

Fact and Propaganda: Yugoslavia and The “Politics of Genocide”

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Is it possible that the prevailing current usage of the word genocide is “an insult to the memory of the Nazi regime victims”?

This incisive thought of Noam Chomsky was taken from the preface he wrote to an astonishing book titled “The Politics of Genocide” by Edward Herman and David Peterson, published in Belgrade in 2010 by “Vesna info”.

Edward Herman is a professor emeritus teaching finance at the University of Pennsylvania and David Peterson is a free-lance journalist. What an unusual match, you might think at first. However, if you check the exhaustive list of references you will find out that they have worked on at least two more published books, both dedicated to the former Yugoslavia and its disintegration. David Peterson is author of another dozen of published books, either alone or in cooperation with other authors.

According to Noam Chomsky, the end of the Cold War “opened an era of the Holocaust denial”, in which the humanitarian bombing of Yugoslavia (read: Serbia) is far from being the last piece of the puzzle.

According to “Counter-Revolutionary Violence: Bloodbaths in Fact and Propaganda”, written by Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky, in the period between 1945 and 2009 the USA organized “major” military interventions in as many as 29 countries. “Thanks to its dominant position and its global counter-revolutionary efforts, the US has been the key single instigator, organizer and provider of moral and material support for some of the heaviest bloodsheds that took place after the World War Two.

The US officials, supported by the media and intellectuals close to the administration (“genocide intellectuals”), have mastered the skills of “crime management” used to draw attention of the public away from the violence instigated and endorsed by the leading global super-power and direct the public eye towards the violence perpetrated by the US enemies. In line with this the authors have come up with an unusual classification of the bloodbaths into four categories: constructive, benign, criminal and mythical.

“The largest genocidal act undertaken in the last thirty years was the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq following the invasion of Kuwait in 1990, both in respect of the number of victims and in respect of full awareness of the impact of this policy among its creators”, reads the introductory section of the book.

The New York Times revealed that “in the long run, Iraq has been pushed back into pre-industrial times, though it still suffers from post-industrial dependence on energy and technology”. And Washington Post, quoting a reliable source, stated that “the bombs... were targeted at everything that was vital for survival of the country”. Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

Dennis Halliday, the leading UN humanitarian coordinator in Iraq, resigned issuing a statement that overall effects of the sanctions were comparable to that of a genocide. And Eleanor Robinson, lecturer at the Old Soul College in Oxford (England), added: “You will have to go back in time as far as the Mongol invasion of Baghdad in 1258 to find an example of pillage of comparable magnitude”. You can guess who was doing the pillage!

Edward Herman and David Peterson have exposed the ill doings of politicians, intellectuals and reporters who used the word genocide in their reports on the most deadly world crisis since the end of the World War Two (5.4 million dead between 1998 and 2007 in DR Congo) only 17 times, while killing of 4,000 Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija was qualified as genocide as many as 323 times!

George Robertson, British Defense Minister, admitted during the hearing before the Parliament: “Before Račak this year (24 March 1999), the KLA was responsible for more deaths in Kosovo than the authorities of Yugoslavia”. The number of killings since 1998 was estimated at 2000, and 500 of these killings were attributed to Serbian forces.

“During the civil wars in the wake of disintegration of the former SFR Yugoslavia in the nineties, the USA, Germany, NATO and EU supported national minorities which insisted on breaking away from the federal state and acted against the national group of Serbs who persisted in their efforts to save the former Yugoslavia. That is why the Western powers strongly supported first Croats and Slovenes, later Bosnian Muslims, and finally Kosovo Albanians,” explained Edward Herman and David Peterson, quoting a number of critically intoned works.

We are also informed that the NATO forces supported, “even coordinated war operations, and as there were numerous cases of ethnic cleansing and ethnically motivated killings, it was only natural that expressions such as ethnic cleansing, massacre and genocide were applied primarily to the war acts of the Serbs”. Regarding the “Srebrenica massacre”, they say that there is no proof that Serbian forces killed anyone but “the Muslim men capable of army service”, taking care to evacuate all children, women and the elderly by buses.

“If Račak was a contrived crime, and we believe that it was, than the war sold to the world on the strength of this crime was based on a lie, and therefore any claims that the war was waged on humanitarian grounds must be disputed, if for no other reason then on account of this fact alone,” said Edward Herman and David Peterson, referring to their own article “CNN: Sale of a NATO War on a Global Scale” from 2009.

“The massacre of Račak” perfectly suited the needs of Bill Clinton's administration and NATO and provided them with an excuse to launch the air attacks against Yugoslavia (Serbia), which had been prepared for a long time, soon after the failure of the negotiations in Rambouillet, “one of the greatest staged deceptions in recent history”.

When Madeleine Albright was first informed that the attacks had been launched, she commented with delight: “The spring has come early to Kosovo this year”.

This valuable book meticulously reveals the double standards applied to war acts in Darfur (Sudan), Rwanda, Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Guatemala, Salvador, and so on.

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