

# Yugoslavia, Camp Bondsteel and the Caspian Sea

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*This article was first written in January 2008 by the late Prof. Lenora Foerstel, who taught at the Maryland Institute College of Arts.*

*She passed away in October 2018. Her legacy will live.*

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During World War II, the Croatian nation fought side by side with Hitler's Germany. The Serbian people, like the Jewish people, were slaughtered by the Croatian army and those who survived were placed in concentration camps. After the Fascists were defeated in World War II, Croatia became a republic of Yugoslavia.

In 1990, Franjo Tudjman became President of Croatia. During his reign he fired 300 women journalists and closed down any newspapers and television stations that offended him. His rule gave power to a small oligarchy. Yet despite his ultra-nationalism and his brutal purge of ethnic Serbs from Croatia, the US, under President Bill Clinton and his Balkan adviser, Richard Holbrook, supported Tudjman's regime.

In early August 1995, the Croatian Army received support from the Pentagon and the CIA in planning and carrying out the attack on Croatia's Krajina region and the expulsion of its 250,000 ethnic Serbs. Croatian soldiers had been trained at Fort Irwin, California, and additional training assistance came from a private company of mercenaries, the American Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI). The end result was US participation in an unprecedented act of ethnic cleansing, resulting in a quarter of a million Serbs fleeing from their homes.

In the early 1990's, tension broke out in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In September 1992, in an attempt to prevent Bosnia-Herzegovina from sliding into war, several international peace plans were offered. The most reasonable proposal was the Carrington-Cutileiro plan, under which all districts in this area would be divided up among Bosnia's Muslims, Serbs and Croats.

Initially, the plan was signed by all three sides, but it was never implemented because Alya Izebegavic, Bosnia's Muslim leader, withdrew his signature from the agreement after Washington promised to recognize Bosnia as an independent country.

In 1991, Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence from Yugoslavia. They had been encouraged to do so by Germany, which hoped to reestablish traditional German influence in the Balkans. The United States then joined Germany in supporting the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), promising military and political assistance to the ethnic Albanian separatist

organization in its quest for an independent Kosovo and, ultimately, a greater Albania.

In 1998, Richard Holbrooke, representing the Clinton Administration, came to Kosovo and appeared in public ceremonies with the KLA, sending a clear signal that the US was backing them. Exploiting the tensions between the KLA and the Serbs in Kosovo, the US used staged ethnic protests and conflicts to justify military intervention. In March 1999, in Rambouillet, France, the United States demanded that Yugoslavia accept NATO occupation of Kosovo and the expulsion of all Yugoslav forces. Milosevic refused, and the United States used this as a pretext for war.

On March 27th, 1999, the Clinton administration initiated heavy bombing of Yugoslavia. These attacks on a sovereign country were never approved by the United Nations or the US Congress, violating both international law and the War Powers Act.

The US and NATO had advanced plans to bomb Yugoslavia before 1999, and many European political leaders now believe that the US deliberately used the bombing of Yugoslavia to establish camp Bondsteel in Kosovo (image below).. According to Colonel Robert L. McCure, "Engineering planning for operations in Kosovo began months before the first bomb was dropped." (1)



In June 1999, in the immediate aftermath of the bombing of Yugoslavia, US forces seized 1,000 acres of farm land in southeast Kosovo at Uresevia, near the Macedonia border, and began the construction of a camp. (2) Brown and Root, a subsidiary of Halliburton, currently provides all of the services to the camp. This same company receives \$180 million per year to build military facilities in Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia, and several other countries. Presently, the Bondsteel template is being supported in Georgia and Azerbaijan. According to Chalmers Johnson, author of "America's Empire of Bases," the US has about 1000 bases

around the world. "Once upon a time, you could trace the spread of imperialism by counting up colonies," says Johnson. "America's version of the colony is the military base."  
(3) Kosovo is an American colony.

The main purpose for the Bondsteel military base is to provide security for the construction of the Albanian-Macedonian-Bulgarian oil pipeline (AMBO). The AMBO trans-Balkan pipeline will link up with the corridors between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea basin, which holds close to 50 billion barrels of oil.



Hashim Thaci, Kosovo's current Prime Minister, was formerly the political head of the KLA. The KLA is widely regarded as a terrorist organization and is supported in large part by drug dealing and human trafficking, making particular use of Eastern European women. The US had begun training KLA forces well in advance of the bombing of Yugoslavia.

Presently, Camp Bondsteel houses about 1000 US military troops along with more than 7,000 local Albanian personnel. It is no coincidence that the escalating US presence at Bondsteel was accompanied by increased military activity by the KLA. Since the appearance of this massive base, more Serbs, Roma and Albanians opposed to the KLA have been murdered or driven out of Kosovo.

It is quite clear today that the United States and NATO had advance plans to bomb Yugoslavia long before the ethnic conflicts emerged there. The Kosovo Liberation Army and NATO were determined to foment violence, and no concessions by President Slobodan Milosevic would have prevented the bombing. Building Camp Bondsteel was the US mission, and, by whatever means necessary, it would be built to ensure the completion of a pipeline to the Caspian Sea.

#### Notes

1. Paul Stuart, "Camp Bondsteel and America's Plans to Control Caspian Sea," April 29, 2002. World Socialist Website, WSWS.org, [WWW.WSWS.ORG/articles/2002/apr2002/oil-a29.shtml](http://WWW.WSWS.ORG/articles/2002/apr2002/oil-a29.shtml)
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

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