

The Ides of March: False Pretexts Galore in the Wars on Yugoslavia and Iraq

By [Michael Welch](#), [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#), [Scott Ritter](#), [Živadin Jovanović](#), [James Bissett](#), and [Scott Taylor](#) Region: [Europe](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#), [USA](#)

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Theme: [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#), [Media Disinformation](#), [Military Militarization and WMD](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

“Biden was a man who believed in regime change. Biden was a man who believed Saddam Hussein was the personification of evil. Biden was a man who believed that we had to use whatever means necessary up to and including war to remove Saddam Hussein from power. And Joe Biden recognized that weapons inspections, if allowed to proceed would undermine his effort. This is why he had to discredit the inspections.” – Former Chief UN Weapons inspector **Scott Ritter** (included in interview.)

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Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in December of 1991 the U.S., NATO and the world had entered a brand new era. With the threat of the Soviets launching an invasion of the European Union now essentially moot, it would seem the hostile military alliance had lost its usefulness. [1]

But in 1999, the U.S. led cavalry found a new lease on life! Negotiations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Kosovo Liberation Army fighting for an independent ethnic Albanian state broke down. After the pivotal [Račak massacre](#) in January of 1999, NATO took the role of instituting a military ‘peacekeeping force’ to restrain both sides. When talks at the [Château de Rambouillet](#), outside Paris failed to arrive at an agreement, international monitors withdrew and then the KLA with the air support from NATO launched the beginning of a 78 day war. [2][3]

NATO then went to war on Afghanistan two years later on the excuse they were defending themselves from terrorism which they never proved emerged from that country. [4][5]

Two years after that, the U.S. and the UK, together with a small list of belligerents attacked the beleaguered country of Iraq, on the principle assertion this country decimated by the first war in 1991 and years of [devastating sanctions](#), posed a threat to America and the world by virtue of his devastating supply of ‘[weapons of mass destruction.](#)’ Of course, the UN weapons inspectors dedicated to finding and destroying his entire supply of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons [could not verify their existence](#) any longer. But with [Colin Powell’s famous presentation](#) providing the proper pretext, the world stood a month later and watched in horror as the Coalition of the Willing subjected the former Mesopotamia to a truly Shock and Awe Spectacle.

The war killed [at least 100,000 civilians](#). The leader [Saddam Hussein was executed](#). The [war lasted until December of 2011](#). And absolutely [no weapons of mass destruction](#) were found!

The War on Yugoslavia launched on March 24, 1999. The War in Iraq launched March 19, 2003.

Once again, in chapter 3 of our series on wars launched in March, the Global Research News Hour looks at these two principal conflicts which would reshape the wartime trajectory the U.S. would pursue at a time when threats from Russia were reduced.

Our first half hour features a few comments made by guests of a past show speaking of the background of the War on Yugoslavia. A brief summary of their comments are supplied in a 20 minute period. They include **Professor Michel Chossudovsky**, **Živadin Jovanović**, **James Bissett** and **Scott Taylor**.

In our second half hour, we are delighted to have former UN Weapons Inspector **Scott Ritter** on to recount his insights into the falseness of the pretext of weapons of mass destruction, his understanding of the real motive of the war, his take on the former Senator **Joe Biden** who sounded like a hawk 23 years ago (see video below), and his take on the timing of wars almost always in March.

Professor Michel Chossudovsky is an award-winning author, Professor of Economics (emeritus) at the University of Ottawa, Founder and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), Montreal, Editor of Global Research. In May of 1999 he published the in depth analysis of the conflict in Yugoslavia in the article [NATO's War of Aggression against Yugoslavia: Who are the War Criminals?](#) For these and related writings he received the 2014 Gold Medal for Merit of the Republic of Serbia.

Živadin Jovanović served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia between 1998 and 2000. Since 2005, he has served as President of the [Belgrade Forum for a World of Equals](#), a non-profit organization which is a member of the World Peace Council. The Forum supports world peace and non-interventionism and opposes "humanitarian wars".

James Bissett is a Canadian diplomat with a 36 year track record of public service in the Departments of Citizenship and Immigration and Foreign Affairs. He was Canada's ambassador to Yugoslavia from 1990 until 1992, with responsibility for Albania and Bulgaria. A consistent critic of the West's policies in the former Yugoslavia, Bissett testified at the [Trial of Slobodan Milošević](#) as a defence witness.

Scott Taylor is a former soldier, a journalist, and the Publisher/Editor of the Canadian military magazine [Esprit de Corps](#). Taylor reported from the ground during and after NATO's 1999 assault on the former Yugoslavia. He is the author of several books including [Diary of an Uncivil War: The Violent Aftermath of the Kosovo Conflict \(2002\)](#).

Scott Ritter is a U.S. Marine Corps Intelligence officer, former UN Chief Weapons Inspector

from 1991 -1998, and is currently engaged as a commentator and columnist on Huffington Post, RT OP-ED, and the American Conservative.

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CIXX 106.9 FM, broadcasting from Fanshawe College in London, Ontario. It airs Sundays at 6am.

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[Cowichan Valley Community Radio CICV 98.7 FM](#) serving the [Cowichan Lake](#) area of Vancouver Island, BC airs the program Thursdays at 9am pacific time.

Notes:

1. <https://intpolicydigest.org/the-end-of-nato/>
2. [Peter Beaumont](#) and [Patrick Wintour](#) (July 18, 1999) 'Kosovo: the untold story', The Guardian; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/1999/jul/18/warcrimes.balkans>
3. Timothy W. Crawford (April 1, 2001) 'Pivotal Deterrence and the Kosovo War: Why the Holbrooke Agreement Failed', Brookings; <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/pivotal-deterrence-and-the-kosovo-war-why-the-holbrooke-agreement-failed/>
4. <https://www.nato.int/docu/update/2001/1001/e1002a.htm>
5. <https://www.globalresearch.ca/was-america-attacked-by-afghanistan-on-september-11-2001/5307151>

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