price of Support

Public opinion polls show that an overwhelming majority of Serbs -- approximately 70 percent -- favor eventual [integration](#) into the EU. At the same time, even staunchly pro-EU politicians like Tadic have not dared to speak out openly against Moscow's expanding influence.

According to media reports, Tadic reportedly is opposed to the NIS deal, but has been careful about saying so publicly before the elections.

"Nowadays you cannot oppose Russia and win the election, because there is a sense, or feeling, that Russia is protecting Serbia from losing Kosovo," says Teofil Pancic, a political columnist with the weekly "Vreme." Pancic adds, however, that the Russia infatuation will turn out to be an "emotional reaction" that will not last -- provided Tadic eventually wins the election.

"I don't think that most of the Serbs care about it in such a way that they would want to become a sort of Russian 'guberniya' as we say here -- a part of Russia, or a Russian satellite," Tancic says. A Nikolic victory, on the other hand, would likely mean substantially greater Russian influence in the country's affairs.

According to Gvosdev, Russia is now "laying out its price" for its long-standing diplomatic support over the Kosovo issue.

"You want Russian support? Well, we don't want just simple declarations of cultural friendship and Slavic unity," Gvosdev says, describing Moscow's position. "We want, essentially, to be let into what in most countries would be seen as critical infrastructure. What would be seen as a national security issue. And the question will be now: What Serbian government might want to pay that price?"

Copyright (c) 2008. RFE/RL, Inc. Reprinted with the permission of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 1201 Connecticut Ave., N.W. Washington DC 20036. www.rferl.org

[Advertise with Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [GlobalSecurity.org In the News](#) | [Internships](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Privacy](#)

[Copyright](#) © 2000-2008 GlobalSecurity.org All rights reserved.
Site maintained by: [John Pike](#)

WORLD WAR 4 REPORT

Defending the Fourth World, Deconstructing the War on Terrorism

Current Issue

Daily Report

Back Issues

Our Mission

Contact Us

Subscribe

Support Us



Links

Documents

About Us

Exit Poll

Search Archive

*WW4 Report
pamphlets*

IRAQ'S CIVIL RESISTANCE SPEAKS

Interviews with the
Secular Left
Opposition

**Eclipsed from the
headlines by the
ongoing carnage,
there is an active
civil resistance in**

[Home](#) » [blogs](#) » [Bill Weinberg's blog](#)

Russia signs Balkan pipeline deal with Serbia

Submitted by Bill Weinberg on Fri, 01/25/2008 - 18:24.

Serbian and Russian officials have signed an energy deal they say will turn Serbia into a major hub for gas supplies to Europe and boost Russia's economic influence in the region. The deal was signed in Moscow, where Serbia's President Boris Tadic, Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic and other officials met President Vladimir Putin and their Russian counterparts. The agreement provides for the construction of a stretch of the South Stream gas pipeline in Serbia, including a major regional gas storage unit at Banatski Dvor. Under the deal Gazpromneft, the oil subsidiary of Russian gas monopoly, Gazprom, acquires a 51% stake in Serbia's top oil and gas company, Naftna Industrija Srbije (NIS). The deal comes a week after Bulgaria joined the South Stream project, which is to have an annual capacity of 30 billion cubic meters of gas. The pipeline is to carry Russian gas via [Bulgaria](#) and Serbia to Hungary, Austria and Italy.

The Moscow visit comes amidst campaigning for the Feb. 3 run-off for the Serbian presidency. Tadic who heads the moderate Democratic Party, narrowly lost the Jan. 20 first round of voting to Tomislav Nikolic of the ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical Party—who has gained from fears of Kosova's imminent secession. ([Balkan Insight](#), Jan. 25)

The State Department-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty takes an ominous view of the deal. "There is the possibility that Russia could start using energy as a political tool in parts of Central Europe, like it has done in the East with Ukraine," it quoted Mark Hester, editor of the UK-based journal Oil and Energy Trends.

RFE/RL also frets that the advancement of the South Stream project could spell the end of the competing [Nabucco](#) pipeline, an EU-backed project that would circumvent Russia by transporting gas from the Caspian and Central Asia to Europe via Turkey.

Last May, Moscow dealt a first blow to Nabucco when it

Ads by Google

[Th](#) [Oil & Energy](#)
Why Oil's Prognosis Is Terminal & Where the Future Stands: New Report
www.EnergyAndCapital.com/Peak

[Manas Petroleum](#)
Exploring & Developing Oil & Gas Assets in Central Asia & E. Europe
www.manaspetroleum.com

[Russian Oil & Gas Shares](#)
Get Free Finance & Investment Report, Invest, Make Profit Today!
www.Fin-Rus.com

[Oil & Gas Energy Info.](#)
Maps, Data and Pipeline Resources about the Oil and Gas Industry
www.OilandGasPipelines.com

[Coast NDE](#)
Inspection and Integrity Assessment Services across North America
www.coastnde.com

Iraq that opposes the occupation, the torture regime it protects, and the jihadi and Ba'athist 'resistance' alike.

Six Dollars



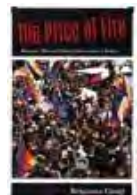
[The Politics of Immigration](#)

Jane Guskin, David...

Best Price \$6.70
or Buy New \$9.56



[Privacy Information](#)



[The Price of Fire](#)

Benjamin Dangel

Best Price \$9.57
or Buy New \$10.85



[Privacy Information](#)



[The Bush Agenda](#)

Antonia Juhasz

Best Price \$1.96
or Buy New \$17.79



[Privacy Information](#)

signed an agreement with Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan to build a pipeline along the Caspian Sea coast to transport their natural gas to Europe via Russia. Then in June, Gazprom and Italy's Eni further undermined Nabucco by signing the initial deal to build South Stream.

"Nabucco is not dead, but it is a patient that risks dying," Federico Bordonaro, Rome-based energy analyst with the Power and Interest News Report, told RFE/RL. "[T]he economic viability of Nabucco now comes into question." ([RFE/RL](#), Jan. 25)

See our last posts on [the Balkans](#), [Russia](#) and the Eurasian [pipeline wars](#).

» [Bill Weinberg's blog](#) | [add new comment](#) | [email this page](#) | [printer friendly version](#)

Comment viewing options

Threaded list - expanded ▾ Date - oldest first ▾

200 comments per page ▾ Save settings

Select your preferred way to display the comments and click "Save settings" to activate your changes.

Deep Purple fetes Russian petro-elite

Submitted by Bill Weinberg on Wed, 02/06/2008 - 19:43.

Well, the "moderate" Tadic has emerged victorious over the onepotchket Nikolic, thank goodness. ([Reuters](#), Feb. 4) Meanwhile in Russia, Dmitry Medvedev, the chief of Gazprom, has been all but anointed as Vladimir Putin's successor. And those one-time bad boys of heavy metal, [Deep Purple](#), have been called in to preside over the bash sealing the deal. It's pretty terrifying that the leader of the resurgent super-power could be someone with such appallingly bad taste in music. From a Feb. 6 [Reuters](#) report, smarmily entitled "Russia's Medvedev secures rock-for-gas deal":

MOSCOW - Deep Purple are heading for Moscow as a farewell gift to Dmitry Medvedev, the chairman of gas giant Gazprom and almost certainly Russia's next president.

Medvedev has told interviewers Deep Purple, known for hits such as "Smoke on the Water", are his favourite band.

The rock group will perform at a show Gazprom

Find your Russian beauty today!...

Browse Photos Now!

JOIN FREE!

RussianEuro.com

www.RussianEuro.com
Ads by Goooooogle

Recent Comments

- [Strikes me...](#)
13 min 53 sec ago
- [Follow the Link!](#)
1 hour 33 min ago
- [Not intended to be ironic](#)
1 hour 35 min ago
- [I sent you an email, Bill.](#)
1 hour 51 min ago
- [counter-revolutionary petit-bourgie scum?](#)
4 hours 31 min ago
- [Still grasping...](#)
5 hours 39 min ago
- [Idiot Left, &c](#)
7 hours 38 min ago
- [What about this? Are you](#)
11 hours 28 min ago



[Insurgent Iraq](#)

Loretta Napoleoni,...

Best Price \$5.00
or Buy New \$15.95



[Privacy Information](#)



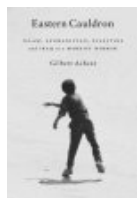
[We Are Iran](#)

Nasrin Alavi

Best Price \$6.54
or Buy New \$15.95



[Privacy Information](#)



[Eastern Cauldron](#)

Gilbert Achcar

Best Price \$6.00
or Buy New \$18.95



[Privacy Information](#)



[Foucault and the Iranian Revolution](#)

Janet Afary, Kevin...

Best Price \$20.00
or Buy New \$24.00



[Privacy Information](#)

is putting on at the Kremlin to mark the 15th anniversary of the firm's creation, industry sources told Reuters.

Both Medvedev and outgoing president Vladimir Putin are expected at the party on Feb. 11. The British band's management declined to comment.

The first deputy prime minister and 70 other political figures and businessmen brought Deep Purple's former lead singer to Moscow last year for a secret concert, local media reported.

Putin, hugely popular at home, has all but guaranteed Medvedev's victory in a March 2 presidential election after naming him as his preferred successor.

Putin is known to enjoy patriotic Russian pop songs. It was not clear if the concert line-up would have anything to suit his tastes.

If Medvedev becomes president, he will resign as Gazprom chairman. Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov is expected to take over the job in June.

» [reply](#) | [email this page](#)

How appropriate

Submitted by Bill Weinberg on Thu, 02/07/2008 - 16:56.

[Perfect anthem](#) for the oil age...

Nobody gonna take my car
Im gonna race it to the ground
Nobody gonna beat my car
Its gonna break the speed of sound
Oooh its a killing machine
Its got everything
Like a driving power big fat tyres
And everything

I love it and I need it
I bleed it yeah its a wild hurricane
Alright hold tight
Im a highway star

Take that, Al Gore!

- [Talk about "limited" independence...](#)
17 hours 12 min ago
- [lol...](#)
1 day 23 min ago

WW4 Report pamphlets

9-11 AND THE NEW PEARL HARBOR

Aw Shut Up Already,
Will Ya?

The inconvenient facts and unanswered questions surrounding the attacks are legion, but the endemic sloppiness of the self-styled "researchers" is delegitimizing the entire project of critiquing the "official version." The ostentatiously named "Truth movement" is not clearing the air, but muddying the water.

Six Dollars



WW4 Report pamphlets



[Homage to Chiapas](#)

Bill Weinberg

Best Price \$2.99
or Buy New \$14.96



[Privacy Information](#)

» [reply](#) | [email this page](#)

WAR AT THE CROSSROADS

An Historical Guide
Through the Balkan
Labyrinth

The Balkan region is intensely multicultural - a point of crossroads and clash for some of the world's major religions, cultural spheres, and economic systems. While there have been vicious wars in Balkan history, these have taken place in the context of manipulation by imperial powers and the self-serving local leaders who cater to them.

Six Dollars



[The Other Campaign/ La Otra Campaña ...](#)

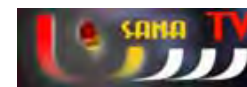
Marcos

Best Price \$4.64
or Buy New \$8.95



[Privacy Information](#)

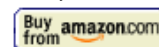
- Panama: uprising after unionist killed
- Mexico: Cananea strikers take message to Capitol Hill
- Mexico: Oaxaca teachers protest
- Peru: Colina death squad used techniques from SOA curriculum
- Iran to join Central Asia



[The West Bank Wall](#)

Ray Dolphin

Best Price \$17.89
or Buy New \$19.46



[Privacy Information](#)

- nuclear-free zone?
- HRW: Israel violated laws of war in Lebanon
- Saudi Arabia: woman faces execution for "witchcraft"
- Violence erupts as Kosova declares independence
- Ex-IRA fugitive detained by Homeland Security —despite asylum plea
- Iraq: USMC didn't "support the troops"

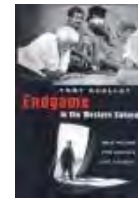
[more](#)

Username: *

Password: *

Log in

- [Create new account](#)
- [Request new password](#)



[Endgame in the Western Sahara](#)

Toby Shelley, Josep...

Best Price \$22.81
or Buy New \$32.00

Buy from [amazon.com](#)

[Privacy Information](#)



[Historical Dictionary of Western Sah...](#)

Anthony G. Pazzani...

Best Price \$70.50
or Buy New \$135.00

Buy from [amazon.com](#)

[Privacy Information](#)

| Home - Latest News | Introduction | Bayside Prophecies | Directives from Heaven | Shopping Cart | Testimonies | Veronica Lueken | Miraculous Photos | Bible | Radio Program | Report R155

Russia and China Striking the United States where it hurts. Part 1



"Russia will also utilize the manpower of China as they make their thrust forward.

I realize, My child, that this message has a great emotional impact upon you. Do not be afearred." - Jesus, March 26, 1983

From Asia Times Online Oct 19, 2006:
AMERICA'S ACUPUNCTURE POINTS

PART 1: Striking the US where it hurts

A noted Chinese theorist on modern warfare, Chang Mengxiong, compared China's form of fighting to "a Chinese boxer with a keen knowledge of vital body points who can bring an opponent to his knees with a minimum of movements". It is like key acupuncture points in ancient Chinese medicine. Puncture one vital point and the whole anatomy is affected. If America ever goes to war with China, say, over Taiwan, then America should be prepared for the following "acupuncture points" in its anatomy to be "punctured". Each of the vital points can bring America to its knees with a minimum of effort.

1.) Electro-magnetic Pulse (EMP) attack

China and Russia are two potential US adversaries that have the capability for this kind of attack. An EMP attack can either come from an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), a long-range cruise missile, or an orbiting satellite armed with a nuclear or non-nuclear EMP warhead. A nuclear burst of one (or more) megaton some 400 kilometers over central United States (Omaha, Nebraska) can blanket the whole continental US with electro-magnetic pulse in less than one second.

An EMP attack will damage all electrical grids on the US mainland. It will disable computers and other similar electronic devices with microchips. Most businesses and industries will shut down. The entire US economy will practically grind to a halt. Satellites within line of sight of the EMP burst will also be damaged, adversely affecting military command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR). Land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles will be rendered unserviceable in their silos. Anti-ballistic missile defenses will suffer the same fate. In short – total blackout. And American society as we know it will be thrown back to the Dark Ages.

Of course, the US may decide to strike first, but China and Russia now have the means of striking back with submarine-launched ballistic missiles with the same or even more devastating results. But knowing China's strategy

of "active defense", when war with the US becomes imminent, China will surely not allow itself to be targeted first. It will seize the initiative as mandated by its doctrine by striking first.

China has repeatedly announced that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons. But as an old Chinese saying goes: "There can never be too much deception in war." If it means the survival of the whole Chinese nation that is at stake, China will surely not allow a public statement to tie its hands and prevent it from seizing the initiative. As another saying goes: "All is fair in love and war."

2.) Cyber attack

America is the most advanced country in the world in the field of information technology (IT). Practically all of its industries, manufacturing, business and finance, telecommunications, key government services and defense establishment rely heavily on computers and computer networks.

But this heavy dependence on computers is a double-edged sword. It has thrust the US economy and defense establishment ahead of all other countries; but it has also created an Achilles' heel that can potentially bring the superpower to its knees with a few keystrokes on a dozen or so laptops.

China's new concept of a "people's war" includes IT warriors coming, not only from its military more than 2-million strong, but from the general citizenry of some 1.3 billion people. If we add the hackers and information warriors from Russia, Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba, Syria and other countries sympathetic to China, the cyber attack on the US would be formidable indeed.

So, if a major conflict erupts between China and America, more than a few dozen laptops will be engaged to hack America's military establishment; banking system; stock exchange; defense industries; telecommunication system; power grids; water system; oil and gas pipeline system; air traffic and train traffic control systems; C4ISR system, ballistic missile system, and other systems that prop up the American way of life.

America, on the whole, has not adequately prepared itself for this kind of attack. Neither has it prepared itself for a possible EMP attack. Such attacks can bring a superpower like America to its knees with a minimum of movement.

3.) Interdiction of US foreign oil supply

America is now 75% dependent on foreign imported oil. About 23.5% of America's imported oil supply comes from the Persian Gulf. To cut off this oil supply, Iran can simply mine the Strait of Hormuz, using bottom-rising sea mines. It is worthwhile to note that Iran has the world's fourth-largest inventory of sea mines, after China, Russia and the US.

Combined with sea mines, Iran can also block the narrow strait with supersonic cruise missiles such as Yakhonts, Moskits, Granits and Brahmos deployed on Abu Musa Island and all along the rugged and mountainous coastline of Iran fronting the Persian Gulf. This single action can bring America to its knees. Not only America but Japan (which derives 90% of its oil supply) and Europe (which derives about 60% of its oil supply from the Persian Gulf) will be adversely affected.

In the event of a major conflict involving superpower America and its allies (primarily Japan and Britain) on the one hand and China and its allies (primarily Russia and Iran) on the other, Iran's role will become strategically crucial. Iran can totally stop the flow of oil coming from the Persian Gulf. This is the main reason why China and Russia are carefully nurturing intimate economic, cultural, political, diplomatic and military ties with Iran, which at one time was condemned by US President George W Bush as belonging to that "axis of evil", along with Iraq and North Korea.

This is also the reason why Iran is so brave in daring the US to attack it on the nuclear proliferation issue. Iran knows that it has the power to hurt the US. Without oil from the Gulf, the war machines of the US and its principal allies will literally run out of gas.

A single blow from Iran or China or Russia, or a combination of the three at the Strait of Hormuz can paralyze America. In addition, Chinese and Russian submarines can stop the flow of oil to the US and Japan by interdicting oil tanker traffic coming from the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. On the other hand, US naval supremacy will have minimal effect on China's oil supply because it is already connected to Kazakhstan with a pipeline and will soon be connected to Russia and Iran as well.

One wonders: what will be the price of oil if Iran blocks the Strait of Hormuz. It will surely drive oil prices sky high. Prolonged high oil prices can, in turn, trigger inflation in the US and a sharp decline of the dollar, possibly even a dollar free-fall. The collapse of the dollar will have a serious impact on the entire US economy.

This brings us to the next "acupuncture point" in the US anatomy: dollar vulnerability.

4.) Attack on the US dollar

One of the pillars propping up US superpower status and worldwide economic dominance is the dollar being accepted as the predominant reserve currency. Central banks of various countries have to stock up dollar reserves because they can only buy their oil requirements and other major commodities in US dollars.

This US economic strength, however, is a double-edged sword and can turn out to be America's economic Achilles' heel. A run of the US dollar, for instance, which would cause a dollar free-fall, can bring the entire US economy toppling down.

What is frightening for the US is the fact that China, Russia and Iran possess the power to cause a run on the US dollar and force its collapse.

China is now the biggest holder of foreign exchange reserves in the world, accumulating \$941 billion as of June 30 and expected to exceed a trillion dollars by the end of 2006 - a first in world history. A decision by China to shift a major portion of its reserve to the euro or the yen or gold could trigger other central banks to follow suit. Nobody would want to be left behind holding a bagfull of dollars rapidly turning worthless. The herd psychology would be very difficult to control in this case because national economic survival would be at stake.

This global herd psychology motivated by the survival instinct will be strongly reinforced by the latent anger of many countries in the Middle East, Eurasia, Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America that silently abhor the pugnacious arrogance displayed by the lone Superpower in the exercise of its unilateral and militaristic foreign policies. They will just be too happy to dump the dollar and watch the lone Superpower squirm and collapse.

The danger of the dollar collapsing is reinforced by the mounting US current account deficit, which sky-rocketed to \$900 billion at an annual rate in the fourth quarter of 2005. This figure is 7% of US gross domestic product (GDP), the largest in US history. The current account deficit reflects the imbalance of US imports to its exports. The large imbalance shows that the US economy is losing its competitiveness, with US jobs and incomes suffering as a result.

These record deficits in external trade and current accounts mean that the US has to borrow from foreign lenders (mostly Japan and China) \$900 billion annually or nearly \$2.5 billion every single day to finance the gap between payments and receipts from the rest of the world. In financial year 2005, \$352 billion was spent on interest payment of national debt alone - a national debt that has ballooned to \$8.5 trillion as of August 24.

The International Monetary Fund has warned: "The US is on course to increase its net external liabilities to around 40% of its GDP within the next few years - an unprecedented level of external debt for a large industrial country."

The picture of the US federal budget deficit is equally grim. Dennis Cauchon, writing for USA Today said:

The federal government keeps two sets of books. The set the government promotes to the public has a healthier bottom line: a \$318 billion deficit in 2005. The set the government doesn't talk about is the audited financial statement produced by the government's accountants following standard accounting

rules. It reports a more ominous financial picture: a \$760 billion deficit for 2005. If social security and medicare were included - as the board that sets accounting rules is considering - the federal deficit would have been \$3.5 trillion. Congress has written its own accounting rules - which would be illegal for a corporation to use because they ignore important costs such as the growing expense of retirement benefits for civil servants and military personnel. Last year, the audited statement produced by the accountants said the government ran a deficit equal to \$6,700 for every American household. The number given to the public put the deficit at \$2,800 per household ... The audited financial statement - prepared by the Treasury Department - reveals a federal government in far worse financial shape than official budget reports indicate, a USA Today analysis found. The government has run a deficit of \$2.9 trillion since 1997, according to the audited number. The official deficit since then is just \$729 billion. The difference is equal to an entire year's worth of federal spending.

The huge US current account and trade deficits, the mounting external debt and the ever-increasing federal budget deficits are clear signs of an economy on the edge. They have dragged the dollar to the brink of the precipice. Such a state of economic affairs cannot be sustained for long, and the stability of the dollar is put in grave danger. One push and the dollar will plunge into free-fall. And that push can come from China, Russia or Iran, whom superpower America has been pushing and bullying all along.

We have seen what China can do. How can Russia or Iran, in turn, cause a dollar downfall? On September 2, 2003, Russia and Saudi Arabia signed an agreement on oil and gas cooperation. Russia and Saudi Arabia have agreed "to exercise joint control over the dynamics of prices for raw materials on foreign markets". The two biggest oil and gas producers, in cooperation, say, with Iran, could control oil production and sales to keep the price of oil relatively high. Sustained high oil prices, in turn, could trigger a high inflation rate in the US and put extreme pressure on the already weak dollar to trigger a more rapid decline.

Russia is now the world's biggest energy supplier, surpassing Saudi Arabia in energy exports measured in barrel oil equivalent or boe (13.3 million boe per day for Russia vs 10 million boe per day for Saudi Arabia). Russia has the biggest gas reserves in the world. Iran, on the other hand, runs second in the world to Russia in gas reserves, and also ranks among the top oil producers. If and when either Russia or Iran, or both, shift away from a rapidly declining dollar in energy transactions, many oil producers will follow suit. These include Venezuela, Indonesia, Norway, Sudan, Nigeria and the Central Asian Republics.

There is a good chance that even Saudi Arabia and the other oil-exporting countries in the Middle East may follow suit. They wouldn't want to be left with fast-shrinking dollars when the shift from petro-dollar to euro-dollar occurs. Again, the herd psychology will come into play, and the US will eventually be left with a dollar that is practically worthless. Considering the strong anti-American sentiments in the world caused by American unilateralism, especially in the Middle East, a concerted effort to dump the dollar in favor of the euro becomes even more plausible.

When the dollar was removed from the gold standard in August 1971, the dollar gained its strength through its use as the currency of choice in oil transactions. Once the dollar is rejected in favor of the euro or another currency for global oil transactions, the dollar will rapidly lose its value and central banks all over the world will be racing to diversify to other currencies. The shift from petro-dollar to petro-euro will have a devastating effect on the dollar. It could cause the dollar to collapse; and the whole US economy crushing down with it - a scene reminiscent of the collapse of the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001. But this one will be a thousand times more devastating.

A successful assault on the US dollar will make America crawl on its knees with a minimum of movements. And this assault can come from China, Russia or Iran - or a combination of the three - if they ever decide that they have had enough of US bullying.

5.) Diplomatic isolation

In 1991, when the Soviet Union collapsed from its own weight, the US emerged as the sole superpower in the world. At that crucial period, it would have been a great opportunity for the US to establish its global leadership and dominance worldwide. With the world's biggest economy, its control of international financial institutions, its huge

lead in science and technology (specially information technology) and its unequaled military might, America could have seized the moment to establish a truly American Century.

But in the critical years after 1991, America had to make a choice between two divergent approaches to the use of its almost unlimited power: soft power or hard power. The exercise of soft power would have seen America leading the world in the fight against poverty, disease, drugs, environmental degradation, global warming and other ills plaguing humankind.

It would have pushed America in leading the move to address the debt burden of poor, undeveloped or developing countries; promoting distance learning in remote rural areas to empower the poor economically by providing them access to quality education; and helped poor countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America build highways, railways, ports, airports, hospitals, schools and telecommunication systems.

Unfortunately, such was not to be. If there was any effort at the exercise of soft power at all, it was minimal. In fact, it is not America which is practicing soft power in diplomacy but a rising power in the East - China. China has been busy in the past decade or so exercising soft power in almost all countries in Africa, Latin America, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Middle East, winning most of the countries in these regions to its side. Through the use of soft power, China has created a de facto global united front under its silent, low-key leadership.

The US, on the other hand, decided to employ mainly hard power in the exercise of its global power. It adapted the policy of unilateralism and militarism in its foreign policy. It discarded the United Nations and even the advice of close allies. It unilaterally discarded signed international treaties (such as the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty). It adapted the policy of regime change and preventive war. It led the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the 78-day bombing of Serbia purportedly for "humanitarian" reasons. It invaded Afghanistan and Iraq without UN sanctions and against the advice of key European allies like France and Germany.

The US-led war in Iraq was a tactical victory for the US initially, but has resulted in strategic defeat overall. The Iraq war caused the US to lose its principal allies in Europe and be isolated, despised and hated in many parts of the world. Without too many friends and allies, the US is likened to an "emperor with no clothes".

So in a major conflict between America and China, isolated America cannot possibly win against a global united front led by China and Russia.

This brings us to the question of alliances, another "acupuncture point" in the anatomy of the superpower, which will be addressed in the second part of this report.

Russia and China Striking the United States with the Assassin's Mace. Part 2



"Russia will also utilize the manpower of China as they make their thrust forward.

I realize, My child, that this message has a great emotional impact upon you. Do not be afearred." - Jesus, March 26, 1983

If America ever goes to war with China, Chinese military doctrine suggests the US should expect attacks on a number of key points where it is particularly vulnerable - where a single jab would paralyze the entire nation. China would aim at targets such as the US electricity grid, its computer networks, its oil supply routes, and the dollar. Other vital "acupuncture" points are outlined below.

1.) A powerful triumvirate

No one ever imagined before 1991 that China and Russia would come together to form a close-knit alliance politically, diplomatically and, most important of all, militarily. For more than three decades before the break-up of the Soviet Union, China and the USSR had been bitter rivals, even going into a shooting war with each other along their common border.

But now the picture has changed completely. China and Russia have embraced one another and help each other ward off the military advances of the lone superpower in their respective backyards. In fact, it was a series of strategic blunders by the superpower that forced China and Russia into each other's arms. How so?

When the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, it would have been the best time for the US to use soft power to win over Russia into the Western fold. Russia at that time was an economic basket case, with the price of oil at \$9 per barrel. But the promises of economic assistance from the US and Europe proved empty, and the Russian oligarchs were the main beneficiaries of relations with the Western powers.

NATO and EU then slowly advanced eastward, absorbing many of the countries making up the former Warsaw Pact alliance. Serbia, a close ally of Russia, was subjected to 78 days of continuous air bombardment. Regime changes were instigated by US and Western-financed non-governmental organizations in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan - all former Soviet republics and considered Russia's backyard - giving Russia a feeling of strategic encirclement by the US and its allies. There was also the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, followed by the establishment of US bases and deployment of troops in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

These aggressive geopolitical moves by the US pushed Russia into the waiting arms of China, which badly needed Russian energy resources, modern weapon systems and military technology as a consequence of the US-led arms embargo imposed after the Tiananmen incident. Furthermore, China also needed a reliable and militarily capable ally in Russia because of the perceived threat of the US.

Reinforcing this Chinese perception was the outrageously wanton bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade by US-led NATO forces in 1999; the spy plane incident in 2001; the unilateral withdrawal of the US from the ABM Treaty in 2002; the enhanced military cooperation between the US and Japan; the inclusion of Taiwan in the Theater Missile Defense program.; the setting up of a military base in Kyrgyzstan which is only some 250 miles from the Chinese border near Lop Nor, China's nuclear testing ground.

Add to that the announcement of President George W Bush that the US would come to the aid of Taiwan in the event that China uses force against it; the sending of two aircraft carrier battle groups to waters near Taiwan in 1995-1996; and the naval show of strength of seven aircraft carrier battle groups converging off the China coast in August 2004. All these aggressive moves by superpower America pushed China to embrace its former bitter rival, Russia.

Both China and Russia needed a secure and reliable rear; and both are ideally positioned to provide it. Moreover, their strengths ideally complement each other. It must be borne in mind that both are nuclear powers. The abundant energy resources of Russia ensures that China will not run out of gas in a major conflict - a strategic advantage over

the US and its key allies.

Russia is also supplying China with many of the modern armaments and military technology it needs to modernize its defense sector. This effectively militates against the arms embargo imposed by the US and the EU on China. Russia in turn needs the increased trade with China, China's financial clout and assistance, and manufactured goods.

The coming together of China and Russia was one of the most earth-shaking geopolitical events of modern times. Yet hardly anyone noticed the transition from bitter enemy to a solid geopolitical, economic, diplomatic and military alliance. The combined strengths of the two regional powers surely surpass that of the former Warsaw Pact. If we add Iran to the equation, we have a triumvirate that can pose a formidable challenge to the lone superpower. Iran is the most industrialized and the most populous nation in the Middle East. It is second only to Russia in terms of gas resources and also one of the largest oil producers in the world. It is also one of the most mountainous countries in the world, which makes it ideal for the conduct of asymmetric and guerrilla warfare against a superior adversary.

Iran borders both the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea, two of the richest oil and gas regions of the world. Most importantly, it controls the gateway to the Persian Gulf - the Strait of Hormuz. Modern bottom-rising, rocket propelled sea mines and supersonic cruise missiles deployed along the long mountainous coastline of Iran, manned by "invisible" guerrillas, could indefinitely stop the flow of oil from the Gulf, from which the US gets 23% of its imported oil.

Japan also derives 90% of its oil from the Persian Gulf area, and Europe about 60%. In a major conflict, Iran can effectively deprive the US war machine and those of its key allies of much needed energy supplies.

Imagine the war machine of the superpower running out of gas. Imagine also a US economy minus 23% of its imported oil. This 23% can rise considerably once Chinese and Russian submarines start sinking US-bound oil tankers. The triumvirate of China, Russia, and Iran could bring the US to its knees with a minimum of movement.

2.) The US's geopolitical disadvantage

Another "acupuncture point" in America's anatomy in the event of a major conflict with China (and Russia) is its inherent disadvantage dictated by geography. Being the lone superpower, any major conventional conflict involving the US will necessitate its bringing its forces to bear on its adversaries. This means that the US must cross the Pacific, Indian, and/or Atlantic Oceans in order to bring logistics or troop reinforcements to the battlefield.

In so doing, the US will be crossing thousands of miles of sea lanes of communication (SLOC) that can easily become a gauntlet of deadly Chinese and Russian submarines lying in ambush with bottom-rising sea mines, supercavitating rocket torpedoes, and supersonic cruise missiles that even aircraft carrier battle groups have no known defense against. Logistic and transport ships and oil tankers are particularly vulnerable.

The air corridors above these sea lanes will also be put at great risk by advanced air defense systems aboard Sovremenny destroyers or similar types of warships in Chinese and Russian inventories. In short, the US will be forced by geography to suffer all the disadvantages of conducting offensive operations against adversaries in Eurasia.

Of course, the US has "forces in being" and "logistics in place" in numerous military bases scattered around the world, especially those strategically encircling China, Russia, and Iran. But when the shooting war starts, these bases will be the first to be hit by barrages of short- and medium-range ballistic missiles and long-range land-attack cruise missiles armed with electro-magnetic pulse, anti-radar, thermobaric, and conventional warheads.

Following the missile barrages, the remnants of such weakened US military bases will easily be overwhelmed by blitzkrieg assaults from Russian and Chinese armored divisions in the Eurasian mainland. China, for instance, has four large armored units constantly on standby, poised to cross the Yili Corridor in Xinjiang province at a moment's notice. The US base in Kyrgyzstan near the Chinese border would not stand a chance.

China, Russia and/or Iran, on the other hand, will operate on interior lines within the Eurasian mainland. When they move troops and logistics to meet any threat on the continent, they will have relatively secure lines of communication and logistics, using inland highways, railways and air transport.

Since the US cannot correct the dictates of geography, it and its main allies Japan and the UK will have to live and fight with this tremendous geopolitical disadvantage. Of course the US can bypass this geographic obstacle if it attacks China and Russia with its intercontinental ballistic missiles, sea-launched ballistic missiles and strategic bombers in a nuclear first strike, but China and Russia have the means to retaliate and obliterate the United States and its allies as well.

There are some among the leading neo-conservatives in the US who believe that a nuclear war is winnable; that there is no such thing as mutually assured destruction (MAD). Well, that truly mad way of thinking may well spell the end of planet earth for all of us.

3.) Asymmetric attack

Superpower America is particularly vulnerable to asymmetric attack. A classic example of asymmetric attack is the September 11, 2001, attack on America. Nineteen determined attackers, armed with nothing but box cutters, succeeded in toppling the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and causing the death of some 3,000 Americans. Notice the asymmetry of casualty ratio as well - the most lopsided casualty ratio ever recorded in history.

China, Russia, and Iran also possess asymmetric weapons that are designed to neutralize and defeat a superpower like America in a conventional conflict. Supersonic cruise missiles now in their inventories can defeat and sink US aircraft carriers. The same is true for medium- and short-range ballistic missiles with independently targetable warheads, extra-large bottom-rising, rocket-propelled sea mines (EM52s), and supercavitating rocket torpedoes (SHKVAL or "Squall"). The US Navy has no known defense against these weapons.

Iraqi insurgents are conducting a form of asymmetric warfare. They use improvised explosive devices, car bombs, booby traps and landmines against the most modern army the world has ever seen. The US's huge advantage in weaponry is negated by the fact that its soldiers cannot see their adversary. They are fighting against a "phantom" enemy - an invisible army.

And how can you win against an enemy you cannot see? This may be one reason why reports of massacres of Iraqi civilians by US soldiers have been increasing lately. But turning sophisticated weapons against civilians will never win wars for America. It will only heighten the rage of the victimized population and increase suicide bombings against US forces.

Connected to asymmetric warfare is asynchronous warfare, where the weaker side bides its time to strike back. And it strikes at a time and place where the adversary is totally unprepared.

For example, if the US were to strike Iran's underground nuclear facilities with bunker-busting tactical nuclear warheads, Iran could bide its time until it develops its own nuclear weapons. It could then use its Kilo class submarines, equipped with supersonic "moskit" cruise missiles armed with Iran's own nuclear warheads, to hit New York, or Washington, DC as a payback to the US for using nuclear weapons against Iran. Or the Iranians could infiltrate nuclear scientists into the US, where they would fabricate a "dirty" bomb to be detonated near the US Congress, in full session while the president is making his annual state of the nation address.

The possibilities for asymmetric and asynchronous warfare are limitless. Various weapons are available to the asymmetric or asynchronous attacker. If a simple box cutter produced such devastating results on September 11, 2001, imagine what chemical or biological weapons dropped from a private aircraft could do to a crowded city; or trained hackers attacking the US banking system and other key infrastructure and basic services; or man-portable surface-to-air missiles attacking US airlines taking off or landing in various airports around the globe; or non-nuclear electromagnetic pulse weapons hitting New York City or the US Capitol. No amount of even the best

intelligence in the world can totally guard against and stop a determined asymmetric attacker.

4.) Attack on US's command and control

C4ISR stands for command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. In a war situation, C4ISR is a prime target because therein lies the center of gravity of one's adversary. Neutralizing C4ISR is like cutting off the head of a chicken. It can run around in circles for a while, but will soon collapse and die. The same is true in warfare.

Having the mightiest and most modern armed forces in the world, America prides itself with having the most sophisticated and advanced C4ISR. US military spy satellites can gather intelligence data and disseminate it on a real time basis. US surveillance and reconnaissance satellites are so sophisticated that their sensors can detect objects on Earth as small as one-tenth of a meter in size, from several hundred miles up. Satellite sensors can also penetrate clouds and bad weather or see in the night. Some of these spy satellites can also monitor radio or telephone conversations.

Aside from communications, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, satellites are also used for navigation, most especially in guiding ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, aircraft and other smart weapon systems to their targets. Without satellite guidance, such "smart" and precision weapons turn into "dumb" bombs and directionless missiles.

The advances in C4ISR are rapidly revolutionizing warfare. Gathering, processing, disseminating, and acting on intelligence is now made possible on a real-time or near real-time basis on a global or regional level. Because of these developments, a new war principle is emerging in the modern battlefield: "If the enemy sees you; you are dead."

The US is far advanced in its C4ISR compared with, for instance, China. China cannot hope to catch up and match the American system anytime soon. So in order for China to survive in the event of a major conflict with the US, China has to resort to asymmetric means. This means that China has to develop effective means of countering and neutralizing America's C4ISR. And that is what China had been working on for more than two decades now.

The heart of America's C4ISR lies in its technologically sophisticated satellites. But this seeming strength is also an Achilles' heel. Neutralize or destroy the key satellites, and America's major forces, such as aircraft carrier battle groups, are blinded, muted, and decapitated. This concept is part of China's strategy for "defeating a superior with an inferior" called *shashaojian*, or "assassin's mace". It is like the mace kept by ladies in their bags, which they use when attacked by a mugger or rapist. They squirt the mace into the eyes of an attacker to temporarily blind him, giving the intended victim time to escape.

China now has the capability to identify and track satellites. And for more than two decades they have been busy developing anti-satellite weapons. China has been developing maneuverable nano-satellites that can neutralize other satellites. They do their work by maneuvering near a target satellite and neutralizing the target by electronic jamming, electro-magnetic pulse generation, clinging to the target and physically destroying it, bumping the target out of orbit, or simply exploding to bring the target satellite down with it. Such nano satellites can be launched in batches on demand by road-mobile DF21 or DF31 booster rockets.

Another anti-satellite weapon in the works is a land-based laser that blinds the sensitive sensors of satellites or even destroys them completely. Of course, if worse comes to worst, China can always use its weapon of last resort, destroying adversary satellites with a high-altitude nuclear burst. But this will only be used if China has not yet fully developed the other options when major hostilities start. With the neutralization of its C4ISR, America would be like "a blind man trying to catch fish with his bare hands", to quote Mao Zedong. In short, America would be brought to its knees.

5.) Attack on US aircraft carrier battle groups

Aircraft carrier battle groups are the mainstay of US military supremacy. They serve as America's chief instrument

for global power projection and world dominance. In this category, the US has no equal. At the moment, the US maintains a total of 12 aircraft carrier battle groups. In comparison, China has none.

From June to August 2004, the US, for the first time in its naval history, conducted an exercise involving the simultaneous convergence of seven of its 12 aircraft carrier battle groups to within striking distance of China's coast. This was the biggest and most massive show of force the world has ever seen. It was to remind China that if it uses force against Taiwan, China will have to contend with this kind of response.

It was mentioned earlier that China's strategy in defeating the superior by the inferior is *shashaojian* or the "assassin's mace". "Mace" is not only a blinding spray; it is also a meaner and deadlier weapon, a spiked war club of ancient times used to knock out an adversary with one blow. The spikes of the modern Chinese mace may well spell the end for aircraft carriers.

The first of these spikes consists of medium- and short-range ballistic missiles (modified and improved DF 21s/CSS-5 and DF 15s) with terminally guided maneuverable re-entry vehicles with circular error probability of 10 meters. DF 21s/CSS-5s can hit slow-moving targets at sea up to 2,500km away.

The second spike is an array of supersonic and highly accurate cruise missiles, some with range of 300km or more, that can be delivered by submarines, aircraft, surface ships or even common trucks (which are ideal for use in terrain like that of Iran along the Persian Gulf). These supersonic cruise missiles travel at more than twice the speed of sound (mach 2.5), or faster than a rifle bullet. They can be armed with conventional, anti-radiation, thermobaric, or electro-magnetic pulse warheads, or even nuclear warheads if need be. The Aegis missile defense system and the Phalanx Close-in Defense weapons of the US Navy are ineffective against these supersonic cruise missiles.

A barrage of these cruise missiles, followed by land-based intermediate- or short-range ballistic missiles with terminal guidance systems, could wreak havoc on an aircraft carrier battle group. Whether there are seven or 15 carrier battle groups, it will not matter, for China has enough ballistic and cruise missiles to destroy them all. Unfortunately for the US and British navies, they do not have the capacity to counter a barrage of supersonic cruise missile followed by a second barrage of ballistic missiles.

The first and second spikes of the "assassin's mace" are sufficient to render the aircraft carrier battle groups obsolete. But there is a third spike which is equally dreadful. This is the deadly SHKVAL or "Squall" rocket torpedo developed by Russia and passed on to China. It is like an under-water missile. It weighs 6,000lbs and travels at 200 knots or 230mph, with a range of 7,500 yards. It is guided by autopilot and with its high speed, makes evasive maneuvers by carriers or nuclear submarines highly difficult. It is truly a submarine and carrier buster; and again, the US and its allies have no known defense against such a supercavitating rocket torpedo.

The "assassin's mace" has still more spikes. The fourth spike consists of extra-large, bottom-rising, rocket-propelled sea mines laid by submarines along the projected paths of advancing carrier battle groups. These sea mines are designed specifically for targeting aircraft carriers. They can be grouped in clusters so that they will hit the carriers in barrages.

The final spike of the mace is a fleet of old fighter aircraft (China has thousands of them) modified as unmanned combat aerial vehicles fitted with extra fuel tanks and armed with stand-off anti-ship missiles. They are also packed with high explosives so that after firing off their precision-guided anti-ship missiles on the battle group, they will then finish their mission by dive-bombing "kamikaze" style into their targets.

If we now combine the mace as a means of blinding an adversary and the mace as a spiked war club, one can see the complete picture of how China will use the "assassin's mace" to send America's aircraft carrier battle groups into the dustbin of naval history. Although China does not possess a single operational aircraft carrier, it has converted the entire China mainland into a "virtual aircraft carrier" that is unsinkable and capable of destroying all the aircraft carrier battle groups that the US and its allies can muster.

The sad part for the US Navy is that even if American leaders and naval theorists realize the horrible truth that

aircraft carriers have been rendered obsolete in modern warfare by China's "assassin's mace", the navy cannot just change strategy or discard its carriers. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been poured into those weapon systems and hundreds of thousands of jobs would be affected if such behemoths are turned into scrap. Besides, even if US Navy authorities wanted to change strategy, the all-powerful and influential military-industrial complex lobby would not allow it.

So, if and when a major conflict between the US and China occurs, say over the issue of Taiwan, pity those thousands of American sailors who are unfortunate enough to be in one of those aircraft carrier battle groups. They won't stand a chance.

A challenge to America

The 10 "acupuncture points" mentioned in this article (See also Part 1: Striking the US where it hurts) are like a 10-stage riddle. It is an "assassin's mace" or war club of olden times with 10 deadly spikes. Any one of those spikes can bring America to its knees. I therefore throw this riddle to the think tanks in the Pentagon, to the US Congress, to the president's men, to US academe, and to every concerned American.

America is in the last two minutes of the fourth quarter of the "great game", and it is behind in points. If America can solve the riddle in time, it wins the game, it can seize global leadership, and the 21st century will truly be the American Century.

On the other hand, failure to solve the riddle will shake America to its very foundation and cause this great nation to collapse - just like that vivid image of the collapsing Twin Towers familiar to each and every American. America loses, and it will be down and out for the rest of this century.

Wake up, America!

Our Lady of the Roses awesome Bayside Prophecies...

<http://www.tldm.org/./Bayside/>

These prophecies came from Jesus, Mary, and the saints to Veronica Lueken at Bayside, NY, from 1968 to 1995.

RUSSIA & CHINA

"Wars are a punishment for man's sins. Syria holds the key to peace at this time. However, I place in front of you, My children, a graphic picture for you to understand. It will be a parable for some, and some will turn away not willing to hear what Heaven has to say in these desperate times."

Veronica-Our Lady is pointing up with Her finger, like this, to Her right side, and high above Her the sky is opening up-all the clouds are floating away and the sky is opening up, and I see a map of the Mideast. And then Our Lady is pointing up farther and that's another map of China and Russia. Our Lady is turning back now; She was looking upward also.

Our Lady-"My child and My children, there are scoffers who will say there shall not be a Third World War. They do not know and cannot conceive of the plan of the Eternal Father. Be it known now that the Father has great heart for all His children, but when the sin reaches a peak only known to the Father, the amount of sin among mankind, then the Father will take action. He will allow you to go upon your reprobate way until there will be few souls to save upon earth, for the others will have died in battle and also at the hands of a corrupt generation of the young." - Our Lady, May 28, 1983

THE APOCALYPSE

Veronica-I'm looking up, and the sky's becoming very lighted. And I am seeing thousands and thousands of people marching. But they look like Chinese, or Mongolian. No, they're-I believe they're Chinese; they're Asiatic. They're marching across the land, and they're boarding some kind of transport. They're going onto the water. Oh, it's a great War. Oh! Oh!

Now Michael is coming over to the left side of the flagpole, and he's looking down.

St. Michael-"My child, we have asked you to send the word to mankind that they will read in the Book of life, the Bible, the words given to them that will fulfill the prophecy of the latter days, Apocalypse. You are living the days

of the Revelations. Read them and be knowledgeable, and you will not be caught without the light." - St. Michael, June 8, 1974

RUSSIA PLANS ATTACK

"My child and My children, I wish that you all keep a constant vigilance of prayer going throughout the world, your country, the United States, and Canada. I warn you again that Russia plans an attack upon the United States.

"You must remember, My children, when you accept the talkings and the words of an atheist: there is no honor in the atheist. There is no truth in the atheist. They will cajole you, and buy you, until you no longer are what is called a 'free nation,' but you will be enslaved-if they do not kill the multitudes before, My child. I say 'if,' because it is their plan to destroy your nation and rebuild it by themselves. The cost of life means nothing to them, as you can recognize in all of the countries around your world that have been invaded by Russia, or Russia is the secret agent giving over the firearms and the destructive missiles to destroy the United States and Canada." - Our Lady, September 14, 1985

COSMETIC ACT TO DELUDE YOU

"I assure you, My children, there is no freedom in Russia. It is all a delusion.

"They seek the monies of the world from the nations of the world. And why do you not learn a lesson? It happened in the time of Lenin; it happened in the time of Stalin. And there you are all on the same road, ready to give billions of monies that should be given to those of your nation and the free nations of the world.

"Do not be deceived, My children, Russia is not free. It is a cosmetic act to delude you. Lenin and Stalin used the same tactics, My children. Why do you not learn from your errors?" - Our Lady, June 18, 1992

WORLD WAR III

"Day by day man is killing now. Many countries shall be embroiled in wars, until we have the greatest war ever seen, nor shall ever be seen again, the Third World War, which shall engulf the nations. And many nations shall disappear from the force of the armaments being gathered now throughout Russia.

"Yes, My child, no matter how the world reacts to the truth, you will shout it from the rooftops that Russia has not accepted any overtures from Rome. Unless Russia can be dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Jesus and Mary, unless they will recognize the truth, they will continue to go throughout the world sowing seeds of discord, discontentment, and war. You know, My children, that war is a punishment for man's sins, but also, war is an indication of the loss of the knowledge of God." - Our Lady, August 21, 1985

"I MADE A PROMISE"

"When I came to Fatima many years ago, I knew that communism would go throughout the world destroying many nations and attacking My Son's Church. Therefore, I made a promise that if the Pope, the Pope of those days and the Pope today, would unite with all the bishops of the world, all together on one day-not the world-but the bishops and the Pope will unite and pray for the consecration of Russia. I do not mean the world, My children; I mean Russia-Russia, the scourge of mankind. You will pray for Russia. One day must be allotted in which Pope John Paul II and also, all the bishops of the world must unite on one day, I repeat, and pray for Russia; or Russia will continue to be the scourge from God. Russia will continue to go throughout the world annihilating people and places and countries." - Our Lady, October 2, 1987

[Directives from Heaven...](http://www.tldm.org/directives/directives.htm)

D10 - [Consecrate Russia](#)  [PDF](#)

D57 - [The Great WW III Chastisement \(Part 1\)](#)  [PDF](#)

D58 - [The Great WW III Chastisement \(Part 2\)](#)  [PDF](#)

D59 - [The Great WW III Chastisement \(Part 3\)](#)  [PDF](#)

D101 - [Russia and China, Part 1](#)  [PDF](#)

D102 - [Russia and China, Part 2](#)  [PDF](#)

D103 - [Communism](#)  [PDF](#)

D104 - [Invasion](#)  [PDF](#)

Articles...

Russian spying in the United States has reached the high-water mark of the Cold War

<http://www.tldm.org/news7/RussianSpyingInAmerica.htm>

Masters of deceit

http://www.tldm.org/news2/masters_of_deceit.htm

Communism dead???

<http://www.tldm.org/news3/dead.htm>

Planned U.S. invasion through Mexico

<http://www.tldm.org/news3/Nicaragua.htm>

Veronica's "landing points" vision: Is this the communist strategy for invading the United States?

<http://www.tldm.org/news3/landing%5Fpoints.htm>

Global communism, part 1

<http://www.tldm.org/news2/global-1.htm>

Global communism, part 2

<http://www.tldm.org/news2/africa.htm>

Russia's master plan

http://www.tldm.org/news/master_plan.htm

Russian spying in Britain back to Cold War levels

<http://www.tldm.org/news7/RussianSpyingInBritain.htm>

External Links...

U.S. urges Ukraine not to certify votes, Newsmax, November 24, 2004

<http://www.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2004/11/23/201815.shtml>

Ukraine elections results to be announced, Fox News, November 24, 2004

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,139466,00.html>

Ukrainian Leader Calls for Talks to Avert Violence, Fox News, November 23, 2004

<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,139340,00.html>

Ukraine protesters march on Parliament, My Way News, November 23, 2004

http://reuters.myway.com/article/20041123/2004-11-23T145322Z_01_N23508336_RTRIDST_0_NEWS-UKR

Russia lashes out at the U.S., Newsmax, November 24, 2004

<http://www.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2004/11/23/200352.shtml>

There are 4 things you must have to survive the end times:

1.) The Douay-Rheims Holy Bible...

"You must all obtain a copy of the Book of life and love, the Bible. Do not accept the new mods. Try to find in your bookstores the old Bibles, My children, for many are being changed to suit the carnal nature of man. I repeat, sin has become a way of life." - Our Lady, October 6, 1992

"I must ask you all to read but a few short chapters a day now, the Book of life and love, your Bible. Knowledge must be gained for all the disciples of My Son, for you will be attacked by scientific minds. But do not be concerned what you will say to them when accosted, for the words will be given to you by the Spirit." - Our Lady, April 10, 1976 ([Order Form](#))

2.) The total Virgin Mary's Bayside Prophecies in 6 paperback books...

The Virgin Mary brings directions from God, the Father in Heaven on how to survive the end times. God, the Father, through the Virgin Mary, tells what is coming, how to prepare for it, how to survive it, and how to even stop it. These six volumes along with the Bible are most important to save yourself and your loved ones. Order it now. Tomorrow may be to late. These 6 pocket size paperback books costs \$33.00. ([Order Form](#))

3.) Heaven's Home Protection Packet...

Heaven's Home Protection Packet...

Our Lord stated we must have crucifixes upon the outside of all of our outside doors. In the "Heaven's Home Protection Packet" there are instructions, four crucifixes, a tube of special cement for wooden or metal crucifixes. Wooden crucifixes adhere better to the doors when the aluminum strap is removed from the back. Put a light coat of cement on the back of the crucifix and then press it to the outside of the door. If you have any problems, you can call us at 616-698-6448 for assistance. This Heaven's Home Protection Packet is available for a donation of \$5.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Send \$8.00 to TLD Ministries, P.O. Box 40, Lowell, MI 49331. Item # P15 ([Order Form](#))



Crucifix on front and back door... The only real protection against terrorists...

Jesus - "Pray and wear your sacramentals. And, also, My children, I ask you again to place a crucifix upon your door. Both front and back doors must have a crucifix. I say this to you because there will be carnage within your areas, and this will pass you by if you keep your crucifix upon your doors." (6-30-84) ([Testimonies of lives and homes saved by the crucifixes.](#))
<http://www.tldm.org/news/crucifix.htm> ([Order Form](#))

4.) Heaven's Personal Protection Packet...

Heaven's Personal Protection Packet . . .

Our Lady tells us to be protected from all evil, we must wear the following sacramentals around our necks: a Rosary, a crucifix, the St. Benedict medal, Our Lady of the Roses medal, the Miraculous Medal, and the scapular. We have all of these sacramentals in a packet we call "Heaven's Personal Protection Packet." This packet is available for a donation of \$5.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Send \$8.00 to TLD Ministries, P.O. Box 40, Lowell, MI 49331. Item # P5 ([Order Form](#))

Our Lady of the Roses, Mary Help of Mothers promises to help protect our children. On September 13, 1977, She said, "He has an army of ogres wandering now throughout your country and all of the countries of the world. They are in possession of great power; so wear your sacramentals, and protect your children and your households. Learn the use every day of holy water throughout your household. Insist even with obstructions, insist that your children always wear a sacramental. One day they will understand that they will repel the demons."

On February 1, 1974, Our Lady said, "My children, know the value of these sacramentals. Guard

your children well. You must awaken to the knowledge that you will not be protected without the sacramentals. Guard your children's souls. They must be surrounded with an aura of purity. Remove them if necessary from the sources of contamination, be it your schools or even false pastors."

This Heaven's Personal Protection Packet is available for a donation of \$5.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Send \$8.00 to TLD Ministries, P.O. Box 40, Lowell, MI 49331. You may use your MasterCard, VISA, or American Express and call 1-616-698-6448. Item # P5 ([Order Form](#))

Your names have been written in Heaven...

"It is not by accident that you are called by My Mother, for your names have been written in Heaven.... But with this great grace you have great responsibility to send this Message from Heaven throughout the world, for if you are able to recover just one more for Heaven, an additional star shall be placed in your crown." - Jesus, August 5, 1975

A great obligation to go forward...

"It is not by accident that you are called by My Mother, for it is by merit and the prayers that have risen to Heaven for your salvation. For those who have received the grace to hear the Message from Heaven, you have a great obligation to go forward and bring this Message to your brothers and sisters. Do not expect a rest upon your earth, for you will have eternal rest very soon." - Jesus, June 12, 1976

The sin of omission...

"The sin of omission shall condemn many to hell, be they layman or Hierarchy. I repeat: not the sin of commission, but the sin of omission will commit many to hell." Our Lady of the Roses, October 6, 1980

My Gift to help spread Our Lady of the Roses' messages to the world.

Amount: \$

We encourage everyone to print or email copies of this web page to all the Bishops and all the clergy. Also, email or send this web page to the news media and as many people as possible.

[Email this page to a friend.](#)

| [Home - Latest News](#) | [Introduction](#) | [Bayside Prophecies](#) | [Directives from Heaven](#) | [Order Form](#) | [Miracles & Cures](#) | [Veronica Lueken](#) | [Miraculous Photos](#) | [Bible](#) | [Radio Program](#) |

The electronic form of this document is copyrighted.

Quotations are permissible as long as this web site is acknowledged with a hyperlink to: <http://www.tldm.org>

Copyright © These Last Days Ministries, Inc. 1996 - 2006 All rights reserved.

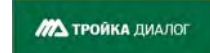
P.O. Box 40 616-698-6448

Lowell, MI 49331-0040

Revised: November 28, 2006



летняя стажировка
в Тройке Диалог



- FEATURES**
- Front Page
 - News
 - Business
 - Opinion
 - Arts & Ideas
 - Stock Market
 - City Wise
 - Crime Watch
 - Latest Wires
 - Current issue

- SERVICES**
- Community
 - Moscow Guide
 - Travel Guide
 - Appointments
 - Job & Career ▶
 - Real Estate
 - Classifieds
 - Conferences
 - B for B
 - MT News **NEW!**
 - Photobook
 - The St. Petersburg Times **NEW!**

- TOOLS**
- Archive Search
 - PDF Edition ▶
 - PDA Edition
 - Mobile TMT **NEW!**
 - RSS Feed
 - My Account
 - Subscriptions ▶
 - Advertising ▶
 - Reprints ▶
 - Contact us

ARCHIVE

February	2008
Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su	
	1 2 3
4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
11 12 13 14 15 16 17	
18 19 20 21 22 23 24	
25 26 27 28 29	
<< Jan.	

ARCHIVE SEARCH

Advanced search...

MARKET MATTERS

Rosneft Debt Worries Push Markets Down
Headwinds from global markets continued to buffet Russian stocks in a volatile week of trading. >>

PUTIN'S LEGACY?

Piety's Comeback as a Kremlin Virtue
The warrior saints Alexander Nevsky and Dmitry Donskoi serenely look down at the nave of the church where a new generation of defenders of the Russian fatherland comes to pray. >>

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

USD RF CB - 24.67

Stock Market >>

MOSCOW WEATHER



Light Snow, -5° C
NW at 4.5 m/s, 738 mb
More info >>

The Moscow Times • com

Wednesday, February 20, 2008 / Updated Moscow Time

RSS >> PDA >>

OPINION / POLICY LINES

Wednesday, February 20, 2008. Issue 3846. Page 9.

Refitting Global Organizations for New Order

By Fyodor Lukyanov

Kosovo's proclamation of independence has sparked a storm of debate. The main topic of discussion is how Kosovo's decision will influence other regional conflicts. More interesting, though, is what role the events in the Balkans will play in the overall weakening of international institutions.

All of the participants in the Kosovo conflict appealed to international law to support their positions. But since the United Nations Security Council has had little impact on resolving the Kosovo issue, the legitimacy of the new state will remain a matter of dispute.

Moscow and Belgrade blame the countries that argued for "independence at any price" -- the United States and Western Europe. For their part, Washington, London, Paris, Berlin and other Pristina supporters feel that Russia's obstructionist position has further weakened the UN Security Council's effectiveness.

In reality, though, this is nothing new. International institutions have been steadily losing influence for the last 15 years. One country after another has contributed to the problem whenever it was expedient to do so.

As a rule, a country's reliance on international law and organizations is inversely proportional to its power. The weaker and more vulnerable a country is, the more it argues for the rights and obligations of all nations. And the reverse is also true: When a country has superpower status, it is tempted to circumvent or outright ignore international law.

Russia Volunteers Wanted
Live and Work Abroad, 1-11 Weeks. Help the Community - Enroll Today!
CrossCulturalSolutions.org/Russia

TEFL Jobs in Russia
Excellent Salaries - Accommodation, Flight and Insurance Included...
www.englishfirst.com

Moscow City Tour
You will see Moscow's main streets, squares and places of interest
www.r-tg.com

Russian Girls For Dating
Russian Girls Seek Love, Dating And Marriage. Join Free Today.
www.RussianEuro.com



ritual, rather than a substantial process of decision-making.

NATO justified its military action against Yugoslavia in 1999 by citing the need to defend the rule of law and human rights. But a different interpretation of earlier UN Security Council resolutions was required to legitimize the military campaign on legal grounds. And the U.S. invasion of Iraq was initiated without any supporting UN resolution whatsoever. According to the opinion of neoconservative ideologues who dominated U.S. foreign policy during the first years of this century, the UN had lost its moral and legal standing and should therefore be abolished.

The situation appeared in a new light when that approach led to unfortunate consequences -- primarily for the United States. With the start of his second term, President George W. Bush attempted to position U.S. foreign policy back within the framework of international agreements. The inability of the old system to regulate international conflicts is becoming more obvious with every new conflict. Former U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's concept of a "coalition of the willing," which has proved a handy substitute for stable alliances and international organizations, prevails.

Of course, the UN is not the only organization that is suffering from decay. Nearly every international organization has become less effective at solving global problems. Talks of reforming various institutions -- from the UN and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to the World Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization -- have not amounted to much.

For example, last spring Russia requested that the OSCE convene to discuss the proposed changes to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Nothing was achieved. The efforts to shift talks on missile-defense issues to include a greater number of EU and NATO member countries were equally unsuccessful. But the members of these organizations are more interested in seeing the question resolved at a bilateral level and do not want to incur any of the responsibility for strategic questions.

NATO itself is going through a crisis. After September 2001, Washington's refusal to fully rely on the organization in its war against terrorism brought NATO's founding principle into question. It is not surprising, therefore, that current U.S. efforts to involve NATO in resolving military problems and to shift its focus toward global conflicts have failed.



To Our Readers

The Moscow Times welcomes letters to the editor. Letters for publication should be signed and bear the signatory's address and telephone number. Letters to the editor should be sent by fax to (7-495) 232-6529, by e-mail to oped@imedia.ru, or by post. The Moscow Times reserves the right to edit letters.

[Email the Opinion Page Editor](#)

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

» The Senseless Rule of Law (Yulia Latynina)

LATEST WIRES

» (RBC - email)

The Moscow Times Student PROJECT



COLUMNISTS

- From a Safe Distance
By Alexei Bayer
- The Russian Front
By Richard Lourie
- Arbat & Main
By Mark H. Teeter
- South of the Border
By Matthew Collin
- Rules of the Game
By Konstantin Sonin
- Between the Lines
By Alexei Pankin
- Inside Russia
By Yulia Latynina
- Policy Lines
By Fyodor Lukyanov
- Macromanaging
By Martin Gilman
- Uncommon Sense
By Georgy Bovt
- Always a Dissident
By Boris Kagariitsky
- The Word's Worth
By Michele A. Berdy

...an exclusive
framed photo
from
The Moscow Times



In the post-Cold War multipolar world, new nations have emerged as international leaders, and they are declaring their right to participate in defining the rules of the global game. The current international institutions, however, were designed to meet the needs of the old bipolar world. They could somehow function as long as they were only required to formally ratify decisions made outside the framework of those organizations.

Which forms of international cooperation are effective in today's world? Those that were set up by a range of different powers to resolve concrete problems. The Group of Six, for example, convened to settle the problem of the North Korean nuclear threat. Or the Group of Five to sort out the situation with Iran. Of course, they operate in coordination with the UN Security Council, but at their core is a combination of different policies and interests from individual countries. But it is difficult to achieve a consensus because of the deep mutual suspicions among the participants.

Is there a chance that this destructive process will give way to something more constructive in the foreseeable future?

It appears that this is unlikely. The end of the Cold War was not the finale, but the start of a painful process of global transformation -- from stable, long-term confrontation governed by well-defined rules to something entirely new. Just where this process is leading remains unclear. The only certainty is that it hasn't stopped yet. It is impossible to establish a status quo or create a new system of standards and institutions while the world is still in constant flux.

The circumstances surrounding the emergence of a new Balkan state suggest a gloomy conclusion. The hope that arose in the 1990s for a world governed by law and human rights did not bear out. It was the combination of the use of military force and the domination of ethnic interests over legal ones that led the citizens of Kosovo to declare their independence.

This indicates that the world has changed less over the last 100 years than was previously thought. And the lessons we thought we had mastered might have to be repeated.

Fyodor Lukyanov is editor of Russia in Global Affairs.

[« PREVIOUS ARTICLE](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

[NEXT ARTICLE »](#)

© Copyright 2006. The Moscow Times. All rights reserved.
Designed by [Oriental Star](#)

Vladimir Putin's nuclear threat to the West

By Adrian Blomfield in Moscow

Last Updated: 2:10am GMT 15/02/2008

Vladimir Putin has delivered perhaps his most menacing tirade against the West yet, repeating threats to train nuclear missiles on Europe and warning of unspecified retaliation if Kosovo declared independence.

Addressing his last press conference as Russian president, Mr Putin mounted a defiant display that demonstrated more emphatically than ever the widening gulf between Moscow and its former Cold War rivals.

In a vintage performance, the former KGB spy laced almost five hours of invective with crude insults, threats and admonitions often expressed in the argot of the Russian street.

Reserving his greatest ire for the United States, which he accused of harbouring a colonial mentality towards Russia, Mr Putin again said that Europe would pay the consequences for a Washington-backed plan to [erect a missile shield in Poland and the Czech Republic](#).

"Our generals, our security council, consider these moves a threat to our national security," he said. "We asked our partners to stop but no one listened to us. So if they continue we will have to react appropriately by retargeting our missiles." Mr Putin also made similar threats against Ukraine if it joined Nato.

The Russian leader - often accused of returning his country to a state of autocracy - portrayed his nuclear threat as an act of democratic generosity, saying he was acting in the interests of Europeans who opposed American military expansionism.

Few western countries escaped the vitriol. Europe was scolded for its "silly", "immoral" and "illegal" backing of Kosovo's imminent unilateral declaration of independence from Serbia.

Although he did not elaborate, Mr Putin gave warning of retaliation once Kosovo broke away - a threat likely to chill Western leaders. "We have a ready-made plan and we know what we are going to do," he said.

advertisement Although Mr Putin is expected to hand over power to Dmitry Medvedev, his handpicked and pliant protégé, after elections next month, there was little sign of a swansong in his final press conference as president.

Indeed, this was Mr Putin at his most combative. To the delight of fawning Russian journalists, he confirmed his intention to re-emerge as a powerful prime minister in a Medvedev administration - and pointedly told reporters that he had no intention of hanging his successor's portrait on his office wall.

Encouraged by enthusiastic applause from his audience, Mr Putin often resorted to crude rhetoric to condemn his critics.

He told western observers who refused to monitor the forthcoming election, widely seen as a sham, that they should "rather teach their own wives how to cook cabbage soup."

He later compared British newspaper stories that carried allegations of his alleged multi-billion-pound fortune to "debris excavated from someone's nostril and smeared across bits of paper."

Critics have accused Mr Putin of creating a personality cult during his years in power - an allegation that may have been borne out by the sycophantic and even simpering questions put to him by local reporters.



Vladimir Putin used the language of the Russian street in his tirade

A Chechen journalist asked the president when he would grace the ravaged province with another visit, while a female reporter presented the president with a golden heart as a gift for Valentine's Day.

Asked what had made him such a great leader, Mr Putin suggested that he had been anointed by God to make Russia a great state and boasted that he had made no mistakes during his eight years in power.

Giving a brief insight into how his mind works, Mr Putin attributed his success to the fact that he approached politics with a tough-man attitude.

"Heads of state have no right to whinge or drool for any reason," he said. "If they are going to slobber and blow snot and say things are bad, bad, then that's how it will be."

Information appearing on telegraph.co.uk is the copyright of Telegraph Media Group Limited and must not be reproduced in any medium without licence. For the full copyright statement see [Copyright](#)

Blues Brothers

Join Frank Lampard and Gianluca Vialli in the Game podcast

TIMES ONLINE



“ If Hillary showed how she’s really feeling, she’d be a lot better off ” Ariel Leve

Send your views

NEWS COMMENT BUSINESS SPORT LIFE & STYLE ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

OUR PAPERS AUDIO / VIDEO JOBS & CLASSIFIEDS

COLUMNISTS LETTERS OBITUARIES BLOGS CARTOON FAITH RELATED REPORTS

Where am I? Home Comment Columnists Guest contributors

[MY PROFILE](#) | [SHOP](#) | [SITEMAP](#)

From The Times

February 5, 2008

Why kowtow to brutal, cynical Russia?

We have a new Cold War and we're losing it. The West must stand up to the Kremlin now

Edward Lucas

Sixty years ago the Berlin Airlift highlighted the menace of Stalin's Kremlin. Forty years ago Soviet tanks crushed both the Prague Spring and any remaining illusions about the Kremlin's grip on the captive nations. Twenty years ago we began dropping our guard, as totalitarianism withered under Mikhail Gorbachev. Now it is time to acknowledge the inconvenient truth. Russia is back: rich, powerful and hostile. Partnership is giving way to rivalry, with increasingly threatening overtones. The new Cold War has begun - but just as in the 1940s, we are alarmingly slow to notice it.

The loudest alarm signal is Russia's predictable yet mystifying presidential election on March 2. Predictable because everyone knows who will win: Dmitri Medvedev, Vladimir Putin's polite, lawyerly sidekick; mystifying because the meaning of that victory is so unclear. Will Mr Medvedev be a mere figurehead? Will he stand down and allow Mr Putin to return? What does his stint running Russia's energy giant, Gazprom, one of the world's most corrupt, incompetent and sinister companies, tell us about his plans for the future? What does his rise mean for the clans of crooks and spooks whose murky feuds have increased so sharply in past months? Once a dead art, Kremlinology is now a lively and useful discipline.

Politics in Russia is a matter of life and death. Mikhail Khodorkovsky, once Russia's richest man, is on prison hunger strike in protest against the ill-treatment of his aide Vasily Aleksanyan. Mr Aleksanyan is confined in a filthy mould-infested cell because he refuses to sign a bogus confession incriminating Mr Khodorkovsky. His judicial torture, including denial of medical care, which has blinded him, has been condemned by the European Court of Human Rights. It reads like something from Dostoyevsky, not a factual account of prison conditions in supposedly one of the world's top eight industrialised democracies.

That doesn't bother most Russians. Mr Putin is wildly popular; so is Mr Medvedev. Mr Khodorkovsky and other former "oligarchs" are seen as despicable emblems of the 1990s, a decade in which Russians feel they were swindled at home and humiliated abroad. Mr Putin has brought both stability and pride. For now, democracy has failed: most Russians say they agree that the media should be controlled and that the opposition should not be allowed to contend for power.

BACKGROUND

Analysis: Putin is flexing his muscles
We must not cave in to a spookocracy
Don't mess with our madrigals, Vladimir
Russia: Britain behaving like colonial masters

Those feelings are complex. They are partly the result of the state-controlled media's propaganda. They also truly represent tragic misunderstandings and missed opportunities in the Yeltsin years, when oil prices were low and Russian governments struggled with crippling foreign debts. Mr Putin has been lucky - with oil at nearly \$100 a barrel, Russia is

TIMES RECOMMENDS

- Obama: is America ready for this dangerous leftwinger?
- Diana: I blame the French There's no place like Terminal 2

OUR COLUMNISTS

Columnists

David Aaronovitch

Blogs

Alpha Mummy

CARTOONS



[More cartoons](#)

[Slide Show](#)



Peter Stothard
The Editor of the TLS writes on books, people and politics



A Don's Life
Mary Beard of Cambridge and the TLS on culture ancient and modern

Communism has gone, but in its place has come "sovereign democracy", a potent cocktail of self-righteousness, nationalism and xenophobia that fuels the Kremlin's power grab abroad. In the "swing states" of Eastern Europe - Bulgaria, Latvia and Moldova - we are already losing the new Cold War. We have avoided catastrophe in Serbia by a hair's breadth. The great engines of EU and Nato expansion, which brought half a continent into our orbit after the collapse of communism, have stalled.

But it is not just "faraway countries of which we know nothing" that are at stake. Russia plays divide and rule with the West, ruthlessly using our democratic politics and open economies to undermine us. It has brazenly hired Gerhard Schröder, the former German chancellor, to promote its biggest energy project, Nord Stream. This is a hugely expensive and strategically vital gas pipeline on the Baltic seabed that will bypass Poland and deliver gas straight to Germany. Like a rich and powerful man who becomes pathetically dependent on heroin, Germany is mainlining on Russian energy. The new pipeline hooks up addict and pusher directly. Instead of urgently diversifying away from gas and to other suppliers, the Netherlands, Italy and Austria are following the same path.

Russia has cowed and muzzled the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, supposedly the Continent's main democracy-promoting and election-monitoring body. It has nobbled the Council of Europe, a talking shop that is supposed to be the custodian of human rights. The British Conservatives, in bizarre alliance with Mr Putin's United Russia party, came within a whisker of electing a former KGB man and Kremlin propagandist, Mikhail Margelov, to the presidency. At its summit in Bucharest in April, Nato's European members are all set to kowtow to Kremlin pressure and give a cold shoulder to Georgia's bid to move towards membership. The EU can not even summon the willpower to liberalise its internal energy markets, let alone counter the Kremlin's ruthless use of cheap energy deals and lucrative pipelines.

Our biggest weakness is money. During the old Cold War, doing business with the Soviet Union was a rare and highly suspicious activity. Now bankers, lawyers, consultants and spin-doctors (and even, it is whispered, politicians) flock to take 30 silver roubles for services rendered, even when they are privately disgusted by the source. Until that changes, we have little chance of resisting the Kremlin - and even less of persuading ordinary Russians that their corrupt, cynical, brutal and incompetent rulers are harbingers of disaster, not triumph.

Edward Lucas is author of *The New Cold War: how the Kremlin menaces both Russia and the West*



How to beat Obama

The British experience that shows how it could be done

[Comment Central](#)

GREEN CENTRAL BLOG



Why insects love global warming

ENVIRONMENT



Climate change: news, comment and tips on how to go green

HAVE YOUR SAY

Russia and the West are like gladiators in a circus. Our politicians and pseudo analysts are unable to see beyond the illusions of Enlightenment. We are marching toward our comun anihilation: can you guess who is enjoying the show? CHINA. They do not need us. They have enough people to populate the world, and they will, if we do not wake up now.

Aleksey, New York, USA

I wish Putin was British. I despise liberal democracy. Oh for something to believe in; oh for something worth living for.

(I have a successful financial career and a beautiful girlfriend. Its not that I'm not grateful; its just simply not what I want)

Alex, London, England

While Russia is flexing its muscles externally it keeps declining internally.

The population has been decreasing at the pace of one million per year, the suicidal rate is the third highest in the world, life expectancy is falling brutally - russian males can hope to live maximum 58 years - 20 years less than their west european counterparts, the whole country is addicted to alcohol and so on.

Russia wants to spook the world in order to avoid looking at its own frightening image in the mirror.

Yarda, Prague,

[Read all 68 comments](#)

[HAVE YOUR SAY](#)

PRINT EMAIL POST TO DELICIOUS

POST TO FARK POST TO YAHOO! POST TO DIGG

ALSO IN GUEST CONTRIBUTORS

Enjoy yourself, pay more
 Sometimes, the best ideas are free
 One Iraq war –that's \$3 trillion to you, Mr Bush

ALSO IN COLUMNISTS

Atticus
 Why Robert Tchenguiz faces a high street rethink
 Atticus

[Ads by Google](#)

Leaving the Navy?

Find jobs with top companies Get matched jobs automatically
www.navyleague.info

Low VA Rates Vets Deserve

Veteran Loans. Guaranteed Low Rates Proudly Helping Vets for 20 Years
www.LowVArates.com

CLASSIFIEDS

CARS JOBS
 PROPERTY TRAVEL

JOBS

Divisional Mortgage Manager

c£75k
 Abbey
 Nationwide

Commercial Services Manager

£50, 616 - £62,402
 NHS Birmingham
 Birmingham

HR Business Partners

£ 26 - £63.5k
 HM Prison Service
 Nationwide

Commercial Manager

Innocent Drinks
 London

[Search more Jobs](#)

Search Ad Reference:

SEARCH

TRAVEL DEALS
 Sherman's Top 25



Published on 02/20/08

\$63 & up
Cheap fares to US cities

\$85/night+
Up to 60% off Bermuda cruises

\$200 & up
Spring flights to Europe

\$299+
Vegas vacations -- airfare incl.

\$699+
Disney cruise & park vacation

\$195 & up
Airfare to sunny Mexico

[» more](#)




Take Off Today!

Where am I? Home Comment Columnists **Guest contributors**

[CONTACT US](#) [BACK TO TOP](#)

[NEWS](#) | [COMMENT](#) | [BUSINESS](#) | [SPORT](#) | [LIFE & STYLE](#) | [ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT](#) |

 SEARCH

Contact our [advertising team](#) for advertising and sponsorship in Times Online, The Times and The Sunday Times. Search globrix.com to buy or rent UK property.

© Copyright 2008 Times Newspapers Ltd.

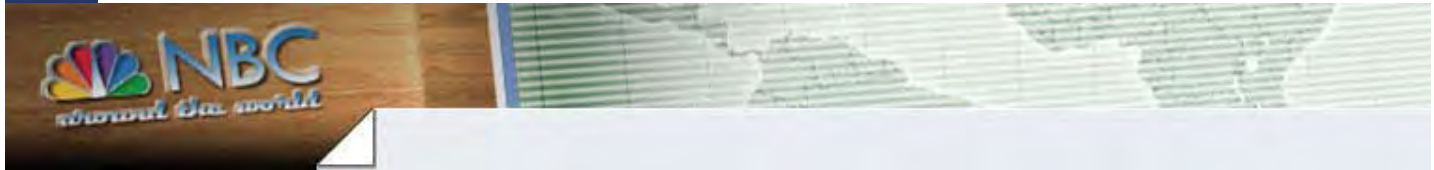
This service is provided on Times Newspapers' [standard Terms and Conditions](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#). To inquire about a licence to reproduce material from Times Online, The Times

or The Sunday Times, click [here](#). This website is published by a member of the News International Group. News International Limited, 1 Virginia St, London E 98 1XY, is the holding company for the News International group and is registered in England No 81701. VAT number GB 243 8054 69.





- [Home](#)
 - » [World News](#)
 - » [World Blog](#)



Web MSNBC World Blog

ABOUT WORLD BLOG

NBC News World Blog aims to provide a dynamic look at world events and trends -- both big and small -- from NBC News correspondents, producers, and bureaus around the world. Online entries -- from text to video -- will explore news events and how they are shaping our world.

Regular contributors include NBC News correspondents, producers and staff based in bureaus across the world and on assignment.

[Click here](#) to read more about the journalists behind NBC News World Blog.

Kosovo throws wrench into U.S.-Russian relations

Posted: Friday, February 22, 2008 3:38 PM

Filed Under: [Moscow, Russia](#)

By [Jim Maceda](#), NBC News Correspondent



MOSCOW – A generation ago, Checkpoint Charlie in Berlin defined the no-go zone between East and West. If you listen to Russian officials these days, that geopolitical schism [has now shifted to the Serbia-Kosovo border](#).

On one side, Russia defends its nationalist proxy, Orthodox Serbians, who say they will never accept a non-Serbian Kosovo; on the other side, Kosovars – more than 90 percent of whom are Albanian Muslims – are backed in their

desire for independence by the United States and most of Western Europe.

Russian warning

This new East-West gap should surprise no one who's watched and listened to Russia's take on Kosovo since June 1999.

Then, just as Serb forces were involuntarily withdrawing from Kosovo, [Russian President Boris Yeltsin ordered his general to take his troops – part of an international peacekeeping mission – and occupy the strategic airport in Pristina before NATO could get there.](#)

Those Russian troops eventually re-joined the peacekeeping operation, but only after days of intense negotiations in Finland between U.S. and Russian officials.

[Most Serbs believed that Yeltsin had abandoned Serbia by acquiescing to NATO's demands.](#)



[SLIDESHOW: Serbs protest Kosovo independence](#)

For years, every time rumors of an Albanian declaration of independence for Kosovo were whispered in Pristina or Brussels or Washington, Moscow would weigh in, warning that such an illegal act could plunge the whole European continent into another spasm of violence. But no one seemed to take notice.

Then Russia started to muscle up: President Vladimir Putin is no Yeltsin, and Russia under Putin has grown into an economic powerhouse, no longer afraid to throw its weight around. [During Thursday's massive rally against Kosovo independence](#), Serbian protestors were holding up posters of Putin, showing that they consider the Russian leader to be their chief ally in the current stand-off with the West

Fighting words

People inside Serbia and beyond are now taking notice of what Russia is saying. And for many in the West it's frightening.

[On Friday, Russia's NATO envoy, Dmitry Rogozin, warned that Russia might have to resort to "brute military force" if Europe recognizes an independent Kosovo.](#)

But in the same breath, Rogozin backed off some, suggesting that Russia would not to go to war over Kosovo. Still, many are asking, how did it come to this?

Russian analysts explain that the West – especially the United States – has fallen victim to a miscalculation which some equate to being as grave as the ill-advised invasion of Iraq. They say that the West has grossly underestimated the place Kosovo holds in the hearts of Serbs, no matter how many – or few – actually live there. [As Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica said at the 200,000-strong rally in Belgrade on Thursday, "Kosovo is Serbia."](#)

This is not to be taken lightly. He used the same words almost 10 years ago when I spoke to him following his election as president of a new, seemingly moderate post-Milosevic nation. "Kosovo is the origin of Serbia," he told me. "We will never give it up." No one took much notice.

Pandora's Box

Analysts here in Moscow also warn that the ripping of Kosovo from the Serbian province will open a Pandora's Box of potentially destabilizing ruptures all around the world: Chechens in Russia, ethnic Serbs in Bosnia, Russians in Moldova, Abkhazians in Georgia, Basques in Spain, just to name a few.

Would the United States defend these groups if they were to declare independence in violation of territorial integrity and international law, experts in Russia ask? If not, then why in Kosovo?

To define it in more familiar terms, Kosovo, for Serbs, is like a combination of Jerusalem and the Alamo: both the birthplace of its identity, forged in a bloody defeat at the hands of the Turks in 1389, and the crucible of its religious faith. Over the centuries, Russia has been Serbia's natural ally, sharing the Orthodox religion and the Cyrillic alphabet. But the United States also has been a trusted ally to Serbia through two world wars and other difficult times.

But strangely, friends of a friend can act like enemies. Just when it seemed like Russia and the United States were on the brink of what some consider a new Cold War, tiny Kosovo reared its head, caught the West's fancy for freedom and declared its independence – just as it promised it would. In the process, it triggered the kind of belligerent rhetoric we haven't heard from the Russian military in years.

Forget Checkpoint Charlie. Kosovo means hot zone.

[Q & A: The history of strife in Kosovo](#)
[Key dates in Kosovo's drive for independence](#)

Jim Maceda is an NBC News Correspondent based in London who covered the wars in Yugoslavia extensively during the 1990s. He is currently on assignment in Moscow.

[Main page](#)

 [EMAIL THIS](#)

Comments

Make no question about it, Russia is a bully, always has been, always will be. They are ones that have recently threatened to point missiles at the Czechs, have orchestrated political assassination in London, shut off energy supplies to Georgia, have declared signed agreements void and are now threatening "brute military force." They also have no freedom of press and blame all negative events on the west. Stalin would be so proud. Well, let's make JFK proud, it is our rightful quest and the people's right to be free. If they want war, we will bury them once again.

Pat, Philadelphia (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 4:24 PM)

A well reasoned and sobering analysis. I only wish Mr. Maceda had offered his thoughts prior to the rush to recognition. Perhaps someone would have listened.

John, Chicago IL (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 4:47 PM)

The United States and a minority of countries in the EU that supported the breakup of Serbia violated the international law. The US is a bully, and Russia with the majority of the world behind it should put its weight against these violations. I guess the friendly US mask fell off the Comrade Wolf the US this time. Kosovo, Iraq, "orange" revolutions, blowing the international law to name just a few, these are all parts of the "US international policy". Oh well...

Vlad (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:19 PM)

Kosovo is free!!! not the Russian version of freedom but the west's version of freedom. I for one am sick and tired of

Russia threatening violence every time something does not add up to their brand of oppression. Putin is much worse than Stalin.

John Golden Lawrebeville, NJ (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:20 PM)

The media is blinding you to the truth. Kosovo is part of Serbia. This is an invasion. Let me put this in layman's terms. Imagine Serbia is the US and Kosovo was Texas. One day the illegal Mexican immigrants gather and say there are now more Mexicans in Texas than Americans so we're going to take Texas and call it illegalland. The US is supporting the muslim side of this issue. Thank Bill Clinton for bombing the Christians on this. We should just bomb Israel if we're going down this path. Milosevic was a psycho but the Serbian christians should have our support on this.

Jay Berry, Texas (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:22 PM)

If you really want to know why the Christian Serbs are upset over Kosovo, this web site has the answer.

www.interfax-religion.com/kosovo/

Paul, Wilkes Barre, PA (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:24 PM)

PAT as a KOSOVAR ALBANIAN I WILL PROUDLY FIGHT WITH THE U.S.A FORCES, AND IN EUROPE MOST ALBANIANS WHO ARE NOW 7-8 MILLION STORNG WILL FIGHT WITH THE U.S.A FORCES. GOD BLESS AMERICA AND KOSOVA AND ALL THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN FREEDOM...

VALON, NEW YORK, USA (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:28 PM)

Bravo, Mr. Maceda. You have written this very well. Russia, indeed, has long ties with Serbia, stronger than the United States unfortunately. Kosovo could be the spark that ignites an old flame, or war, between the two most nuclear equipped countries in the world. [also, perhaps, Kosovo holds more than what is said to be there..] Threat after threat, blame after blame, and accusation after accusation Vladimir Putin has increased tensions between the West and Russia dramatically. He flaunts Russia's military might (such as detonating the largest non-nuclear bomb ever recorded, and scrambling his long range bombers for "routine" flights) to influence not only the U.S., but West Europe as well. From 1945 to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Cold War was paramount over all world matters. Shall it be re-lived? Shall our children go through it also? Questions too important to be looked over.. If such should happen will we be ready for it? Look to the future, but do not just wait, we must pick ourselves up out of the economic turmoil we wallow in and work together completely as a nation once again. I do not want to make John F. Kennedy just proud, I want to make him flip over in his grave.

Brett, Saint Petersburg, FL (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:28 PM)

Pat, who do you think you wil bury ? A Nation that has a president that is actually strong ? A Nation without 9 trillion in public debt and a military in shambles after 6 years of war in the desert left the US literally with a worn out military machine ?

Against a nation with enormeous Oil and Gas reserves ?

I think the places of the US and Russia have switched, the one that was rich during the cold war is the one that is broke now and vice versa.. think before you speak my friend.

John Masterson, Seattle, Wash (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:31 PM)

If you look at the Map of Servia and Kosovo you will find that they are actually in one piece of land. Like California and Nevada or Nevada to Arizona, or California to Arizona etc. We are all together. Imagine if you can if one of the States wants a different form of government like communism. Will the rest of the States allow this to happen? I don't think so.

Fred Young, Alameda, Ca. (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:44 PM)

Hey, what about us, we want to be free as well! At least 90% of people would be for independence. Will US support us? Or you have two sets of rules: one for Serbs, and the other for everybody else in former Yugoslavia. Well, if it is

so, don't think we will lay down and play dead; giving up freedom is not an option.

Milan, Serb from Serb republic in Bosnia (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:46 PM)

If the US can place missles in the Czech Republic and Poland, why can't Russia point missles in return?

George Lucas, NYC, NY (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:46 PM)

Funny that as I read this column, I'm looking at a picture of a Tu-95 Bear that a colleague of mine shot back in the late 1980s when he was in the Air Force. He was on an interdiction mission when they came across the Bear approaching Greenland. They gently escorted it back East, but I look at it and wonder when we'll be doing this again. Oh, we just did the other day. The Cold War would be a nice break from all of this suicide bombing/unconventional warfare. At least the Russians are predictable, if nothing else.

Curtis, Albuquerque, NM (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:51 PM)

the real solution is too reunite Yugoslavia to become one nation again.

david a deily bangor pa (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:52 PM)

Ar we going to give Texas and the rest of the sout if they ask or start shuting or our police.
Can we let the sam not to pay taxes like Albanians did at Serbia for last 20 years.
Think bifore you say anything ,bicouse world will turn against us like they did to Hitler.
Afther ocupaing the haf of the world ,as we do today.

Mike.IL .Chicago (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:57 PM)

The U.S. as always doesn't think ahead and realize there are other interests and viewpoints in the world. I'll be interested to see how supportive they'll be of other seperatist regions that have just as much merit as Kosovo.

Kyle, Rochester, MN (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 5:58 PM)

I for one have never understood why we ever thought the Soviet Union was dead. It just changed names and leaders but make no mistake, the Bear is still the Bear and it's growling again. It's time for the Eagle to peck the Bear's ass!
The real enemy has always been the Soviet, I mean Russia.

Peter Smith (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:04 PM)

We, in the USA are a country supposedly dedicated to the idea of freedom. When people, anywhere on the globe that were once forced together, now want to go their own way, our country should support them. Freedom and democracy, will, in the long-run, benefit us all.

Nicholas, Philadelphia, PA (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:05 PM)

The U.S. would not have gotten involved with Kosovo had not "Clinton", (Bill), been caught with his pants down. Butt, (no pun intended), Bill had to divert attention away from his, (extracurricular), activities.. Every time this situation appeared, impeachment, purgery, etc. some little fellow on a donkey are camel had bombs dropped on them..... Bill went to Kosovo and dropped bombs on the Christians and supported the Muslims, Yea this was and still is a stupid idea. King George has followed the lead of this "Prancer", or should I say, Dancer, Bill was good at skirting and unskirting the real issues.

Douglas Soileau Marbury , al (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:06 PM)

All empires are alike. Make sure you understand that aggressive expansionistic Global Power Projection evident in building dozens of new military bases in Kosovo, Iraq and elsewhere to primarily support US Concealed Energy Grab such as now in Iraq will definitely cause more and more tension around the globe in the future. Hypocritical Double Standards for which US even have no support at home among the fast vanishing middle class, IS the main

cause for current destabilization of world order, growth of Islamic Nationalism, hate of US and declining of US own economy we all watch in disbelief. Once upon a time US stood for individual freedom and privacy. The system took pride in developing strong middle class. Today US government spy on their own citizens, people chock in about \$60,000 per capita consumer debt and fear their own government, while they watch the dollar sinks like a rock in the ocean and their standard along with it. Ultimately, with sharply declining dollar value and \$ 9.3 Trillion Debt, US knows her power will begin to diminish, so they are making last effort grab policy their priority, before the Empire's faith is sealed. It's a pity! For more information on current state of US economy, visit official US www.gao.gov web site.

[John, New York](#) (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:14 PM)

Why is the U.S. encouraging (implicit or explicit) problems elsewhere, especially in areas that are not critical to our success? Let's bring most of our troops and Dept. of State employees home!

Loyd Eskildson (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:14 PM)

Ignoring a 1,000 years of Balkan history, the outcome of two world wars, the deep feelings of the Serbian people and the long standing threat by Russia to use military force to support the Serbs could be called the most significant miscalculation of the 21st century bringing Europe to the brink of war. One might ask how the United States and the European Union missed the point completely and deliberately set up a confrontation with the Serbs and the Russians.

Does anyone with an ounce of common sense or any insight into the history of the Balkans and the emotional ties the Serbian people feel towards Kosovo doubt that the "moderates" in Serbia will be swept away in this nationalist tide or that the Russians will go toe to toe with NATO and the EU if more Western troops are sent to Kosovo under any guise. The Russians and the Serbs believe with a strong degree of support from other European countries that the actions taken by the Kosovars and supported in the West are provocative and an absolute violation of international law. As such, they feel free to act with "brute force" to match what they perceive as an illegal power play by the West. Our actions, and the threats by Secretary Burns, are do nothing to calm this very dangerous situation.

Martin Gray, Miami, Florida (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:17 PM)

I recall as a young Marine when the Berlin wall came down. Two intelligence officers in the room adjacent mine argued about whether the collapse was a deep Russian ruse. I knocked on their door and sat in on the conversation. I now believe the elder Marine, a Captain, was correct: The Russians simply needed time to recover financially, then move out again.

I wonder, are there prophecies from the Christians about a war?

[Robert, Oakdale, California](#) (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:18 PM)

Blah blah blah. Overexagerate why dont you. Whats Russia going to do, not sell it gas. Please/ serbia tried to exterminate the country, and now the overwhelming majority of kosovo does not want to be a part of that country. That sounds like a Democracy to me.

Adrian, El paso, Texas (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:19 PM)

Our precipitous recognition of Kosovo independence will be another in the litany of foreign-policy disasters that Bush bequeaths to future presidents. He continues with his messianic, infantile dream of planting democracy everywhere, and damn the realities of Afghanistan, Iraq, Russia, etc. The fact is that Kosovo is a mafia state that has adopted democratic rhetoric simply to bewitch Bush the Fool. These "democrats" now have legal license to do what they have done extra-legally: oppress and ethnically cleanse the 200,000 Serbs still living in their territory. If Bush were truly interested in democracy, at the least we could have insisted on a carve-out of the largely Serbian enclave that borders on Serbia proper. Nothing good will come of this, and in the bargain we've given more ammunition to the Russian revanchists pushing their country back into its traditionally hostile posture toward the west.

Alex G, NYC (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:20 PM)

I was in Belgrade on Friday, February 15 through Monday, February 18. Witnessed the signing of the Kosovo independence on Serbian television from the apartment I was staying in. On Saturday the 16th I stood on the fringe of a very peaceful demonstration in front of the French Embassy at the end of Knez Mihaila Street. I have been traveling to Serbia every two months for the past 18 months and the sights we are seeing on the news are horrifying but the violence is also being carried out by an extreme minority of Serbians. The people are warm, friendly, caring, and they want the same out of life that all Americans want - freedom. Believe me, the Serbs don't understand the university shootings here at NIU or Virginia Tech anymore than we understand what is going on in their country.

Tom, Gaithersburg (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:20 PM)

Nothing is going to happen. This is just an temporary artificial journalistic hype, now that Iraq seems to get quieter and not too "hot" to talk about or write about. Selling news starts with first "creating news", just like this one. Serbian propaganda about their "love" for Kosovo comes from nothing else but the immense underground richness of that particular now--independent-country. We are talking here about billions of tons of coal, aluminum, iron and gold. Yes, the world GOLD must wake up those who were so far sleeping. There is nothing unusual going on over there, just straight business! Whatever "side dishes" you see or hear on "news" is just smoke created to divert the attention from the real issue, remember: GOLD!!!

Eric, Chicago, IL (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:21 PM)

If anyone is a bully, it's the Usa ! how come we meddle in everyone's else's business ? Greed, that's why ! So what do you expect ? When other nations notice how Greedy we are ?
I say get out of everyone's business and concentrate on the problems we have here at home !

George, San Jose, Ca (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:22 PM)

Serbia and the independence-minded extremist touched off World War 1 - which led to World War 2 - which led to the Cold War. I don't understand why Kosovo's independence claim is more important to America and the West than good relations with a nuclear-armed Russia. This is beyond me.

Tim, Moravia, New York (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:25 PM)

The US is once again in the middle of every one else's business. Once again we should be focusing on our own mess in our own country. What would we do if part of our own country wanted to succeed from the US and the world backed the succession. Would we just stand by and let it happen while another country established a military presence in let's say Florida or Texas.

michael, tula Oklahoma (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 6:25 PM)

POOR JUDGMENT ON THE SIDE OF US AND EUROPEAN UNION, YOU CAN NOT TAKE LAND FROM A SOVEREIGN COUNTRY AND RECOGNIZE INDEPENDENCE. WHY THE US HAS NOT RECOGNIZED PALESTINE INDEPENDENCE EVEN THOUGH ONE HUNDRED NATIONS DID IN THE UN. THIS IS A BLOW TO INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE UN. IT IS NO LONGER INTERNATIONAL LAW. IT IS US AND EUROPEAN LAW. RUSSIA UNDERSTANDS THAT IT HAD BEEN UNDERMINED BY THIS AND WILL NOT LET THIS GO ANYWAY.

BASHER SALEM, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 10:36 PM)

Pat from Philadelphia said:

"Make no question about it, Russia is a bully, always has been, always will be. They are ones that have recently threatened to point missiles at the Czechs, have orchestrated political assassination in London, shut off energy supplies to Georgia, have declared signed agreements void and are now threatening "brute military force."

Well, well well...

Dr. Hebbels, minister of Propaganda in Nazi German ones said that semi-truth is much more effective than the whole truth.

I'm not sure why you told people semi-truth?

1) Yes, Russia recently threatened to point missiles at the Czechs IF Americans put their missiles over there!

A little difference, huh? ;)

America is going to put missiles in Czech "against Iran's rockets" that don't even exist!

Check the map: Czech is even nearer to Moscow than Cuba!

What would America do if Russians had said: "Ok, we want to put our missiles in Mexico to protect Costa-Rica from N. Korean rockets"???

2) "Russia has orchestrated political assassination in London"

Any proof of that?

We watch how police chasing a guy that shot policemen before, damaged some cars and put lives of many people in danger. And this guy is called "suspect"! Why? Because only court can say "Guilty"!

You can say anything about KGB, but this organization is not stupid! If they wanted to kill him, they would have done it in much more professional way!

Ancient Romans said: look who will benefit from it?

How Russia benefited from assassination of retired spy that was as "dangerous" to Russia as a fly? Did Russia really want that scandal?

3) "shut off energy supplies to Georgia"

Where did you hear about it? On "free independent" CNN? ;)

4) "have declared signed agreements void"

I heard about just one occasion: Russia declared Treaty of Conventional Weapons in Europe void recently.

Why?

Firstly, after many attempts to persuade US and NATO do not put missiles next to Russian border and after offering ANY other options including sharing Russian bases.

Secondly, the treaty was signed by both Russia and NATO, but ONLY Russia ratified it! And it acted according to this Treaty, BTW, as good will!

NATO countries refused to ratify it asking Russia to do something that wasn't related to the Treaty.

So, if NATO didn't ratify it why Russia only must comply with it?

BTW, this Treaty limited moving weapons and troops in Europe and required to ask permissions before.

Did NATO ask Russian permissions when it bombed Serbia and moved its troops to Kosovo?

And the last, but not least.

I was in Moscow when September 11 happened.

By the evening of that day American embassy was covered by flowers and burning candles. Crowds were staying around the embassy with signs: "We also were killed in World Trade Center!"

Putin was the first among other national leaders that called Bush and offered any support. And it provided it! Russians helped Americans a lot in Afghanistan with bases, intelligence, etc. They saved a lot of American lives in Afghanistan!

Russia is NOT bully, and Russians are NOT bullies!

Thanks God America lost in WWII 100 times less people This is a shame Cold War plague is still alive!

Booba Kastorsky, Boston, MA (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 10:44 PM)

If the Russians want to talk tough about how they will use their military force if they need to, should also remember that we watched their big daddy, The Soviet Union, crumble to the ground. If they want to start another Cold War, or even World War Three, the United States will once again watch the communist wannabes fail. We are the world's sole remaining Super Power for a reason and have the right to let other nations be free from authoritarian rule.

Jacob, Miami, Florida (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 10:47 PM)

A. Kosovo is Serbian & always will remain such.

B. America has never "buried" Russia as the moron in the message above me proclaims. America got its asses kicked in by Koreans, Vietnamese, & currently by Iraqi freedom fighters. How in the world could they ever defeat the best fighters in the world-Russians.

C. Why are we on the side of Albanians who are nothing more than a bunch of Islamist criminals. Haven't we learned our lesson when we defended Afghanistan extremists against Russian army. Now we call the same groups we have supported then Taliban.

D. Finally. If a million Polish Americans inside Chicago have decided to annex Chicago from USA, call it Poland

republic, & seek independence from US , WHICH IS PRETTY MUCH WHAT IS HAPPENING IN Serbia, would you support this stupidity in the name of freedom . GIVE ME A BREAK !!!!!!!!
This time the greatest military power in the world , Russian republic stands shoulder to shoulder with it's closest blood brothers the Serbs. So why don't you try this old trick again , why don't you bomb Belgrade again my friendonly beware of aftermath , because it would BITE.

Efrim Soltanovich , Centennial , CO. (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 10:48 PM)

After spending 22 years in the Army and serving many deployments overseas to lands such as Panama, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Afghanistan, I could really care less about Kosovo's plight for independence. We should wait until we're asked for help, not assume that we know what's best for everybody. All of the "Do-Gooders" in this world should brush up on their history a bit and they might then realize that these countries we're supposedly helping rarely have ever seen peace... for 2000 years religion and dictatorships have been driving the train.

Tim Browning, Zanesville, Ohio (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 10:48 PM)

Putin wants the Russia of old. He recognizes the current economic and military weakness of the U.S.. We are overstretched militarily, suffering economically due to the war and from out-sourcing all of our jobs and technology, and have few friends in the world all thanks to Dubya Bush and Cheney and "friends". Of course Russia is going to flex their muscles...expect the same actions soon from China, and maybe India. Those last two have their boots on our throats as to our economic dependence on them...and we've done that to ourselves with the corporate greed of our CEO's and Board of Directors. We're becoming just like the Russians -breaking from the weight of our leaders and corporations not paying attention to the home fires, and not learning from the past...even as far back as from the time of the Romans.

Ray, Detroit MI (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 10:49 PM)

History show up the great mistakes that cost millions of lives and enormous cost when the land is fenced in the name of freedom, but this freedom is not specified in the religious basis rooted in those places, mistakes that nobody wants to look upon because can make them look weaker.

georg aguir, Bloomington CA (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 10:51 PM)

Mr. Maceda's comment: "But the United States also has been a trusted ally to Serbia through two world wars and other difficult times." I'm sure he was thinking about former 'old' Yugoslavia (before Communist Party took over the country) and not Serbia. Does Mr. Maceda remembers the year of 1999? Is that the way of helping somebody? I'm sure Serbia did not deserved that kind of help, after being a European 'gate keeper' (for centuries) against the islam invasion. United States created an islam country (Republic of Bosnia & Herzegovina) in the heart of Europe, and now is trying to 'push' another islamic satelite named Kosovo and all that for the good old OIL that this country needs so badly.

milan jankovic (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 10:53 PM)

Kosova's independence is not about USA or Russia. Kosova has 95% Ethnic Albanians with different language and culture from Serbs. Mr. Maceda should learn the history first. I think US made the right choice, better give Kosova what they deserve than send there 200,000 troops.

Robert (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 10:56 PM)

Fight with Russia you suggest you must be MAD our military cant even beat the towel heads

[eric,nanuet NY](#) (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:00 PM)

To Pat From Philadelphia,

We never "buried" Russia you typical ignorant American. Russia is still the only country on the globe that can nuke America quickly and completely. You have never travelled much in the world I can tell as only a stupid, ignorant

American like yourself would call a still weak country a bully when so many in the world look at America like a bully today. How many Iraqi children and elderly did the American people kill in Iraq? You are responsible as an American Pat, for killing thousands of Iraqi children, how do you feel about that? How is that for being a bully? I have been to Russia three times and was always taken back by how warmly I was treated by the Russian people who are generous, wonderful people indeed. Many of them like Americans unlike so many other nationalities in the world who hate us all because we are American. Americans like you only fuel their fire against us Pat. I have also been to 25 countries in the world and on four continents and lived in another two countries abroad. Hearing Americans as ignorant as you is shocking and just goes to show how little certain Americans like you know anything about the true workings of the world at large. Putin was the first foreign leader to call Bush after 9/11. We angered them like we have the Serbs and everyone else in the world since 9/11 due to arrogant ass like you and the white trash Texan in the White House who unfortunately are US citizens and make us all look bad with their stupidity, arrogance and false sense of righteousness. Americans like you have the least regard for a human life and everyone knows that in the world now. Between the health care lobby and the gun lobby, filled with murdering bastards, they as Americans both kill about 45,000 Americans per year---so would Stalin be proud of this do you think Pat? This equals almost 500,000 or a half million Americans who died unnecessarily in the past ten years alone due to having no health insurance or from gun misuse---the real weapon of mass destruction that has killed tens of thousands of Americans over the years than any of Saddam's WMD ever did. Also Pat, count 300,000 dead, innocent Iraqi civilians that we indirectly and directly killed and we look like animals ourselves as Americans who have no regard for a human life--either American life or an Iraqi life. Stalin killed his own people and so does the American corporate government establishment like the lobbyists from Corporate America who bribe our useless corporate politicians everyday in America to turn the other way while the health care and gun lobbies kill thousands of us and keep our southern border open to attract cheap, exploitable foreign labor. What about our national security then? The unnecessary loss of an American life then is the same whether at the hands of Islamic terrorists or due to the American corporate politicians who allow innocent Americans to die because bribe money from the health care and gun lobbies is more important to them than saving American lives. So Pat, as an American today, humble yourself before God Almighty and take accountability for all of the evil that people like you with your mentality, have allowed our country to get away with in the world you typical All-American, filthy, scumbag. People like you have learned nothing from 9/11 Pat. We must take accountability for the innocent lives we also cause to perish in America and the world as well that are caused by Americans like you. I am a good American and you are a bad American. That simple Pat. Doz va donya!!!

Sincerely,
A Proud American,
Dan

Dan Portland, Oregon (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:03 PM)

I guess some in Washington feel we are not spending enough money on the boogie man wars in Iraq, Afgan, etc., and figure why not waste some more money and servicemen lives over another dumb cause. At this rate, another 10 years or so and the U.S. will be at war with all the countries in the world!

Don, New Brighton, PA (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:05 PM)

While it is true that Serbia, because of its past actions, had lost the "moral" right to Kosovo, legally, on all levels, recognizing an independent Kosovo is contrary to International and European laws, as well as diplomatic norms. The UN agreements that ended the international conflict over Kosovo, as well as EU laws and precedents make a de facto and de jure recognition simply illegal and I'm aghast at the lack of US and European explanations over their recognition of Kosovo. As a former United Nations official who served 12 years in the Former Yugoslavia, as well as the UN War Crimes Tribunal in Kosovo and Belgrade, how can we create legal security structures, such as the War Crimes Tribunal, as an example of modern international rule of law, only to trample over existing laws.

James Luko, Beijing, China (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:07 PM)

it's hard to bury russia this time around, pat from philadelphia. maybe you can do it on your own.

frank, germantown md (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:08 PM)

Russia says that Kosovo shouldn't be getting its independency from Serbia. But how come, they never said anything when the Serbian army killed over 15,000 unarmed and innocent Kosovars, raped 20,000 women, including little girls aged 10-11 years old. Destroyed over 120,000 houses and left homeless 1 million people. It seems to me, that Russia didn't have much to say at the time.

Eriola, Montreal, Canada. (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:10 PM)

I'm glad they burned our embassy. This is a proud moment in American foreign policy. The Kosovars had the guts to stand up on their own with a little help from us and others. Lets all hope the Iraqis are taking note.

Stew R Augusta, Maine (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:13 PM)

Pat says: "If they want war, we will bury them once again". It seems like, there are forces around the world, who are pushing for another major war. Few profiteer from current wars. And they play dangerous cards of nationalism, patriotism and aggression in all possible forms. We are sliding towards another major world war.

Why do billions - and this time billions - have to die for the rest to start thinking that wars do not solve our problems.

This is not a miscalculation. Quite the opposite, it is a well calculated, albeit short sighted, move, which should generate good weapons sales. Destabilization of Europe, even if it is just a perception, will weaken Euro and help out US economy. Unfortunately, as usual, money wins.

Timour, Oklahoma City, OK (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:16 PM)

Russia invaded every border country's territorial rights in forming the USSR. If it weren't for lack of economy in Russia and the ability to maintain its stronghold on those countries, they would still be a part of the USSR. Russia has very little credibility on a global scale when it comes to protecting the sovereignty of other nations. Of course their eyes only see mother Russia and its potential military gain with each stand made.

Dave, Bossier City, La (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:21 PM)

Kosovo was never birthplace of Serbia, despite what Serbs claim. Kosovo was annexed by force to former Yugoslavia right after the fall of Turkish Empire in 1912, and since Serbs used ethnic cleansing and genocide to rule the region, which is rich in, coal other minerals. The idea of been a "cradle of Serbia state" was invented by Milosevic in 1985 when he took over as a leader and plunged Yugoslavia into civil war. Recognizing the independence of Kosovo ends an era of oppression and Serb ethnic cleansing and genocide and it was the right thing to do, the only thing that would bring peace and stability to the Balkans and Europe.

Zahn Hajdini (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:24 PM)

The Russians have raised a good point in denouncing the illegality of a unilateral declaration of independence from Kosovo. After all, the 1998 crisis was centered around then president Milosevic's brutal crackdown on ethnic Albanian separatists, and much of the US's rhetoric was then based on the former dictator's carnage. Now that he is gone, one wonders what exactly serves as a legitimate proximate cause for the West's support of Kosovo's independence. This, of course, is beside the raw fact that this rushed mass endorsement might very well prove to be a miscalculation of catastrophic proportions.

Pierre-alain Seya, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Sent Friday, February 22, 2008 11:28 PM)

[Next >>](#)

SEND A COMMENT

PLEASE READ:

All comments must be approved before appearing in the thread; time and space constraints prevent all comments from appearing. We will only approve comments that are directly related to the blog, use appropriate language and are not attacking the comments of others.

Message (please, no HTML tags. Web addresses will be hyperlinked):

Your name, city and state (John Doe, Seattle, Wash.):

Your e-mail address (jdoe@msnbc.com):

Your website (it's okay if you don't have one):

Remember me? (We'll keep it private) Remember me?

TRACKBACKS

Trackbacks are links to weblogs that reference this post. Like comments, trackbacks do not appear until approved by us. The trackback URL for this post is: <http://worldblog.msnbc.msn.com/trackback.aspx?PostID=692450>

ON LOCATION

- ['We are dying for nothing' says Kenyan](#)
- [Kenyans debate nation's fate](#)
- [Delhi cracks down as monkeys run amuck](#)
- [Rickshaws against global warming!](#)
- [Hope, loss, and bicycles in Zambia](#)
- [Braving blogging like a wildebeest in the wild](#)
- [Liberia ready for a 'great turn around'](#)
- [Rwanda's long road back](#)

advertisement



More World Blog

Recent Posts:

- [Kosovo throws wrench into U.S.-Russian relations](#)
- [Starting on a long road to recovery in Liberia](#)
- [Remaking China's 'Garden of Perfect Splendor'](#)
- [Rwanda's long road back](#)
- [Rwanda is slowly 'becoming whole' again](#)

Archives:

- [February 2008 \(18\)](#)
- [January 2008 \(28\)](#)
- [December 2007 \(18\)](#)
- [November 2007 \(28\)](#)
- [October 2007 \(25\)](#)
- [September 2007 \(32\)](#)
- [August 2007 \(32\)](#)
- [July 2007 \(25\)](#)
- [June 2007 \(32\)](#)
- [May 2007 \(24\)](#)
- [April 2007 \(21\)](#)
- [March 2007 \(29\)](#)
- [February 2007 \(21\)](#)
- [January 2007 \(28\)](#)

- [Blogging Baghdad](#)

Categories:

- [Baghdad, Iraq \(63\)](#)
- [Bangkok, Thailand \(4\)](#)
- [Beijing, China \(59\)](#)
- [Beirut, Lebanon \(3\)](#)
- [Cairo, Egypt \(5\)](#)
- [Havana, Cuba \(19\)](#)
- [Islamabad, Pakistan \(23\)](#)
- [London, England \(27\)](#)
- [Mainz, Germany \(10\)](#)
- [Moscow, Russia \(9\)](#)

- [On Assignment \(55\)](#)
- [Tehran, Iran \(19\)](#)
- [Tel Aviv, Israel \(25\)](#)

Syndicate This Site

Add World Blog to your news reader:



External Links

- [Iraq the Model](#)
- [Baghdad Burning](#)
- [Iraqi Bloggers Central](#)
- [Michael Yon: Online Magazine](#)
- [Milblogging.com](#)
- [Checkpoint Baghdad](#)
- [BLACKFIVE](#)
- [Boxun News](#)
- [Danwei.org](#)
- [Sand Monkey](#)
- [The Spirit of Man](#)
- [Aryamehr](#)
- [City Boy](#)
- [CubaNet](#)
- [AllAfrica.com](#)
- [Sudan: The passion of the present](#)
- [PostGlobal](#)
- [FP Passport](#)
- [Economist blogs](#)
- [Global Voices Online](#)

Interactive



Launch

[Fight for Iraq](#)

Learn more about the ethnic, religious and political power plays in and around Iraq during a briefing of the region led by NBC's Richard Engel.

DAILY NIGHTLY



[The blog of "NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams" features a daily post from the broadcast's anchor and managing editor, as well as contributions from correspondents and producers around the world. Go behind-the-scenes and learn how news is gathered and produced for the broadcast.](#)

MSNBC Weblogs

- [Ads of the Weird](#)
- [allDAY](#)
- [Alpha Channel](#)
- [At Bat](#)
- [Beyond the Arc](#)
- [The Body Odd](#)
- [Clicked](#)
- [Daily Nightly](#)
- [Cosmic Log](#)
- [Daryl Cagle's Cartoon Weblog](#)
- [Deep Background](#)
- [Does It Work?](#)
- [Extra Points](#)
- [Field Notes](#)
- [First Read](#)
- [The Fit List](#)
- [Hardblogger](#)
- [Inside Dateline](#)
- [The News Hole](#)
- [Open Mike](#)
- [Photoblog](#)
- [Red Tape Chronicles](#)
- [Test Pattern](#)
- [World Blog](#)
- [Your Biz](#)
- [Zeitgeist](#)

[Cover](#) | [U.S. News](#) | [World News](#) | [Business](#) | [Sports](#) | [Tech/Science](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Travel](#) | [Health](#) | [World News](#) | [Weather](#) | [Local News](#)
[Newsweek](#) | [Today Show](#) | [Nightly News](#) | [Dateline NBC](#) | [Meet the Press](#) | [MSNBC TV](#)

[About MSNBC.com](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [RSS](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [Search](#) | [Help](#) | [News Tools](#) | [Jobs at MSNBC.com](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#) | [Privacy](#)

[© 2007 MSNBC.com](#)

- © 2008 Microsoft
- [MSN Privacy](#)
- [Legal](#)
- [Advertise](#)

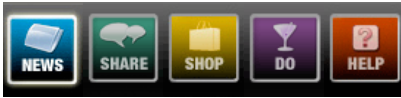
- [Feedback](#)
- | [Help](#)

My Dashboard

Username:

Password:

[Register](#)



Site Web



Web Search powered by
YAHOO! SEARCH

[JOBS](#) [REAL ESTATE](#) [AUTOS](#) [ADVERTISE](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#)



57° F

[FORECAST](#) [TIDES](#)

News



Opinion | Editorial

Article Links: [email this page](#) | [printer friendly version](#) | 194 reads

Kosovo powder keg

[Comment on this story](#)

Saturday, February 23, 2008 at 12:30 am



Kosovo's bid for independence could be complicated by low productivity, high unemployment, and half its population being under 16.

NINE YEARS ago, the [United Nations](#) made a deal with [Serbia](#): Hand over [Slobodan Milosevic](#), stop the persecution of ethnic Albanian Kosovars and institute certain reforms, and [Serbia](#) would be able to maintain its territorial integrity, including the province of [Kosovo](#).

But by granting immediate recognition of the breakaway [Kosovo](#) region after it announced its independence Sunday, both the [U.N.](#) and the [United States](#) have reneged on that deal - even after [Serbia](#) held up its end of the bargain.

In this instance, religion seems to have colored [U.S.](#) policy, and most likely to ill effect.

[Kosovo](#) is about half the size of metro [Atlanta](#) in both population and geographic area. The majority of its 2 million people are Muslim. In the Bush administration's zeal to show

the world it supports Muslim democracies, it too quickly turned its back on [Serbia](#) in favor of [Kosovo](#).

Angry Serbs responded Thursday by breaking into the [U.S.](#) embassy, burning an office and an American flag. The attack merits condemnation, and the fact that Serbian authorities seemed to look the other way while the mob assembled suggests that officials wanted to send [Washington](#) a message.

Although some tiny nations do make a go of it, backing [Kosovo's](#) independence is a decision the [United States](#) may regret, considering the region's internal instability and potential for disaster.

Industry in [Kosovo](#) is virtually nonexistent. The gross domestic product per capita is only \$250 a year. Unemployment is at a dreadful 50 percent, and half the population is under 16. That's a million youths, half of whom are not likely to find work, and so become discontent.

An angry, young, destitute Muslim populace has too often proved a fertile recruiting ground for radical Islam. [Kosovo's](#) independence should therefore be met with a healthy dose of unease.

News reports quote former [U.S.](#) envoy to the [U.N.](#) [John Bolton](#) warning, "Its instability risks attracting Islamic extremists from around the world."

The move could also destabilize [Macedonia](#) and [Montenegro](#). Both nations have regions with significant ethnic Albanian populations that, like [Kosovo](#), border on [Albania](#).

Besides granting approval of a possible magnet for terrorists within [Europe](#), recognizing [Kosovo](#) also puts the [U.S.](#) at odds with allies such as [Poland](#), [Hungary](#), [Romania](#), [Greece](#), [Spain](#) and [Israel](#). It could also mean a further cooling of relations between the [United States](#) and [Russia](#), which opposed the break-up of [Serbia](#).

[Congressman Dan Burton, R-Ind.](#), founding chairman of the [Congressional Serbian Caucus](#), has urged the Bush administration - as well as [Serbia](#) and [Kosovo](#) - to remain at the negotiating table to work toward a mutual agreement.

"I was deeply disappointed to learn today that [Kosovo](#) has decided to walk away from peaceful efforts to resolve the status of the province by unilaterally declaring its independence from [Serbia](#)," Rep. Burton said in a statement Sunday.

"This separation has occurred despite concerted efforts on behalf of [Serbia](#) to engage in negotiations to determine a mutually agreed upon solution that would ensure a peaceful, prosperous future for Serbs and [Kosovo](#) Albanians alike. It is my fear that this unilateral action could spark another round of violence."

Unfortunately, it seems the powder keg that set off World War I is all too likely to explode again.

In the Bush administration's zeal to show the world it supports Muslim democracies, it too quickly turned its back on Serbia in favor of Kosovo.

Your Rating

Score: **0.0**, votes: **0**

If you'd like to rate or comment on the story above, please [log-in](#) or [register](#) now.

[Car Insurance Quotes Online](#)
www.insurance.com

[Fed Cuts Interest Rates Again](#)
www.LowerMyBills.com

Article Links: [email this page](#) | [printer friendly version](#) | 194 reads

Buying
or
remodeling?



Find your unique style
at our unique price.



Click here to visit a
DirectBuy
showroom near you.



Top Jobs

[Savannah Square Retirement](#)
Community, a premier Five Star Quality...

[Self Pay Collector](#)
(w/exp. & also trainees), FT/PT avail for...

[General Manager Growing](#)
home care company based in Bluffton,...

[Full Time Skilled](#)
Mechanic needed with 3 years experience...

[JOB FAIR February](#)
26th & 27th DGS has outstanding career...

[View All Ads](#)

Augusta Top Jobs

[Medical *Great Career](#)
Opportunity* GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS ELIGIBILITY...

[View All Ads](#)

Athens Top Jobs

[DIRECT SUPPORT TECHNICIANS](#)
To provide supervision, direct...

[View All Ads](#)

Top Autos

[Kia Mini Van](#)
'03 3.5L engine 85K mi, seats 7, CD, elec. windows,...

[Honda Accord EX](#)
'00 6cyl, garage kept, gold, fully equip. lthr...

[Toyota Tacoma '05](#)
31K mi, exc cond., CD, Dble cab, blue, \$17,500...

[Corvette 2007 Corvete](#)
Convertible Fully loaded, LT3 Options,...

[FORD F-150 4X4](#)
2005 LARIAT W/ KING RANCH PKG., WHITE/ BGE
63,000...

[View All Ads](#)

Top Homes

[Tybee Island Perfect](#)

for a single or couple, lрге 1Br/Ba apt.,...

[Ardsley Park Garage](#)

Apartment 714 A E 54th Street - 1 bed/1...

[BY OWNER 10](#)

Douglas Court, Bloomingdale. Completely renovated,...

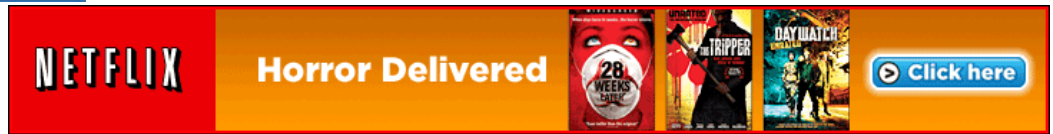
[Home In Guyton](#)

Area 4 br , 2 ba , 2car garage. 1yr old. Neighborhood...

[Effingham Area Brick](#)

3Br/2Ba, \$875 per month, \$875 security...

[View All Ads](#)



A promotional banner for Netflix's horror content. It features the Netflix logo on a red background, followed by the text "Horror Delivered" in white on an orange background. Below this, there are three movie covers: "28 Weeks Later", "The Tripper", and "Day Watch". To the right of the covers is a blue button with a white arrow and the text "Click here".

© 2008 SavannahNOW and the Savannah Morning News.
[About Savannahnow.com](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Local Business Listings](#)