

The Blackmail of America: How the U.S. Is Still on the Wrong Side in Serbia

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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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Something happened after Bill Clinton's 1999 war in Kosovo. In fact, there was no "after," for it never ended. Its [continuation](#) was characterized by anti-Serb arson, [kidnappings](#), [bombings](#) of NATO-escorted civilian [buses](#), [burning a baby alive](#), and [unchecked slaughter](#) and/or [torture](#) of Serbian [octogenarians](#), school [girls](#), [farmers](#), [teenage boys](#), and Albanians who sold goods to Serbs — and occasionally a peacekeeper in the rare event one tried to prevent any of it. All this was dismissed by politicians and media — uniquely on the same page in the Balkans — as "revenge killings." But anyone familiar with Kosovo [coverage](#) from the preceding decade recognized this as a [continuation](#) of the real ethnic cleansing that precipitated the showdown between the Kosovo Liberation Army and Belgrade.

Indeed, toward the end of 1999 [several major newspapers](#) deigned to [report](#) on [findings](#) that mass graves such as the infamous Trepca zinc mine turned up empty, as did the stadium we were told was being used as a concentration camp. Anyone reading this one-time follow-up would have also learned that the "cleansing" of 800,000 Albanians had [more](#) to [do](#) with [NATO bombs](#) and [KLA orders](#) than with the outrageous claim that Serbia was trying to empty the province of 90 percent of its population, a [myth](#) we titled "[Operation Horseshoe](#)."

But the bombshell post-war story had no legs. No media outlet, human rights organization, or congressional subcommittee launched an investigation, and the presses moved on, taking the public with them. So Americans don't know that within months of our serving as the KLA's Air Force, the Albanian insurgents also tried to seize the Presevo Valley area in southern Serbia, which today is again seeing increased terrorist activity. Then, by early 2001 the supposedly disarmed KLA and its various other acronyms started a civil war in Macedonia, which had sheltered 400,000 Albanian refugees from the Kosovo war.

At the same time, the Albanian fighters started to openly engage NATO troops. In Feb. 2000, the UN and NATO in Kosovo issued a joint statement that "two young French soldiers, who came here as peacekeepers, are lying in hospital beds suffering from gunshot wounds inflicted on them by the very people that they came here to protect," the Cato Institute's Gary Dempsey [reported](#). He added, "As a candid intelligence officer with the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) explained to me in November, the [KLA] has not disarmed and disbanded as the White House claims, but instead maintains an underground network that has 'more than enough weapons to start another war.' The relationship between NATO's peacekeepers and the underground KLA, he added, can be summarized in the following way: 'We are their tool, and when we stop being useful to them, they will [turn](#) against us.'"

Writing in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* in 2004, a civilian subcontractor with the U.S. Army named Tanja Gavrilova related part of her 27-month experience in Kosovo: "While on a

border patrol, monitoring [the] Albanian rebel insurgency, the U.S. unit I was working with came under direct mortar fire in a village named Krivenik. An Associated Press journalist, Kerim Lawton, was seriously injured...He died shortly afterward...I once asked a NATO commanding general why ethnic Albanian extremists were not unmasked for what they truly are — bloodthirsty, war-waging terrorists. He looked at me, paused, and replied, “How do you begin to go against the very group you supposedly came to help? We obviously did not know who we were dealing with. We bombed the wrong side.”

In March 2000, before America had decided to stake her future on a Greater Albania rather than engage the well-armed Albanians, the *Washington Post* reported, “A senior Pentagon official warned yesterday that U.S. troops in Kosovo this spring may have to fight their former allies, ethnic Albanian guerrillas who are rearming themselves and threatening cross-border attacks against Serbia. ‘This has got to cease and desist, and if not, ultimately it is going to lead to confrontation between the Albanians and KFOR.’” A few months later, when the KLA was “making a bid for outright independence,” as the *Toronto Sun* reported, then KFOR Commander General Klaus Reinhardt said, “When NATO came into Kosovo we were only supposed to fight the Yugoslav Army if they came back uninvited. Now we’re finding we have to fight the Albanians.”

But that didn’t happen. Instead, we came around to seeing things the Albanian way. In a 2007 [interview](#) with Bulgarian news agency “Focus,” Faton Klinaku — secretary of the KLA Veterans Organization in Pristina — helped explain: “If the international community fails to recognize the right of the Albanian people for self-definition, and the status is defined on the basis of compromises, we would naturally resume the fight...Every other decision different from [independence] would lead to violence for which both the politicians and the international community would be guilty.”

The message was already being delivered, as CNSNews.com [reported](#) in Nov. 2005:

The threat [of an organized military operation by ‘the Kosovo Independence Army’] follows increasing violence against international forces in Kosovo and may lead to an alliance between armed rebel groups and jihadist forces...Rebels have blown up several vehicles belong to UNMIK and the Kosovo [Police] Service, leading UNMIK to warn employees to check their vehicles for bombs before starting the engines...[G]raffiti across Kosovo warned “UNMIK get out!”...NATO’s Kosovo Force has an emergency plan called “Operation Safe Haven” in place to evacuate internationals...The existence of the KIA was at first denied by UNMIK and [KFOR], but later confirmed by UNMIK Police Commissioner Kai Vittrup...[Ex-OSCE security chief Tom] Gambill believes that Albanian frustration over the independence issue could lead armed rebels to forge an alliance with al Qaeda. Both groups want the international presence out of Kosovo and al Qaeda has a history of attempting to destabilize the Balkans region...The threats are played down, Gambill said, because “it does not suit the internationals to have a serious crisis such as this at the time when they are sending out reports on how much improvement has been made in Kosovo.”

Chris Deliso’s 2007 book [The Coming Balkan Caliphate](#) elaborates on the big picture in Kosovo, a story that just won’t break:

The KLA and its criminal partners, it was tacitly understood, [would not be](#)

[touched](#). “[T]he deal was, you leave us alone, we leave you alone,” a former Swedish OSCE official in Kosovo sums up. “It had its benefits, mainly that we were allowed to live.” Senior UNMIK officials have ordered the destruction of files that indicate higher-than-reported numbers of attacks against minorities. [Indeed, a 2007 series in the Swedish daily Dagens Nyheter tells of “a closet at the UN police quarters filled to the ceiling with crime reports nobody has ever read.”] They also systematically fired or relocated employees who speak out or contradict the official line. In exchange for their dutiful cooperation, the internationals got other benefits: they “could enjoy the spoils of peace — everything from mafia-supplied prostitutes to multimillion dollar embezzlement on privatization deals and budget ‘discrepancies.’”

But in 2007 some less than obedient UN observers “took the unprecedented step of compiling an independent analysis,” Canadian military reporter Scott Taylor [wrote](#) in 2008, “...to illustrate ‘the divide that exists between (their) first-hand knowledge...and the rosy picture of the overall situation that is officially presented by top UN officials.’...[T]here have been more than 1,000 abductions of Serbs and other minorities since 1999...and yet not a single person has been found guilty for these crimes...[T]he criminal leadership of the [KLA], which was supposed to be disbanded, has instead assumed positions of power at all levels of Kosovo society...the KLA has simply ‘transformed into criminal structures, carrying out organized crime activities of drugs and weapons trafficking and prostitution.’ [Gambill adds that 42 mafia leaders moved into Kosovo in the wake of our intervention.] As one field officer stated, those guerillas ‘are the real power in Kosovo and many of their leaders are now politicians at all levels — including Prime Minister (Hashim Thaci)...[L]ife in Kosovo for ethnic minorities is one of limited freedom of movement and constant fear...[the international community] has allowed the flag of the Republic of Albania to fly on most public institutions since 1999...the Pristina sports stadium is emblazoned with ‘an enormous picture of an armed, bearded, combat-uniformed KLA leader...Failure to remove the provocative poster demonstrates that the international community is in fact ‘bowing to the dictates of extremists and warlords.’...’The original role for [NATO troops] was to enforce UN Resolution 1244 — which clearly recognized the Serbian sovereignty over Kosovo,’ explained Edward Tawii, a Canadian adviser to the UN [police]...’Now they say that KFOR will be responsible to provide a secure environment in support of the independence declaration.’”

We didn’t want Albanians to start killing us, so we let them keep killing Serbs. Rather than see what would happen if we tried saying “no” to Albanian demands and designs, and risk Americans discerning the real nature of their new best friends — which of course would compound the [domestic](#) terror [threat](#) — we guaranteed ourselves a [bigger](#), more entrenched and [more global](#) problem.

To wit, in addition to jihad’s great Balkan hope as a gateway into Europe, the Kosovo situation led an UNMIK field officer to [tell](#) CNSNews.com in 2005, “After noting that the explosives used by al Qaeda terrorists in the March 2004 Madrid bombing attacks had come from the Balkans, he stated: ‘I sit here [in Kosovo] watching special patrol groups surveying and doing nothing. How many more people will die, whilst terrorists rest and recuperate here in the not so moderate Muslim regions of the Balkans theatre?...Kosovo is saturated with extremists so NATO [may] pull out before it all blows up in their faces. War on Terror! [It’s] more like support [of] terror!’”

When Kosovo reentered the headlines in 2008, some started catching on to the trends. In

March 2008 Northwestern University law professor Eugene Kontorovich wrote in the NY Sun:

An important ingredient of Kosovo's success in achieving self-determination seems to be their constant threats of violence. The Kosovar prime minister, a former leader of an armed rebel movement, often warned of "dangers" and "unforeseeable consequences" if the province were not allowed to secede. With 16,000 NATO troops in the area, the last thing Europe wanted was an insurgency that could become a jihad-magnet. As a result, NATO and America have become parties to the carve-up a sovereign state that they subdued by force...For international law, the entire process is a string of humiliations...[and] the right of self-determination looks like it depends on the product of a group's ruthlessness and proximity to Europe; peacekeepers are hostages; and sovereignty is trumped by the threat of terror.

"Hostages" precisely describes the West in Kosovo. If anyone wonders why the Bush administration was on the same page as the Clintonites that "independence is the [only viable outcome](#)," that "there can be no compromise," that "Kosovo must be independent," "Kosovo *will* be independent," and any other outcome is "[impossible](#)," as Condoleezza Rice [repeatedly](#) stated, it's because in the gangster's paradise of Kosovo the U.S. alternates between hostage and gangster. The Albanians give us ultimatums, and we give the Serbs ultimatums. Our government toes the Albanian line, and our press toes the government line. The UPI's Robert Hayden gave a glimpse of it on March 20, 2008:

[The Serbs] have resisted its imposition on them [of an Albanian state], mainly through peaceful means, except for destroying the control posts on the border that they do not recognize despite U.S. insistence that they must. The protests turned violent when U.N. police with NATO backing forcibly broke up the peaceful occupation of a government building Monday...The problem is not that 'Serb nationalists' are resisting 'the West,' as it is put by those U.S. journalists who honor the First Amendment by parroting the State Department, but rather that the Bush administration has attempted to force a military solution to a political problem, in violation of the U.N. charter and the most basic principles of international law...[A political solution] could have been reached with Serbia, but neither the Clinton administration nor that of George W. Bush wanted one.

A clearer picture emerges of the "failed" negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina, to which the Serbian delegation would come with lists of various broad compromises, and the Albanian delegation would look at their watches, [knowing](#) that the superpower had their back on nothing short of full independence. [Sabotaging](#) the "negotiations" [before](#) each round — and redefining the term — U.S. officials would [announce](#) that the end result would be independence.

No matter that the Kosovo precedent has already demonstrated in Georgia the damage it intends to visit upon the world order. The very month that a surreal, retro, proxy war between the U.S. and Russia was unfolding in August 2008, John McCain [re-justified](#) the Kosovo war at the Annual American Legion National Convention, recycling all the debunked myths, while just weeks earlier — ignoring Russia's repeated warnings that we were setting ourselves up for the Georgia scenario — President Bush's biggest concern was that the next stage of Kosovo's supervised independence wasn't moving quickly enough (the transition from the UN mandate to the EU's "EULEX" law and order mission). Here he was reiterating

the puzzling rush that he and German Chancellor Angela Merkel had expressed that June (coincidentally [after](#) Kosovo's president Fatmir Sejdiu and former KLA commander/war criminal/prime minister Ramush Haradinaj [told](#) the UN it was time to leave). Quoting spokeswoman Judy Ansley: "[W]e hope that this will happen very soon, maybe even this week." The following month, Bush made the [unprecedented](#) move of hosting Kosovo's prime minister and president at the White House, and through broad smiles repeated, "I believe strongly that the United Nations mission must be transferred to the EU as quickly as possible." As our Albanian clients do, he also [asserted](#) that he's "against any partition" of Kosovo, and [added](#), "I pledged that the United States will continue to work with those nations that have not recognized an independent Kosovo in order to convince them to do so as quickly as possible."

The reason for the fire under Western leaders' feet to confiscate another country's land and gift it to our protégées so that they get what they want and not an inch less or after a minute more has nothing to do with the oft-repeated phrases "special case" or "because of Milosevic," as the pre-debunking myths persist and continue to serve. That a small, obscure, and seemingly insignificant area — whose name most American lips have never uttered despite our having had a war there — would be such a top priority for the great powers should seem strange. But what's been keeping Western officials awake at night is that they "are worried that the fragile peace in the UN-administered province could collapse, with Albanians going on the rampage," [reported](#) the UK Guardian during Bush's June 10, 2007 visit to Albania (an [astonishing](#) choice of date). "The question is whether or not there's going to be endless dialogue on a subject that we have made up our mind about...I'm worried about expectations not being met in Kosovo and therefore we'll push the process."

He was worried because war criminal and prime minister (at the time) Agim Ceku had warned even in a 2007 Wall St. Journal [article](#) he penned that independence was "inevitable" and couldn't be delayed. Earlier that year, at a public hearing in Washington (transcript available from the Federal News Service), then Undersecretary Nicholas Burns said, "[T]he prospects for violence would be greater if we waited. Because 92 to 94 percent of the people who now live in Kosovo are Albanian Muslims. They have been waiting a long, long time...And so we the international community must act." To which Rep. [Eliot Engel](#) (D-NY) replied, "And I couldn't agree with you more, Mr. Burns, that the possibility of violence if we delay is something that increases as we delay. People there have been waiting for years, and now really is the time." Two years earlier, at the height of the March 2004 Kosovo-wide pogrom against Serbs, Engel addressed the House of Representatives saying, "[I]ndependence for the people of Kosovo is the only solution...What we have seen...is this ridiculous plan called standards before status."

One wonders if the concept of standards before status is as annoying to Mr. Engel with regard to the Palestinian territories. That's where people have been waiting for a state for six decades — and yet in 2007 we were hearing that seven years was already too long for Albanians to wait. A not so thinly veiled admission that we consider these "pro-American" friends to be a greater danger to us than the vocally anti-American Palestinians.

Illuminating how far we've swerved from the original plan is an [excerpt](#) from a 1999 Q&A in TIME magazine: "The alliance wants Kosovo to be given autonomy within the Yugoslav federation, but opposes the full independence that the KLA is fighting for, fearing that creating a new Kosovar-Albanian state would further destabilize an already volatile region."

Today, however, the language our politicians use has been reversed: that which we knew

would destabilize the region — namely giving Albanians what they want — is now [promoted](#) as being what's [needed](#) to "[stabilize](#)" the region. And so our military is being used to enforce KLA directives and make the last of the resisting Serbs comply with the new reality. Or, as the bright-eyed National Guard [soldiers](#) heading out to Kosovo have [been conditioned](#) to [call it](#), "to provide a safe and secure environment, sir."

Most of the last resisting Serbs are in the only remaining part of Kosovo where it's still safe to be Serbian, in Northern Kosovska Mitrovica, along the boundary with Serbia. As with Bosnia and Croatia, when Kosovo seceded from the country, the people in that Serbian-populated area didn't want to live under the rule of proud Serb-killers, and asked for a partition that would allow them to stay within the internationally recognized borders of their country, Serbia.

While some Western leaders did put a possible partition on the table along the way, our Albanian partners [informed](#) us that a partition was [out of the](#) question, which we then [repeated](#) as official policy. In fact, the NY Times quoted NATO officials as early as March 2000 on this: "But if Kosovo is not kept in one piece, as the Albanians have insisted and as the administration has pledged, the relations between NATO and the Albanian community will worsen, the officials said. 'The Albanians will feel we have betrayed them,' a senior NATO official said, 'and will turn against us.'" (In contrast, betraying the Serbs has never been a problem for us, since we have nothing to fear from them.) Ironically, Kosovo leaders and terrorists alike invoke "border integrity" and warn of setting dangerous "precedents." In December, 2007, President Sejdiu asserted, "We are for respect of borders," and warned of "bad precedents" being set by a partition of Kosovo (but not, of course, by the Kosovo secession itself).

Enter the terrorist groups operating in and around Kosovo: KLA affiliate Albanian National Army (finally classed as "terrorist" in 2003 after years of the UN denying even its presence), whose stated mission is to "protect Kosovo's territorial integrity," also in December 2007 repeated a warning that it was planning "operations" to bring Northern Mitrovica under Albanian rule. [Three days later](#), the UNMIK chief at the time, Joachim Ruecker, told the Pristina paper *Zeri* that "KFOR and UNMIK will not allow for the Serb-inhabited regions to 'separate' from the province." Enter U.S. bureaucrats: "What we cannot allow to happen," Sec. Rice [said](#) in [May](#) 2008, "is moving towards steps that question Kosovo's territorial integrity...We want to make sure that there are no attempts at dividing Kosovo."

But rather than Kosovo's diabolical path to statehood, our bureaucrats and media point the public to some supposed nefarious role being played by Belgrade ([and](#) local Serbs) as the "cause" of the all the "tension" in the north, because it backs Northern Mitrovica, where Serbian institutions are still in place. We are warned that the real threat is Belgrade's refusal to recognize the land grab, its turning to Moscow for support and its "interference" with our machinations on its land. This, they say, creates "parallel institutions," which are "dangerous." A rich admonition indeed, given that Kosovo's parallel Albanian institutions within the host society were what brought us to the hailed secession itself.

In July 2008, as former Kosovo prime minister Ramush Haradinaj was returning to politics from his war crimes trial, where he was [acquitted](#) after [several witnesses](#) suddenly died and others bailed, the NY Times reported that he "lashed out at the government — and the West — for allowing Belgrade to control the Serb-dominated north, and warned that Albanians would grow impatient. 'We have to be able to deliver on Feb. 17,' he said, referring to the date of independence [five months earlier]. 'I know what patience means, but...it can be too

late.'"

And so NATO troops have been encircling Northern Mitrovica in preparation to deliver nothing less than the full piece of land that our masters demand. These are the NATO troops who were originally told they would be protecting Albanians from Serbs, but found instead they had to protect Serbs from Albanians. Now, they are to take Northern Mitrovica by force to subdue the last of the recalcitrant Serbs. So after failing to secure the territorial integrity of Serbia as per UN Res. 1244, the West will now secure the territorial integrity of "Kosova," as the Albanian pronunciation of the Serbian word goes. This is being called "enforcing the rule of law" in the "tense and insecure" north. Which in Kosovospeak means the opposite, and it means making the north as tense and insecure for non-Albanians as the rest of the province. Indeed, the strategy being drafted now by Kosovo leaders and the EU — which was supposedly "status-neutral" — to bring the north under Pristina's control is occasionally referred to by all the parties involved as Kosovo's "final solution" for Kosovo Serbs.

Kosovo has already served two U.S. presidents. Pummeling Serbs gave Bill Clinton a last-minute legacy beyond the word "Lewinsky," and sealing the deal with independence gave George Bush a foreign policy "success" he could point to — "the creation of an overwhelmingly Muslim country in the very heart of Europe," as the late Tom Lantos [boasted](#). Will Barack Obama join the gang bang? One need not wonder.

Either this month or next, with or without Belgrade giving in and selling out the Kosovo Serbs (always a looming possibility), we will likely witness the next act of war by U.S.-led NATO against our WWI and WWII ally that has never been a threat to America, on behalf of the Washington darlings who, incidentally, [fought](#) for [the Nazis](#) and today occasionally fight for jihad. It will be the latest in a series of aggressions by us that have spanned two decades and three presidential administrations in the unending betrayal that characterizes "relations" between the West and Serbia, which still faces Westward. (Indeed, no sooner did the desperately Euro-Atlantic-craving Serbian voters elect pro-Western leaders in the Jan. 2008 elections than the next kick in the teeth came via the secession and our recognition of it.) We will be enforcing borders that only one-third of UN member states even recognize.

This time when Americans watch our military "contain" the Serbs — most likely [after](#) some [provocations](#) or [staged](#) attacks by [some operatives](#) who have been spotted [in the north](#) — they should recognize it for what it is. And it will end with the actualization of a plan that UN workers have [whispered](#) to reporter Taylor: arresting the local Serbian leadership (already in progress); sealing off the border with Serbia; disarming and handing over the Serbs to the ex-KLA insurgents populating the Kosovo Police Service.

While we have sought to [diffuse and downplay](#) the potential for Albanian violence, our intentions with the Serbs has been [to escalate](#) conflict, so as to lend at least visual validity to our policies. As a National Guard soldier wrote me during his Kosovo tour in 2007:

I discovered that our ROE [rules of engagement] for what we call "competitors" is to break contact and report to "higher". A "competitor" is someone that poses a threat to a safe and secure environment. Now when the ANA (Albanian National Army) made their appearance in the winter of 2006, KFOR soldiers were not dispatched to find them or do anything about them, even though [Kosovo Police Service] had a shoot-out with those men. However, when Serbian paramilitary [allegedly] came down here, we dispatched our soldiers in the woods to chase them. I'm confused, two incidents that are the same, but, both were handled differently. That doesn't seem right, and seems fishy to me.

As our troops do or die, they would do well to wonder why. They should understand what is being enforced by their hand. And when the images gracing American TVs are again exclusively of the “wild” Serbian reaction, meant to depict Serbs as violent and therefore justifying the aggression that caused it, Americans should ask themselves how they might react if coerced to secede from their country by an ethnic group that reached majority status in their area, and live under the rule of their slayers.

If Americans felt reassured about the side we’ve taken in Kosovo when they saw all the American flags waving from Pristina to Times Square on Feb. 17, 2008, Balkanalysis.com proprietor Chris Deliso cautions, “Albanians love America to the extent to which America will gang up on their own local enemies. [Were] America to suddenly change its policy and oppose Kosovo independence, would...they still wave the Stars and Stripes and name their streets after American presidents? I think not. On the other hand, the Serbs, who have suffered since the early 1990s a succession of US-enforced aggressions — crippling economic sanctions, a NATO bombing of mostly civilian targets, and now the forced seizure of their historic Kosovo province — still remain open to investment, engagement and cooperation. Can one possibly imagine a similar situation, had the shoe been on the other foot and the Albanians been the ones to suffer NATO’s wrath?”

In Brussels in Feb. 2007, after getting the usual empty guarantees of human rights and protections for Kosovo’s Serbs and other minorities, Jim Jatras, a former senior analyst for the Senate Republican Policy Committee, asked a Hungarian member of the European parliament, “Isn’t all this talk of protections for Serbs a tacit admission that among the Kosovo Albanians are a lot of violent and intolerant people? Why would you reward their violence with state power?” The MP replied, “Because we’re afraid of them.”

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