

Kosovo: First "NATO State"

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Kosovo's Fate Can Be Clarified on May 11. Russia Has its Final Chance

The decision of U.S president George Bush to start deliveries of arms to Kosovo (for reasons of "bolstering" U.S. security) and the belated sincerity of Carla del Ponte, Prosecutor General of the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia, who spoke about the anti-Serb atrocities of the current Albanian leaders in that province, became the final elements of the brilliant western scenario. Indeed, the scenario was brilliantly orchestrated and orderly implemented.

The forced seizure of the cradle of Serbia's statehood and Orthodoxy, and the creation of the world's first "NATO state" was the work of all the present-day international institutes, including UN, the European Union, the North Atlantic Alliance, OSCE and the Hague Tribunal. Some organisations and individual countries presented the order others implemented, still others acted as the "cover" group. The objective was achieved in less than a decade starting from 1998 when an OSCE mission was opened in Kosovo headed by William Walker, an active participant in blatant CIA operations in Central America in the 1980s. It was him who made public details of the alleged massacre by Serbian security forces of the residents of the village of Rachak in Kosovo in January 1999 that came as a shock to western public. And even though independent observers soon announced that in reality the dead were Albanian militants killed in battle whose uniforms were replaced by civilian clothes. But the required pretext for the anti-Serbian campaign was there.

The time then came for the United Nations, EU and the Contact group. Talks in Rambouille and Paris in 1999 were organised with an eye to making Belgrade give up Kosovo under the threat or actual use of force. The demand of NATO's unimpeded access to Kosovo was ghastly reminiscent of the 1914 Austrian-Hungarian ultimatum to Serbia (true, then it was all about the unlimited authority for Austrian courts to investigate independently the circumstance of the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Kingdom of Serbia).

In 1914 Serbia rejected the ultimatum, and Russia sided with Serbia with all its military might. In 1999 the Yugoslav negotiators acted in much the same way, but all that Moscow offered in support, boiled down to Boris Yeltsin's rambling TV address "Stop Clinton!" and the dashing U-turn of Evgeni Primakov's aeroplane over the Atlantic. NATO made its *coup de grace* against the background of lively debates by then Russian elite on the issue whether it was worthwhile for Moscow to quarrel with the West over "some Yugoslavia". Their answer was "No", and to appease Washington and Brussels the more, they despatched Viktor Chernomyrdin to beat the consent to capitulate out of Slobodan Milosevic.

In the summer of 1999 NATO's the Yugoslav army and Serbian police in Kosovo was substituted for by KFOR. Russia made a show of its formal part in the peacekeeping operation, but failed to even get its own zone of responsibility determined. Russian troops then had to report to NATO commanders, immeasurably pleasing their recent "cold war" opponents, and a little later Russian troops quietly left Kosovo for good, betraying both authorities in Belgrade and ordinary Kosovo Serbs.

It took no magic to predict further developments. The UN mission in Kosovo was closing its eyes on the crimes of Albanian extremists, and the Hague tribunal drew carbon copies of accusations of the Serbian and Yugoslav leaders. NATO began to set up bases to train Albanian military units, while the chieftains of the terrorist "Kosovo Liberation Army" continued to seize power in the province. Organising elections and the follow-up selfproclaiming of Kosovo's "independence" February 17, 2008 under the circumstances proved – elementary.

The latest revelations of Ms. Del Ponte about the unprecedented trade in human bodily organs extirpated from hundreds of kidnapped and murdered Kosovo Serbs along with the Interpol and Europol reports on Kosovo turning into Europe's biggest drug trafficking terminal give one a clue as to what the sources of Kosovo's "independence" are.

It is not hard to foresee that there will be more new shocking revelations coming from western politicians and dignitaries, confident that Kosovo's independence process is irreversible so they can now repent their sins, shedding crocodile tears – provided no harm is done to their shared cause.

But both Serbia and Russia still have their last chance to grab before, as it were, the train is out of reach, finding the way into the engineer's cabin and making the train run on a different line. The most important thing is to be able to take advantage of the current situation. For Serbs that is May 11 early parliamentary elections that are to mark the beginning of the revival of Serbian national spirit and the cleansing of the bodies of power of traitors, yes-men and the "fifth column." The follow-up developments can include (provided the only democratic force, the Serbian Radical party coming to power), Serbian leaders could officially make a call on Russia to become the defender of Kosovo Serbs. It is quite possible given the UN Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 1999, which even the West still honours it as legal. The document confirms Belgrade's right to despatch to Kosovo a limited consignment of troops to protect Serbs in Kosovo and their historical and cultural monuments, something not yet demanded by either by Serbia or Russia. The arrival of Russian troops to Kosovo's northern parts could become the first step on the path of installing genuine order in Serbia.

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