

The Serb Lobby in the United Kingdom

By Carole Hodge

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The relative unity and stability which characterized Yugoslavia after the Second World War was largely contingent on a number of external factors, its international role as a halfway house between Eastern and Western Europe diminishing dramatically with the erosion of the Soviet Bloc in the late 1980s. At this point, the inherent contradictions within the state, exacerbated by the activities of political elites within and outside the country, combined to present a significant challenge to Yugoslavia's political, economic and social system, a development which went substantially unheeded in the West.

The suddenness of the actual break-up of Yugoslavia created many fissures within the international community, whereby lobbying became a potentially powerful weapon in creating new perceptions to favor proponents of very diverse interests. Britain, with a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, and as a leading member of most major international organizations, was identified, especially by the Serb lobby, as a prime target in this respect. Access was sought at all levels of society, including parliament, the media, academic institutions, national and local government departments, trades unions, peace movements and other organizations, and the Royal family. In few other West European countries has there been such a powerful and extensive Serb lobby during the recent Balkans war.¹

For the purposes of this analysis, the concept of lobbying is to be understood in terms of political and other activities by groups and individuals seeking or reaffirming access to lines of communication within the British establishment which might influence decision-making, either formally or informally, and contribute to shaping a particular view of events and circumstances relating to historical and contemporary developments in the region. It can also be understood as a propaganda exercise in revisionism and denial, including the historical justification of contemporary events, and the use of myth and legend, interwoven with historical fact.

In these terms, the Serb lobby had a headstart in Britain due to well-established diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, mainly through Belgrade, since its inception in the wake of the First World War and, earlier still, with Serb nationals who had wide access to the diplomatic fraternity. Serbia was perceived as being on the allied side during both world wars² and, following the Nazi invasion of Yugoslavia in 1941, the Serbian king and political leadership fled to London and formed its government-in-exile there.

Traditional connections

At the end of World War II, the British had some 20,000 former Četniks³ under their surveillance at a camp in Eboli in southern Italy. Although officially classified as "Surrendered Enemy Personnel," they were generally viewed as pro-Allied. Provided with British uniforms and non-combatant duties, they were posted throughout Italy. When screened in Germany in 1947, some came under suspicion as possible war criminals⁴ but none were returned to Yugoslavia. 8,000 of them settled in Britain.⁵

According to the Home Office, some 40-50,000 of the Yugoslavs of all ethnic groups would normally have visited the UK annually in the years leading up to the recent war. As a direct result of hostilities, there were three main groups which traveled to Britain: (1) Bosnians, predominantly Muslims, including displaced people and those expelled in the "ethnic cleansing" campaign; (2) Croatians, comprising a small number of refugees

following the fall of Vukovar in 1991;⁶ and (3) Serbs from Serbia proper, probably the largest contingent, consisting mostly of young people, including economic immigrants, and those who left to avoid conscription.

It is estimated that there are now between 50-70,000 Serbs, including their descendants, in the UK, many of them bilingual,⁷ as opposed to under ten thousand from all other ethnic groups in former Yugoslavia combined, most of them recent asylum seekers from Bosnia, with little or no knowledge of the English language. Perhaps for this reason, official interpreting in Britain was undertaken, in the main, by Serbs, including the collection of personal testimonies related to the circumstances in which the refugees had been forced to leave Bosnia. These refugees were, therefore, direct witnesses as to the nature of the war and the way it was being prosecuted and, in most cases. Their interpreters were their sole means of communicating these experiences to outsiders. A number of refugees, however, voiced concern over the coercive methods which were at times used by some interpreters at interview sessions with British officials and others.⁸

Contemporary considerations

In addition to the post-World War II Serb settlers and the well-entrenched diplomatic corps, there were firmly established financial and commercial connections with the UK, represented, in the main, by a number of Belgrade-based companies and financial institutions, such as Genex⁹ and the Anglo-Yugoslav Bank. Yugoslavia was also a good customer of UK military hardware,¹⁰ and close professional ties existed between the military of both countries, with the Yugoslav officer corps comprising up to 70 per cent ethnic Serbs. There was co-operation between the UK and Yugoslavia in intelligence matters conducted mainly through Belgrade, while before and during World War I, close Masonic ties are said to have developed between Serbia and Western Europe, particularly Britain and France.¹¹ Already then, before the outbreak of the recent war, there was a culture of familiarity on various levels between Britain and Yugoslavia, and this for the most part with Serbs.¹²

The ideological dimension would, on the other hand, have drawn in a different sector of the British political scene. The Yugoslav experiment with workers' self-management, its strategic position between East and West, internal liberalization and freedom of travel were perceived by many, in the turmoil of the dissolution, as being continued by Serbian President Milošević in Belgrade. In consequence, sections of the British Left tended to align themselves on ideological grounds with Belgrade's policy, some presumably on the assumption that it was striving to maintain the socialist system, and the unitary state of Yugoslavia on those lines.¹³

Strategic factors also assumed a new relevance. In the immediate wake of German reunification, and just months before the signing of Maastricht, concern grew about Germany's future role in Europe, with the likely concomitant diminution of British influence. It can probably be safely assumed that the Foreign Office would have considered Yugoslavia, with the fourth largest army in Europe, as a vehicle through which to retain British influence in South Eastern Europe. In other words, as the proverbial "guardian of the gate."¹⁴

Outbreak of war

Britain was at the forefront of the decision-making process from the early days of the war. Already by September 1991, British ministers had succeeded in establishing a

European policy which eschewed international military intervention in the region, and supported the blanket arms embargo, within the framework of a "peace conference" which was handed the virtually impossible task of securing a settlement acceptable to all sides. This conference was headed for almost the entire war¹⁵ by two former British foreign secretaries, Lords Carrington and Owen, respectively. As the war progressed, it became at times increasingly difficult to distinguish statements made by British ministers from the observations of apologists of the Pale regime.¹⁶

The main role of the Serb lobby in Britain, therefore, was evidently seen as assisting this policy to prevail. But even this was no mean task. With the accumulating evidence of massive bombardment, ethnic cleansing, concentration camps, and the sheer human misery relayed daily on TV screens world-wide, there was a growing public clamor for more effective policies. Pressure also built up within sections of the European Community (EC), in the United States, the UN General Assembly, the non-aligned states and, not least, the Islamic countries. Equally, reports by leading watchdog organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch (Helsinki), *Medicins sans Frontieres* and *Medicins du Monde*, and by Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the UN Human Rights envoy, Professor Cherif Bassiouni of the UN Commission of Experts¹⁷ and others, produced evidence to indicate that, despite the atrocities on all sides, the vast majority of war crimes and crimes against humanity were committed by Serbs, and these on a systematic basis.

So, with both internal and external pressures to address, how did the Serb lobby in Britain operate?

The Serb lobby in the House of Commons

At diplomatic and parliamentary level, the first graphic display of Serb support after the break-up of Yugoslavia was in a House of Commons debate in March 1992. It was the first major Commons debate on Yugoslavia since the war began, called by the Select Committee for Foreign Affairs just a month before the onset of war in Bosnia. The debate was attended by a number of senior MPs, several of them with close Yugoslav links. Two speakers in particular, Sir Bernard Braine and Julian Amery, both claiming extensive wartime experience in the region, made significant contributions to the debate.

Amery reminded the House that the strength of Germany was once again not very different from what it had been at the beginning of 1938, peppering his speech with reference to emotive terms such as "*anschluss*" and "*lebensraum*." He then moved on to describe the Serbs:

I would like to say I word about the Serbs. I am all against people making hobbies of Balkan countries. This has bedeviled our studies of them both before and after the first world war. The Serbs are a remarkable nation ... a formidable country with formidable people, and the decisions that we must take could put us on the wrong side of them.¹⁸

The mainly Muslim Sandzak region of Yugoslavia, on the other hand, was depicted by Amery as:

a narrow bell of country that links Bosnia to the Albanian Muslim population. I went there many years ago, and in my experience the inhabitants of the Sahjak (sic) are Albanian on Monday, Serbian on Tuesday, Christian on Wednesday, Muslim on Thursday,¹⁹ and at the weekend I am not sure what they are. I do not think that they have changed very much.

In answer to a question from Labour veteran backbench MP, Tam Dalyell, on the advisability of committing troops to the area, Amery recalled that Hitler had needed nine

divisions to keep the roads open. Over three years later, Dalyell, in arguing in the House against military Intervention, quoted Amery as his authority.²⁰

The "Father" of the House, Sir Bernard Braine, then took up the cudgels:

during the two world wars, the Serbs were our gallant allies from the beginning ... We cannot be unsympathetic to the Serbs. We must remember that Croats in Nazi uniform massacred vast numbers of Serbs. The memory of that is still vivid in Serbian minds.²¹

Since most MPs had little or no experience of the Balkans, the words of the few deemed to be experts on the region would have carried some weight, as no doubt they did in the Foreign Office where, again, what Balkans expertise there was probably enhanced by diplomatic contacts who were predominantly Serbs.

In the initial stages of the war, the firm of Ian Greer Associates was an interested player. Operating through parties and receptions at Westminster, to which Serb supporters and MPs from all parties were invited, and through backbench committees, Greer presented his client to his staff as "a group of Serbian Yugoslav industrialists," although the real paymaster was said to be Serbian President Milošević, to the tune of almost £100,000.²²

One of the backbench committees which Greer targeted was the Conservative Council for Eastern Europe, whose Chairman was the Tory MP for Norfolk North West, Henry Bellingham, shortly afterwards to become Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Defense, Malcolm Rifkind.²³ Its Treasurer was John Kennedy, also known as Radoje Gvozdenović. Kennedy, born in Belgrade, claimed aristocratic origins. In 1993 he was engaged as private secretary to Prince Michael of Kent. By the time he became active in the Serb lobby, Kennedy was Conservative parliamentary candidate for Barking. He also made his mark in the Monday Club, joined the Bow Group, and worked as an aide in the office of Cabinet Minister, John Moore. It was Moore who introduced Kennedy to Ian Greer who reportedly paid Kennedy 50 per cent of the £100,000 paid by the Serbs for lobbying services.²⁴ These came to a stop shortly after UN sanctions were imposed on Serbia and Montenegro, but by that time much of the groundwork had been laid. Kennedy thereafter went it alone, organizing trips to Serbia and Serb-held territory in Bosnia for MPs from all three main political parties, and accompanying them, writing letters to the press, and arguing against the imposition of sanctions on Serbia in 1992.

In 1996, Conservative Party Chairman Brian Mawhinney, pledged under pressure to carry out a detailed inquiry into Serbian donations, allegedly administered with the help of John Kennedy, but by the June of that year Mawhinney had apparently still not met with Kennedy. Labour MP Brian Wilson then wrote to Mawhinney,²⁵ urging him to investigate Kennedy's suitability as a prospective candidate for a major political party. The upshot of that letter was a libel action against the Labour Party by Kennedy, resulting in an out-of-court settlement. Shortly afterwards, Kennedy bought himself a house in London, writing on the back of his change-of-address card which he sent to members of Labour's Shadow Cabinet, "*NEW LABOUR. NEW HOUSE.*"²⁶

In January 1997 following a report in the *Guardian* of his part in organizing "extensive Serb donations to the Conservative Party," Kennedy wrote a letter to the paper denying this and, interestingly, citing the Labour Party's (apparently revised) opinion of his role:

Mr. Kennedy sought in good faith to assist in the efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict and worked together with politicians from all the major political parties.²⁷

The Labour Party had a potentially crucial role in shaping Britain's Balkans policy, especially in view of the confrontational structure of the British parliamentary system. Yet it was mainly left to a group of back bench Labour MPs and some Liberals to challenge the policy, while the Labour front bench remained largely bipartisan throughout the war.²⁸ Of key parliamentary figures targeted by the Serb lobby, two later became Cabinet ministers. In opposition, both were in the Shadow Defense team. A third, Robert Wareing, the Labour Party Member for Liverpool West Derby, was also a member of the House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, Chairman of the all-Party British/Yugoslav Group,²⁹ and a Vice-President of the British/Southern Slav Society.

Wareing's influence on the British debate in parliament and elsewhere was extensive during the height of the war and beyond. He took part in most debates on the issue in the House of Commons, and put numerous written questions. Visiting Belgrade in the summer of 1991, Wareing met with Milošević and Croatian President Tudjman, assuring them that Britain stood by the integrity of Yugoslavia.³⁰ Since that time, he has made a number of inaccurate and misleading statements in the House of Commons asserting, for instance, that the Muslims were Serbs, "descendants of those who converted from the Orthodox religion to the Muslim religion during the time of the Ottoman Empire."³¹ He informed the House that Bosnia was "not a state but a province ... under the Austrians and Turks and in the former Yugoslavia."³² Declaring that more than 60 per cent of the land in Bosnia and Hercegovina was owned by Serbian people when the conflict started,³³ Wareing's information was in contrast to other published records, which indicate that more than half the territory of Bosnia and Hercegovina was communally owned before 1992.³⁴

Wareing also informed the House that only one large town which could be described as Muslim had been taken by the Serbs, controlling the water supply to Banja Luka. Presumably he meant Jajce. But he omitted to mention the fate of towns such as Bratunac, Visegrad, Zvornik and Rogatica which, according to the 1991 census, all had a more than 60 per cent Muslim populations, and were ethnically-cleansed by Serbs in 1992. Along with other Serb apologists, Wareing predictably asserted that the bread queue massacre in Sarajevo in 1992 was carried out by Muslims, and criticized as "giving into an emotional spasm" his own party's talk of air strikes,³⁵ saying that it would jeopardize humanitarian aid coming from Serbia.

In June 1997, John Reid,³⁶ then Minister for the Armed Forces, and David Clark,³⁷ then Secretary of State for the Duchy of Lancaster (and former Shadow Defense Secretary), made news headlines for breaching parliamentary rules in failing to declare visits to Geneva in early August 1993 where they had stayed at an exclusive hotel at the Serbs' expense. When confronted, Reid and Clark, the latter then the cabinet minister responsible for open government, admitted they had made a mistake. According to *The Sunday Times* report, Clark admitted: "If we made an error of judgment, I say *mea culpa*." On the other hand, he claimed that in his opinion a considerable number of lives had been saved in Sarajevo as a result of their intervention, in persuading Karadžić to remove his troops from Mount Igman.³⁸ Clark's understanding of the situation may not have been altogether clear, however, in view of reports of fresh Serb troops armed with anti-aircraft weapons secretly digging in near Mount Trebević as the other units were withdrawing. Moreover, the 250 French UN troops which replaced the Serbs at key positions served the dual purpose, from the Serb viewpoint, of creating a buffer zone to prevent the Bosnian Army from retaking the territory, and acting as potential hostages in the event of any renewed US airstrike threat.

John Reid, who had reportedly helped organize the trip along with John Kennedy, commented: "Maybe I have been a mug." Reid stated that, to the best of his recollection,

he had paid for the air tickets for himself and Kennedy. Later, he admitted that Kennedy may have reimbursed him for some of the cost. Clark also had difficulty in recalling the facts, initially claiming that the United Nations had footed the bill for the hotel in a block booking. This was denied by the hotel itself which apparently never had block bookings with the UN. Clark also claimed he had thought it was a UN trip, although admitting that he had not actually been told it was.³⁹

Reid went on a total of three trips to meet Serb leaders in 1993, with expenses paid by the Serbs, and Clark on two.⁴⁰ The timing of these visits was crucial. When the Geneva trip took place, President Clinton was considering extensive air action against Serb positions in the event that Karadžić's forces failed to vacate strategic positions overlooking Sarajevo. After weeks of negotiations, he finally backed down, partly due to British opposition.

The first trip that year, in the late April, to Serbia and the Serb-controlled area of Bosnia, by British MPs at the Serbs' expense, including Robert Wareing, John Reid, and Sir Russell Johnston,⁴¹ was no less crucial in its timing. At this point, there was a massive outcry worldwide, following the first major assault by Serb forces on Srebrenica. Two extensive debates took place in the House of Commons that month, with a number of MPs on all sides arguing for stronger action against the Serbs. On the MPs' return, Russell Johnston pleaded for direct intervention to protect the Muslim enclaves which were besieged, and for the opening of Tuzla airport.⁴² John Reid in the same debate spoke of his experience in Bosanski Brod (then and now under Serb control) where he had witnessed the exhumation of a mass grave: "They were probably all Serbs and probably all massacred by Croats."⁴³ When later asked how he was able to identify the ethnic origin of the victims, he said that was what he had been told – by his Serb hosts!⁴⁴ This story was retold on several occasions.

The third visit that year took place in the summer recess. According to the Register of Members' Interests, David Clark, John Reid, David Faber, Eric Martlew, Don Foster, and Andrew Robathan all visited Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia and Serbia, paid for by the Serbs.⁴⁵ David Clark was evidently impressed by his visit. In an article in *The Times* some days after his return, Clark wrote of the "successful side of peacekeeping," following his visit to the UN safe area of Goražde. According to Clark, both the UN and the Muslims confirmed that there was no lack of food. He advocated that an evenhanded manner should be adopted, with all sides benefiting.⁴⁶ Yet, according to UNHCR figures, food delivery for Goražde citizens under siege was well under target that month, and while UNHCR road convoys to and from Bosnian Serb-controlled areas have been circulating with minimal disruption, access to Eastern Bosnian enclaves for vitally needed shelter and other winterization materials remains effectively blocked, with the Bosnian Serb authorities in practice insisting on reciprocity of assistance.⁴⁷

In advocating an "evenhanded" approach, the Shadow Defense Secretary was unwittingly proposing equal treatment for besieged and besiegers alike. Clark further informed *Times* readers that, following his talks with Radovan Karadžić, Karadžić had promised to see if a hot-line could be established between his forces and the UN at local level to ease the communications problems!

In a Commons Defense debate the following month, Clark retracted the Labour Party position on airstrikes, declaring:

I said that there was a time when bombing Serb positions might have been effective. That time is probably past, but the threat of bombing had a major effect on the Serbs.⁴⁸

Some months later Goražde, which had been monitored by what Clark referred to as a popular UN force of only ten soldiers, came under sustained attack by Serb forces with reinforcements from Serbia proper, killing or wounding nearly 2,000 people in a matter of days. By the following February when a NATO ultimatum was declared after the Markale market massacre in Sarajevo,⁴⁹ Clark had reverted to supporting air strikes. His confusion was patent, as he appeared to be struggling to adjust received propaganda to the reality on the ground.

The impact on other British MPs of their trips to Bosnia as guests of the Serbs became apparent during a parliamentary debate on the Army in February 1995, when Labour backbencher, Calum Macdonald, questioned British UN Commander General Rose's contribution to the UN mission in Bosnia.⁵⁰ Macdonald was the first British MP to do so publicly. Citing a Panorama program on BBC TV the previous month, Macdonald dismissed General Rose's assertion that 12,500 Serbs had been ethnically cleansed from Goražde in 1992 as a complete fabrication, citing the most authoritative report on war crimes in former Yugoslavia by the UN Commission of Experts, which made no mention of any ethnic cleansing of Serbs from Goražde. Macdonald was urged by three Members to retract his statement. Two of them, John Reid and Andrew Robathan, had visited Goražde in August 1993 during a trip paid for by the Serbs, Reid, disregarding his colleague's reference to the UN reports, cautioned Macdonald about investigating matters through press reports, and invited him to put on record "that he was in no way suggesting anything that could impinge the honor of that British officer,"⁵¹ which Macdonald readily did.

Macdonald then went on to describe how NATO's mistrust of UNPROFOR extended to threatening to withhold details of aid patrols from UNPROFOR headquarters for fear they would be divulged to Bosnian Serb General, Ratko Mladić, putting NATO aircrews at risk. Minister for Defense Procurement, Roger Freeman, summed up the attitude of condemnation on both sides of the House to Macdonald's statement on Rose:

The hon. Gentleman surely falls into the trap for which he is incorrectly blaming General Rose - that of being partial. The hon. Gentleman is being partial. He is claiming that General Rose did or did not do certain things to defend one of the parties involved in that sad conflict. I am grateful to Opposition Front Bench members for what they said on that subject.⁵²

None of the speakers offered any evidence to refute the claims made by Macdonald.

Another Labour MP, Eric Martlew, also joined in the condemnation of Macdonald's speech, informing the House that "Labour Front-Bench spokesmen do not associate themselves with those remarks."⁵³

Citing his visit to Bosnia as his authority for equalizing between the sides, Martlew did not, however, inform the House that he had visited the area as a guest of the Serbs. He made similar interventions on other occasions, as did Tory MPs, Harold Elletson and David Faber.⁵⁴ Liberal Democrat, Don Foster, following his Serb-financed trip to Bosnia, became treasurer of the reformed British/Yugoslav group, now chaired by Robert Wareing.

In late June 1995, following the UN hostage crisis in Bosnia, and just two weeks before the fall of Srebrenica, an initiative called the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, was launched in Committee Room 11 of the House of Commons, with the purpose of lobbying against military intervention in Bosnia. The launch was attended by about a hundred people. Sponsors of the initiative included MPs Tony Benn, Tam Dalyell, Alice Mahon (who claimed special expertise, being on the NATO Committee of the House), as well as Campbell Christie, then General Secretary of the Scottish TUC, other trade unionists, members of the National Peace Council, the Green Party, the Labour Women's Action Committee, and Labour Action for Peace, all present in a personal capacity. The

initiative also included two writers (John Berger and William Ash), a poet (Benjamin Zephaniah), a QC (Michael Mansfield), an Air Commodore (Alistair Machie), a Lord (Jenkins of Putney), and other notables like Bruce Kent and Sir Alfred Shennan.

The Committee took the position that the war in Former Yugoslavia was a civil war in which the outside world should remain neutral, and called on the British government to promote:

a purely humanitarian and mediation role for the UN in the former Yugoslavia ... to maintain the arms embargo ... and to halt air strikes and deployment of [combat] troops.

The speakers appeared not to realize that these measures were not dissimilar to British government policy! Tony Benn, who spearheaded the meeting began by admitting he was not an expert on the history of the area, and went on to prove his point by referring to the assassination in Sarajevo in 1914 of Archduke Otto (sic)!

Developments on the ground in Bosnia soon made the Committee's immediate objectives obsolete, as extensive NATO airstrikes brought the war to a halt just over two months later. But some of the misconceptions which led to the formation of the Committee, representing such disparate interest groups, linger on and continue, at various levels, to influence the international response to the postwar situation.

The role of the British media

It has often been claimed that the war in Bosnia was "media-led," with the British and other Western media by and large supporting the Bosnian Muslim side. John Bums of St Cross College, Oxford University, put it this way:

the media have concentrated huge resources upon reporting atrocities in former Yugoslavia and laid blame for those atrocities almost wholly on one side ... In fact, the media in general contributed significantly to the weakening of International Institutions by a pack mentality that quite deliberately ignores swathes of evidence which would otherwise balance the picture in a conflict scenario.⁵⁵

To assess this and similar claims more fully, it is proposed to examine some of the media coverage of events, particularly in terms of access, at certain key stages of the war.

In 1991, when hostilities were still confined to the Western republics, early voices commenting on the war on British television included John Zametica of the International Institute of Strategic Studies, who told BBC viewers on 27 June 1991:

We are not going to see a classic war. We are going to see a few atrocities but no large scale violence⁵⁶

Starcević, a diplomat from the Yugoslav embassy who became a familiar face on the BBC in 1991, commented on developments from the Serb standpoint, whilst British journalist, David Sells, pointed to historic precedent even before the war had got underway in Croatia:

Croatian Ustashes loom large in memory... The Serbs feel under siege. The Croatians accused the army probably falsely, of showing partiality to the Serbs.

From Yugoslavia, Brana Crnevic⁵⁷ portrayed the Serbs as:

chosen to suffer ... less well organized. We feel like a persecuted nation ... Fear is on us like a

madness.

Professor Stojanović from Belgrade University recalled:

Serb popular collective memories of genocide in World War II. We are afraid.

Lazar Macura⁵⁸ warned British viewers that it would be "a very great mistake if the EC sent troops."⁵⁹

Alongside the comments from Serbs and Serb sympathizers were the observations on international aspects of the war from British experts on the region, notably Sir Fitzroy Maclean (who had visited Yugoslavia the previous week):

One of the things said in Belgrade was that Austria had had a hand in what was happening in Slovenia, and Croatia too. It is conceivable.⁶⁰

Lord Carrington who from September 1991 was Chairman of the EC Peace Conference on Yugoslavia, announced:

I don't see a military intervention ... This is not a conference in which you would impose solutions on people."⁶¹

a view propagated throughout the war by the Foreign secretary Douglas Hurd:

I am very anxious that we should not exaggerate what we can do or pretend that we in Western Europe can substitute for a lack of will for peace in Yugoslavia itself. When they are ready for peace, we can help monitor it."⁶²

As early as 1991, there was a coherent message, amounting almost to an unconscious mutual reinforcement process, in the similar signals conveyed to the British public by the Serb community and their representatives, on the one hand, and leading British diplomats and politicians, on the other. In other words, while the graphic media coverage of events on the ground continued, showing tanks rolling from Belgrade to the Croatian border, and the shelling of Vukovar, Dubrovnik, and elsewhere, the general message filtering through to British TV viewers was: yes, it's awful, but it's very complex; it has its roots back in history; and the Austrians may have exacerbated the problems. We, the British, should therefore help where we can in even-handed mediation, but we should not intervene militarily. The people of Yugoslavia should be left to decide their future for themselves.

But, as *Observer* war correspondent, John Sweeney, pointed out at the time: where was the serious debate? Why was there no investigation on *Panorama*, *World in Action*, or *This Week*? And where were all the tabloids? The paucity of substantive analysis of a war in which close to 10,000 had been killed, and hundreds of thousands of people displaced, or made refugees, was echoed in the House of Commons where the only opportunity Members of Parliament had to debate the war in Croatia was within the confines of Ministers' Questions, or at adjournment debates, usually late into the night.

As the war spread to Bosnia and revelations of Serb-run concentration camps, ethnic cleansing, and mass rape were conveyed on TV screens across the world, pressure was building up against the Serbs, with public opinion growing more critical of Western governments in failing to take effective action to stop the aggression. It was at this time that direct media lobbying in Britain was stepped up. On 1 July 1992, a letter from the Bosnian

Serb leader, Radovan Karadžić, was published in *The Times*, purporting to explain the position of Serbs in Bosnia, and praising John Kennedy.

On 19 August, a letter by Karadžić, occupying nearly half a page of *The Times* under the heading "The leader of Bosnia's Serbs states his case before London Conference," warned the international community not to intervene militarily in the war. *The Times* declined to publish a critical response to either letter.⁶³ In early June 1995, the BBC interviewed Karadžić on the 9 P.M. news, where he had the occasion at prime viewing time to put his regime's case to British viewers, just when his forces were holding several hundred UN personnel hostage, including thirty-three British troops. Such appearances contributed to dignifying Karadžić as a credible political leader, may have encouraged him to continue the aggression and, arguably, served to legitimize some of his theses at crucial junctures in the war.

John Zametica, now lecturing in European security at the University of Westminster, while simultaneously accompanying the Karadžić entourage around London,⁶⁴ had direct access to the British media immediately after the discovery of Serb-run concentration camps.⁶⁵ In *The Independent* on 5 August, Defense Correspondent Christopher Bellamy quoted in some detail from Zametica's report published that week,⁶⁶ in which Zametica had asserted that military intervention was only "in the minds of some hotheads." Bellamy described the report as having "renewed relevance with reports of Serb-run concentration camps in Bosnia and demands for intervention."⁶⁷

The Guardian and *The Financial Times* published articles arguing against outside military intervention to restore peace,⁶⁸ while Jonathan Eyal, Director of Studies at the Royal United Services Institute, argued that either Bosnia should be recognized as finished, or its integrity supported, in which case massive ground forces would be required.⁶⁹ Lawrence Freedman, Professor of War Studies at Kings College, London, interviewed on the BBC, put a number (a hundred thousand) to the troops required for the purpose.⁷⁰ Fred Halliday of the London School of Economics wrote that public opinion was reluctant to accept the risks and costs of intervention,⁷¹ although it was not made clear on what evidence his conclusion was based.

The argument that the international community should not intervene militarily was used persistently by Serbs during the Bosnian war, including by those who were regarded as firmly opposed to Milošević's policies. See, for instance, the argument offered by Petar Luković, deputy editor of *Vreme*, the Belgrade opposition paper, where he stated

by even talking about military intervention in Serbia, the West is doing Milošević a great service. He will use this as an excuse to destroy all forms of opposition – all the little plants of freedom that we have been nourishing for years.⁷²

He suggested instead that the West should be visible in Serbia "through monitors and commissions." Luković also stated that the Serbs had won:

I cannot see Bosnia as a unitary state. It is impossible. The Serbs would never accept this after all that has happened in the region ... It is stupid to expect them to give up those territories ... With the army that Karadžić has behind him...he has proved that an ethnically clean state is a possibility.⁷³

That was in early January 1993! Milos Vasić, also of *Vreme*, had expressed a similar view at a conference in Edinburgh in December 1992. Slavko Curuvija, the newspaper editor, who in 1999 achieved almost martyr status after he was murdered by proxies of the Belgrade regime, also in December 1992 advocated that the West recognize reality, stating that hundreds of thousands of troops would be required "to die in Bosnia's ravines" to

restore the status quo ante in Bosnia, advising that the only way "objectively speaking" that the Bosnian Muslims could survive and not become the Palestinians of Europe, was to create a federal or confederal state with Croatia!⁷⁴

Even the seasoned *Guardian* war correspondent, Maggie O'Kane, was momentarily taken in by the Serb lobby. In a full-page *Guardian* interview with Radovan Karadžić,⁷⁵ she described John Kennedy as:

initially sympathetic to the Serbian cause, [he] now finds himself in a difficult position now that it has turned so ugly. Karadžić desperately trying to pull back, relies on Kennedy to keep him straight in the world of PR ... Kennedy, a former parliamentary research assistant, feels under a moral obligation to hang on in while he can influence Karadžić : 'Karadžić is not an evil man. He's trying to stop things now but it's out of control.'

The argument that various forces are "out of control" was a popular one with Serb lobbyists. The Yugoslav Army was said to be out of control in Croatia in 1991; and Milošević was often exonerated from keeping his side of an internationally-brokered bargain by his alleged "inability" to control the Serbs in Bosnia.

Channel 4's *Bloody Bosnia Season*, in early August 1993,⁷⁶ was the first and last attempt on British TV throughout the war to examine it in some depth and from many aspects, generating public debate. Just weeks after *Season* ended, Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, made a seminal speech at the Traveler's Club, in which he criticized British journalists, charging that the war in Bosnia had been media led.⁷⁷

From then on, there was a sea-change in Bosnia war-reporting. For the most part, it vanished from the front pages, and British journalists were posted to other war zones. Nik Gowing, Diplomatic Editor of Channel 4 News, after a spell at Harvard researching media influence on government decision-making in wartime, returned with a revised understanding, not only of media influence, but of the war itself. From then on, Channel 4 News presenters referred increasingly to a "civil war" and "warring factions" in Bosnia, terminology which Serb lobbyists had been peddling all along. Two years later, in September 1995, just as a full-scale NATO attack was launched on Serb positions, Serb General, Ratko Mladić, indicted as a war criminal for genocide and crimes against humanity, was invited to give an exclusive interview on Channel 4 News.

One of the most prolific and impassioned commentators in the British media arguing the Serb side in the war was Joan Phillips who, as Assistant Editor of *Living Marxism*⁷⁸ between 1991 and 1994, filed articles claiming that the misdeeds purportedly committed by Serbs were in fact lies invented by the West, and characterizing Western intervention as a form of colonialism. In 1993 Phillips was involved in bringing into the UK photographs of alleged atrocities carried out against Serbs by Arab mercenaries. The photos emanated from the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences which had produced the infamous Memorandum in 1986, a document generally regarded as a precursor to the Serbian aggression which ensued. In the August of that year Phillips, in her own documentary program, *Journalists at War*, shown on Channel 4 TV, criticized what she called the "liberal moral crusade" to save Bosnia, insisting it was not a "special case."⁷⁹

In early 1995, however, Phillips made what appeared to be a remarkable conversion, changing her name, style, publication and, apparently, her ideology.⁸⁰ Now, as Deputy Editor for Eastern Europe at the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), working under Serbian Director, Laza Kekić, Joan Phillips filed quarterly *Country Risk Service* reports on the Former Yugoslav Republics, as Joan Hoey. At the end of March 1995, just weeks before the UN hostage crisis, the downing of a US NATO aircraft, and the fall of Srebrenica, Phillips/Hoey curiously predicted that "the outlook for a gradual normalization of

the situation in former Yugoslavia is better than for several years."⁸¹

But the conversion was evidently less than wholesale. In the latter half of 1995, Hoey had returned to writing in *Living Marxism* again (as Joan Phillips) condemning, in somewhat different tones from those employed by Hoey in the EIU reports, the US-led airstrikes on Serb positions.⁸² During this time, Hoey continued to file quarterly risk assessment reports in the EIU.

The Lord Byron Foundation

In October 1994, a quasi-academic organization, The Lord Byron Foundation for Balkan Studies, was founded with offices in central London and the United States. According to its mission statement, the Foundation "seeks to correct the current trend of public commentary, which tends, systematically, not to understand events but to construct a propagandistic version of Balkan rivalries designed to promote the interests of outside powers."

The Lord Byron Foundation claims to have participated in several international conferences, its board members traveling half a million miles in the first eighteen months of its existence, securing over two hundred radio and TV interviews, and publishing over fifty articles in English language publications.⁸³ The media appearances of these and other associates of the Foundation, and their papers delivered at various public gatherings and disseminated on the internet, revolve around familiar theses. A common theme is that Germany provoked and prolonged the Bosnian war, using European and Russian troops as "proxy enforcers" with the long-term aim of imposing, under the cloak of Europeanism, German authority in the region, strategic leadership in Europe, and a renewed *Drang nach Osten*.⁸⁴ This argument lends credence to the belief that the German recognition of Croatia, leading to the Bosnian war (some say the Croatian war, too!), was part of a greater conspiracy.⁸⁵

Alfred Sherman and Michael Stenton also elucidated their views on the dangers of German expansionism, the German influence in NATO, Muslim fundamentalism, and the "power of American companies who depend on Muslims"⁸⁶ in interviews in a number of journals, such as *Vojska*, *Intervju*,⁸⁷ and *NIN*.⁸⁸ One of Sherman's speeches, delivered to the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences,⁸⁹ was apparently considered racist even by some people in Belgrade.⁹⁰

Similar themes abound in the journal, *Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, with offices in London's Piccadilly, which describes itself as "the international journal of national management and national security management." One editorial (quoting "very reliable sources in Sarajevo") claimed that 15,000-20,000 "foreign Islamic mercenaries," or *mujaheddin*, were fighting in support of Izetbegović in Bosnia.⁹¹ The same issue quotes a senior British Government source as saying "the peace accord has been signed, but the real threat to the West inherent in the US support for the radicals in Bosnia is not being addressed." Accusing the Clinton Administration of "creating" a war against the Bosnian Serbs in order to deflect from the "Whitewater" scandal and gain popularity at home, another issue details the evidently successful efforts of "key UN and British officials" to stop the Americans from launching airstrikes against the Serbs during their offensive on the "safe area" of Goražde in April 1994.⁹² *Strategic Policy* did not only exaggerate and distort. It abounded in factual inaccuracies.⁹³ According to Milos Vasić in an article in *Vreme*, *Strategic Policy* was virtually run by a married couple, the Copleys, and sold mainly by subscription through the Third World. It also held a number of international conferences on various themes, where the bulk of the work was done in the intervals between speeches,

and most of the participants represented arms manufacturers.⁹⁴ According to Vasić, amongst the Copleys' associates were Serb lobbyist and Conservative Party parliamentary candidate, John Kennedy, John/Jovan Zametica, retired *Observer* correspondent, Nora Beloff, and various "interesting business people" close to Yugoslav export fronting companies in London, such as Genex.⁹⁵

Foundation members also peddle the theory that America encouraged Islamic agitation, and blocked several peace moves between 1992-1995.⁹⁶ Such arguments blur the *contours* of any serious analysis into the responsibility of other major international protagonists in the war. Another common thesis is that the UN Criminal Tribunal at The Hague is politically motivated and biased against the Serbs.⁹⁷ Russia (unlike Germany and the United States) is described as having an evenhanded role in the Balkans, while portrayal of the Serbs as the misunderstood and principal victims of the war paves the way to justify lifting all international sanctions against Yugoslavia, and insisting that regional stability may only be assured through massive economic investment into Republika Srpska, Serbia, and Montenegro.⁹⁸

Probably the main significance of this Foundation in lobbying terms is the substantial access its four board members, Sir Alfred Sherman (Chairman), Michael Stenton (Director of Studies), Professor Ronald Hatchett⁹⁹ (Director) and Dr. Srdja Trifković (Executive Director), have managed to secure to the Western, and especially the British, media. According to their filed biographies, Sherman and Trifković had longstanding links with, *inter alia*, *The Daily Telegraph* and BBC External Services, respectively. Trifković, who studied at Sussex and Southampton Universities, is also listed as South-East Europe correspondent for US News & World Report between 1988 and 1991. Stenton was mistakenly described as the Director of Studies (modern history) at the Board of Continuing Education, Cambridge University.¹⁰⁰

Sir Alfred Sherman, self-proclaimed adviser to Radovan Karadžić,¹⁰¹ was listed by the US Internal Revenue Service as receiving fees in 1993 from the Serbian Unity Congress (SUC),¹⁰² the largest Serbian American pressure group which was, according to one extensive study, acting as a front for Karadžić through Danielle Sremac, appointed by SUC as its Washington Director in 1994.¹⁰³

The royal connection

A founding member of the SUC was Crown Prince Alexander Karadjordjević of Serbia who lives in Britain. Son of King Peter II of Yugoslavia, who fled to London at the beginning of World War II where he set up a government-in-exile, Alexander was born in 1945 in Claridges Hotel, a suite of which, to accommodate the heir to the Yugoslav throne, was declared Yugoslav territory by the British government. Baptized at Westminster Abbey by the Serbian Patriarch, Alexander is a godson of the Queen. His education at Gordonstoun, Millfield and the British Royal Military Academy was followed by a career in the British Army, from which he later resigned to pursue a business career.

Crown Prince Alexander's wife, Greek-born Crown Princess Katherine of Yugoslavia, is Patron of the British-based charity, Lifeline. With access to royal, diplomatic, military, and business circles,¹⁰⁴ Lifeline lists amongst its benefactors nearly a hundred, mostly British, organizations, including Marks and Spencer,¹⁰⁵ *The Daily Telegraph*, the Savoy Hotel, the Economist Charitable Trust and Quaker Oats, and many others.¹⁰⁶

Lifeline claims to have delivered more than 400 tons of humanitarian relief throughout former Yugoslavia. From its promotion material, the institutions and projects supported appear to have been predominantly in Serb or Serb-occupied territory. Given

that the majority of NGOs tended to focus their efforts on the Bosnian Muslim and Croat communities, this might appear not unreasonable. On the other hand, towns such as Banja Luka, Bijeljina, and Trebinje, which feature among Lifeline's beneficiaries, were at no time during the war the target of shelling or ethnic cleansing (except of non-Serbs); nor were they under siege.¹⁰⁷ According to former UNHCR aid worker, Larry Hollingworth, who was stationed in Banja Luka, no more than 20 per cent of UNHCR food deliveries to the Banja Luka region reached the Muslim and Croat minorities for whom they were intended.¹⁰⁸ The rest was siphoned off by the military, or distributed amongst the Serb civilian population.¹⁰⁹ In Hollingworth's words, Banja Luka in 1992 and 1993 was "an evil town... not a place to be in a minority."¹¹⁰

Lobbying in the post-Dayton era

The end of the war in Bosnia required Serb lobbyists to readjust their stated objectives and lobbying techniques. As international protagonists united behind the Dayton Peace Agreement, Serb interests were not well served by those among their ranks who openly flouted an agreement through which Serbs had secured their own republic and 49 per cent of the territory of Bosnia and Hercegovina,¹¹¹ together with the removal of most international sanctions.

But Dayton, at least for the time being, put the brakes on the Greater Serbia project. An outer wall of sanctions remained on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia which, although recognized by many countries, continued to be excluded from all major international organizations, including the United Nations. On the other hand, the main requirements for the removal of sanctions – the surrender of major indicted war criminals and the restoration of democracy in Kosovo – were unacceptable to most Serbs, for the simple reason that they are impracticable, in terms of their aims and objectives. The testimonies of indictees such as Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić, the respective political and military orchestrators of the Bosnian war, may confirm the evidence of major international agencies, namely, that the Serbs are responsible for most of the war crimes, and for perpetrating ethnic cleansing on a systematic basis. Since most Serb leaders, even members of the new "moderate" government of Republika Srpska, might have been implicated in these practices¹¹² they could, if confirmed through the UN Criminal Tribunal, set back the longer-term objectives of the Serb lobby indefinitely.

As well as resisting the authority of the UN Criminal Tribunal at The Hague, Serbs across the political spectrum were concerned to retain the political status quo in Kosovo, which entailed the widescale repression of the majority ethnic group, the Albanians, a policy emanating from Belgrade which had been in force since the late 1980s. This was clearly not a position which was likely to attract instant support in the outside world. These two major hurdles were, from the Serb perspective, compounded by the political and economic effects of the war, both within Republika Srpska and in Serbia itself, which left the majority of the civilian population impoverished. Foreign economic aid and investment was, therefore, seen as a prerequisite to recovery and to the survival of RS Prime Minister, Milorad Dodik, and his new government. The importance of a demonstrably democratic orientation was recognized by Serbs and their supporters as paramount to securing international, and particularly American, economic co-operation.

In the post-Dayton period, therefore, Serb lobbyists had to attempt to reconcile a number of conflicting objectives. While seeking, on the one hand, firstly to denigrate and call into question the work of the Hague Tribunal and, secondly, to argue the case against Albanian autonomy in Kosovo in the face of gross abuse of human and civil rights on the

part of the Serb civil and military authorities there, they were at the same time arguing for substantial international economic investment in Serbia and Republika Srpska, objectives which, taken together, might appear somewhat ambitious. The only solution rested in playing the democratic card.

In this regard, a political power struggle on the ground in Srpska, together with an enterprising new lobbying initiative in America, combined to move the Serb cause forward. In June 1997, the SUC engaged a British ex-diplomat Jonathan Clarke as media consultant, to present a new Serb image at Capitol Hill. Clarke, a research fellow at the Cato Institute in Washington, and a former career diplomat in the British Diplomatic Service, has a distinguished record as foreign affairs analyst, and was well versed in media relations.¹¹³ Previously, the SUC, relying mainly on Greek public relations experts¹¹⁴ and their own resources, had had limited success in influencing policy-makers in Washington. But the newly-appointed media consultant was able to offer a different dimension to Serb lobbying.

Between 1993 and 1997, relations between the Clinton administration and the British Conservative government on Bosnia had been marked by frustration and even deadlock, a situation which was reflected in lobbying efforts in the two countries. The new Labour administration, on the other hand, was perceived overall as being better attuned to that of the United States and, therefore, it was to be expected that on the issue of Bosnia, too, the respective positions of Britain and America might be less adversarial. A more evenhanded policy in relation to the different ethnic groups in Bosnia and Hercegovina than that previously displayed by the United States stood the chance, if presented by the Blair government, of being accepted more readily than hitherto.

After some months of apparent inactivity the SUC, on 18 June 1997, produced a position paper, *Transition to Democracy in Serbia: The Key Issues*, calling for "an imaginative and creative US engagement,"¹¹⁵ and setting out the objectives of (i) furthering the transition to democracy in Serbia, and (ii) preventing the outbreak of a new war in Bosnia while, at the same time, emphasizing the necessity of economic revival as the key to peaceful resolution of the Balkans conflict. This was followed, on 11 July, by a press release, divorcing the policies of Milošević, Karadžić, and company from Republika Srpska President, Biljana Plavsić, and calling on America to support Plavsić through economic aid, in the interests of democracy and the implementation of the Dayton Agreement while, at the same time, criticizing the NATO action against war crimes suspects as counter-productive to these objectives.¹¹⁶ After that time the SUC, through its new media consultant, Jonathan Clarke, sought to highlight the democratic achievements of Republika Srpska, its fight against corruption, and its compliance with Dayton, comparing it with the record of the Bosniac/Croat Federation. Corruption, by implication, was presented by the SUC as a greater evil in Bosnia and Hercegovina than genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Other press releases criticized the US "train and equip" program,¹¹⁷ and stressed that Brcko, a strategically vital town to both entities, should be ceded to Republika Srpska, in the interests of regional peace. SUC representatives claim to have met with high-ranking State Department officials, NATO Secretary-General, Javier Solana, and other Western government leaders to clarify the Serb position, while studiously emphasizing evenhandedness on the part of the international community as the key to peace and reconciliation in the area.¹¹⁸

The SUC claimed to have had considerable success in this approach. Indeed, if its claims are to be believed, it would seem that the Serbs managed substantially to overturn the hitherto hostile attitude of the Clinton administration and, in the space of several

months, to secure a number of its prime stated objectives.¹¹⁹ While British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, in a highly-publicized press conference in Sarajevo in July 1997, alleged widescale corruption in the Bosnian Federation (by inference contrasting it with the progress made in the Republika Srpska through Plavsić's "anti-corruption" stance), Richard Holbrooke the following week made a tour of the former Yugoslav capitals employing, allegedly for the first time, the word "evenhanded."¹²⁰ Most important of all, the conditionality clause imposed by the international community as recently as 24 July 1997 at the Donors' Conference in Brussels appeared to have been waived in regard to the RS, in favor of a massive injection of US and EU aid, with the hope that the apparent political changes would bring about democracy, reconciliation, the return of refugees, and the further marginalizing of the "hardliners," Karadžić, Krajisnik, and Aleksa Buha.¹²¹

The assumed conversion of Biljana Plavsić, from champion of ethnic cleansing to anti-corruption advocate and guardian of democracy, and the installation of an allegedly more moderate government in RS, clearly influenced the position of the international community on Bosnia and Hercegovina which, for a time served as a unifying factor. Indications are, however, that international policy in that area in the aftermath of Dayton continued in some respects to evolve within the context of British perspectives in which the Serb lobby in Britain and the British Serb lobby abroad, played a significant role.¹²²

Kosovo 1999

After the massacre at Racak of over forty civilians in January 1999, it was no longer possible to pretend that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), through its several hundred unarmed monitors in Kosovo, was able effectively to ensure stability and security in that province. The Holbrooke/Milošević agreement of the previous October was in tatters, with the situation spiraling out of control, and no international consensus on the way forward.

The Rambouillet talks, initiated by the leading European military powers, Britain and France, represented a last-ditch effort to resolve the Kosovo crisis through an internationally brokered peace settlement underpinned by a NATO peacekeeping force, with the aim of bringing Belgrade back into line. Its failure, following Serbia's rejection of both the political and military terms of the proposed agreement to be drawn up between Serbian and Albanian representatives, created an impasse. Acceptance of the terms laid down at Rambouillet would have amounted to political suicide for Yugoslav leader, Slobodan Milošević, who had ridden to power ten years earlier on the Kosovo ticket. The major powers could now either search around for a new approach while Serbian military forces proceeded to execute their scorched earth policy in Kosovo,¹²³ both endangering and further exposing the inadequacies of the OSCE verification mission,¹²⁴ or they could act militarily to end the onslaught. The Rambouillet debacle, together with the looming NATO anniversary summit, and the mounting threat of a wider regional war, persuaded the Alliance powers into accepting reluctantly the inevitability of a major NATO air offensive to bring Milošević back on track.

For Britain, this was also an opportunity to restore, through assuming a high profile role in the political and military campaign, some of the influence lost in Europe through its self-exclusion from the single currency, while bolstering its "special relationship" with the United States, which had been severely shaken during the Bosnian war.¹²⁵

The resolve with which British ministers entered into Operation Allied Force in late March 1999 presented a particular challenge to the Serb lobby in the UK, which had hitherto been required to play no more than a supportive role to British government policy.

This lobby now came into full swing, adopting for the first time an offensive stance, pulling out all stops in an attempt to discredit 'the NATO campaign and its leaders, and secure a swift end to the bombing, receiving support from a significant cross-section of British society.¹²⁶ And, as in the Croatian and Bosnian wars, rightwing isolationists coalesced with a number of leftwingers of all shades, this time with the primary objective of bringing the NATO bombing to a halt.

The Committee for Peace in the Balkans whose founder members included prominent personalities from across the political spectrum, and which had receded into the background after its ill-timed launch in 1995, just two weeks before the fall of Srebrenica, was now reactivated, and anti-NATO demonstrations, protests and benefit concerts were planned throughout Britain. Similarly, the Serbian Unity Congress In the United States¹²⁷ coordinated protest activities, publishing through the Internet details of anti-NATO meetings and demonstrations across the world,¹²⁸ while meetings were held by Socialist Workers Party members who, when probed, generally had little understanding of the deeper issues at stake in the region, apparently using the Yugoslav issue as a tool for recruitment to its ranks.¹²⁹ Anti-nuclear groups similarly used the Balkans war as a platform for expounding their position on NATO.¹³⁰

In the House of Commons, the traditional bipartisan position which had held in the Bosnian war also prevailed during the NATO campaign in Kosovo, but with a reverse effect, as the Conservative Party now officially endorsed the policy of large-scale military intervention.¹³¹ While misgivings were expressed from all sides of the House over aspects of NATO strategy, and queries raised as to its objectives, strong dissent was limited to the unofficial cross-party coalition which had adopted a pro-Serb position in the Bosnian war.

The role of the media

In light of all this, the skeptical stance adopted by much of the British media, particularly the TV and radio stations, to the NATO campaign, was the more significant. Central to the success of NATO's mission was public support in the member states, and a unity of purpose among NATO members. In their concern to maintain public backing for the bombing, already clearly indicated in opinion polls especially in Britain and America, NATO political and military leaders strove to minimize collateral damage, opting initially for a limited target list. Ironically, however, it was not the military campaign but the Serbian propaganda machine worldwide which presented the most serious challenge to the Alliance, especially during the first weeks of the war.

In Britain, this worked with special effect through the media, where a variety of military and political "experts" and diplomats were invited for interview on news and current affairs programs, many of whom expressed highly critical views on NATO's handling of the campaign, *even during the very early days of the military action, before its impact could be properly assessed*. It soon became clear that the media support traditionally offered to British governments at war had become significantly modified in regard to the NATO action over Serbia in the spring of 1999. In fact, the degree of opposition to government policy within sections of the media at certain junctures of the war may, arguably, have risked affecting the progress of the NATO campaign, as military and political leaders became called on by media pundits to explain and justify their policy, to provide explicit details of planned activities, and to conduct official enquiries into targeting and other errors (with conclusions to be made public) at the height of the campaign.

There are several factors to bear in mind in assessing the role of the British media in the NATO campaign. The allocation of time, the nature of the coverage, the attitude of

individual newscasters, the choice of interviewees, the balance of views, and the perspectives indicated in documentaries were all relevant to public perception of the conflict itself, and NATO's handling of it. Traditionally, the British media have maintained a supportive role for successive governments at war, both forming and reflecting public opinion, while offering vastly extended news coverage as was largely the case in the Falklands and Gulf wars. A comparison between the extent of British media coverage of the first weeks of the Kosovo and Gulf wars is particularly instructive.

In the initial stages of the NATO bombing in Serbia, the extra time allocation by the BBC and ITN (Independent Television News) amounted to little more than slightly extended news bulletins, despite the degree of declared public interest and the involvement of British forces. In fact, during the Easter weekend (2-5 April), viewers without access to satellite TV might have been forgiven for assuming that there was almost nothing to report in Kosovo, coverage of the Kosovo war on four of the terrestrial channels being confined to the 10-15 minute news bulletins. This was just ten days and the second weekend into the war, when the number of refugees expelled from Kosovo reached the level of hundreds of thousands, with the gruesome tales of their experiences first fully coming to light. Full coverage of this momentous exodus might arguably have proved a crucial factor in swinging public opinion firmly behind the NATO action.¹³²

One of few changes to the BBC schedule at this time was the transmission of a special edition of Panorama called "The Mind of Milošević." Shown just five days into the war, at the height of public interest in events and protagonists, the documentary portrayed Milošević through an assortment of people, British and Serbian, who had associated with him and characterized him in turn as agile, adept, personally warm, defying easy definition, enjoying whiskey and conversation. His Minister of Information, Radmila Milentijević, who appeared a few times in the documentary, described him as a relaxed human leader, "who talks, laughs, is a good singer, and likes a drink occasionally and who, unlike President Clinton, doesn't cheat on his wife." Milošević's wife she described with sympathy as "a girl whose life had also been scarred by violence and separation," while the Serbian representative at the United Nations,¹³³ Vladislav Jovanović, saw Milošević as an "intimately shy and modest" man. On the British side Douglas (now Lord) Hurd,¹³⁴ Lord David Owen, and Pauline Neville-Jones, all of whom had been closely associated with Milošević, were called on to reminisce, and offer their views. Neville-Jones referred almost affectionately to Milošević as "a nutcase who carries responsibility,"¹³⁵ while reminding viewers of the chronic propensity of the Balkan peoples to barbarity.¹³⁶ Lord Owen, meanwhile, attributed the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo to the air strikes.¹³⁷

All this makes an interesting comparison with the early days of the Gulf war where there was fifteen hours coverage daily on the ITN, and similar on the BBC.¹³⁸ In fact, during the first weeks of that war, non-Gulf programs were the exception rather than the rule,¹³⁹ where developments were covered by all four terrestrial channels from 6 A.M. for about three and a half hours, and from midnight until two o'clock in the morning daily.¹⁴⁰ In contrast, anyone in Britain without access to satellite TV, wishing to follow events in the Balkans war in detail, would have needed to be an insomniac, tuning into BBC's night news service, starting at 2 A.M. It has since been claimed that British people showed no increased interest in the news, either on television or in newspapers, during the Kosovo conflict.¹⁴¹ Yet all evidence points to the fact that the British public was avid for news of the Kosovo war and, indeed, eager to express its opinions wherever possible in all the TV and radio phone-in and similar programs. Sky TV reported a staggering increase in emails, with a response of 700 for just one program.¹⁴²

The tabloid press did become fully engaged in action in the Balkans for the first time

in the ten years of conflict, although there was still much less coverage of events in Kosovo than of the earlier Gulf war. The broadsheet press, too, while offering considerably fuller coverage than prior to NATO action, did not in the first month of war allot much space to the broader context of the events and the wider implications for Europe and beyond, when compared to their coverage of happenings in the Gulf.¹⁴³ The public interest in following the progress of the Gulf war was recorded at the time in a survey carried out by *Barb*, an audience research organization, which revealed that the British public watched 4.5 hours more TV in the first week of conflict than usual, with record numbers turning to the BBC for its extended Gulf news programs. According to opinion polls, similar public interest was shown in the Kosovo war, which made it the more remarkable that the terrestrial channels did not take advantage of the situation to increase audience viewing on the Kosovo conflict, especially in view of the altogether more graphic and "human interest" stories emerging from the Kosovar refugees.

The comparative lack of coverage of the Kosovo war by British terrestrial TV is just one point at issue. There is also the question of the choice of coverage. In previous wars involving British troops, the media has generally been fully behind government policy and, where dissent was reported, it was not given priority in news coverage.¹⁴⁴ These factors are relevant to the potential influence of the media on public perception. In the House of Commons, for example, misgivings expressed by Members of Parliament during debates on Kosovo often cited media reports as their authority.¹⁴⁵ And a BBC poll on the internet, revealing 80 per cent of callers in opposition to NATO air strikes in Britain, (in contrast with most other polls which revealed a distinct 2-1 ratio *in support of* government policy in Kosovo), was quoted by the Serbian Unity Congress as evidence of the British government's failure to gain public endorsement for its policy.¹⁴⁶ There was also the potential effect of such coverage on the NATO campaign itself, which was virtually forced at times to fight something amounting to an open war, pressed to give advance notice of its strategy to the public, and urged to conduct on-the-spot investigations into almost every target error.¹⁴⁷

Coverage of the initial stages of the NATO bombing in the broadsheet press included, along with the factual accounts, a significant number of articles which criticized the government's policy from different positions. For instance on page four of *The Times* on 26 March, Michael Rose expounded his containment policy, while on the facing page a prominent article described the opposition of the town of Coventry (twinned with Belgrade) to NATO action, recalling Coventry's World War II ordeal, and, further into the newspaper, Norman Stone, in a curious twist of allegiance, denounced the "US bombing" as "surreal nonsense."¹⁴⁸ The following day, *The Daily Telegraph* quoted Lord Carrington, former Chairman of the Hague Peace Conference on Yugoslavia, who criticized the campaign as "a mistaken and ill-conceived policy."¹⁴⁹ Edward Pearce, who had argued the Serb case in Bosnia, again expressed a personal view of Balkan history, and suggested that bombing would make things worse, casting doubt on the Americans' ability and stamina to conduct such a campaign.¹⁵⁰

General Rose in *The Sunday Times* wrote of the "attack force without the teeth for victory,"¹⁵¹ while in *The Independent on Sunday*, the one Sunday broadsheet to maintain a persistently anti-NATO stance, Tariq Ali described the war as a liberal imperialist adventure. The following day, Michael Binyon wrote a sizeable article in *The Times*, entitled "1,000 year story written in blood," fueling the "ancient ethnic hatred" line peddled by many Serb supporters of the Bosnian war, implying a symmetry of guilt.

The Financial Times also displayed its share of dissenters. On 31 March, D. Buckson wrote that the "war aims of NATO and Milošević seem equally unclear," while Guy

Dinmore in the same edition reported on the tightening of ranks in Serbia, devoting half his article to the views of Serbian historian Aleksa Djilas who, according to Dinmore, admitted his readiness to don a uniform for Serbia.¹⁵²

Another *Financial Times* headline "NATO rejects Serb offer in Kosovo" may have suggested to readers an unreasonable attitude on the part of NATO to what in fact was not a serious offer from Milošević. In the weekend edition of the *Financial Times* (3-4 April), Niall Ferguson questioned the ability of liberals (i.e. Clinton and Blair) to wage war. Turning Bismarck's famous quotation on its head, Ferguson questioned how many NATO grenadiers western voters thought Kosovo was worth, referring to the current "shambles" in the Balkans.

On 1 April, Tom Walker wrote a provocative article in *The Times*, headed "Cruise missiles wreck oven factory." The targeting of the Zastava arms factory in Kragujevac, mentioned in the same article, did not earn a mention in the headline. Instead, the town of Kragujevac was linked to the Serb suffering there during World War II.¹⁵³ A number of Tom Walker's recent articles have been copied onto Serb lobbying websites, along with those of other journalists whose work has been considered helpful to the Serb lobby.¹⁵⁴

One of the most surprising additions to the columns of *The Times* has been that of Mick Hume, editor of *Living Marxism* magazine! Hume writes on a number of issues, and not infrequently on the Balkan war, a subject he has devoted considerable space to over recent years in *Living Marxism*. On 15 April, *The Times* carried his article under the title "The war against the Serbs is about projecting a self-image of the ethical new Britain bestriding the world. It is a crusade," in which he describes the Kosovo Albanian people as "a hapless army of televisual victims."¹⁵⁵ As noted earlier, the wars in the Balkans have brought together some curious bedfellows! *Living Marxism*, until 1996, had been the organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party. Later it re-emerged as *LM*, a glossy magazine sponsoring high-brow celebrity seminars. An interesting profile of the revamped *LM* appeared in the *Guardian Weekend* which described one of its conferences at the Riverside Studios in Hammersmith, where BBC World Affairs Editor, John Simpson, shared a platform with *LM* alias *Living Marxism* editor, Mick Hume. Other guest speakers included Kate Adie, Melvyn Bragg, and David Starkey, with the first discussion panel chaired by John Humphries of the BBC, including Nicholas Kenyon, the director of the Proms, John Tusa, and Sir John Mortimer. Allegedly self-supporting, but carrying hardly any adverts, *LM* discarded its previous ideology, along with its former name (as, apparently did Joan Phillips!), according to Frank Furedi of Kent University, one of its main contributors. Yet there was no dramatic transformation of views to accompany the transition, at least not in its coverage of the Balkans.¹⁵⁶

In the "Culture" section of *The Sunday Times*¹⁵⁷ Waldemar Januszczak presented a broadsweep landscape of 700 years of Serbian history, interweaving fact and fiction, to argue the Serb claim to Kosovo. At the bottom of the article, the reader is referred to a Serbian internet site which manages, in a series of beautifully reproduced photographs of Serbian monasteries and paintings, to portray Kosovo culture without once mentioning the contribution of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians, a feat also accomplished by Januszczak in his article!

Two weeks later *The Times Weekend* featured a cover page story by its correspondent, Eve-Ann Prentice, in a journey through Kosovo in the company of a Serbian "protector." In a detailed, and what may on the surface appear even-handed, account of her four-day trip, Prentice paints a generally sympathetic picture of Kosovo's Serbs, commenting somewhat disingenuously that "despite reports of mass departures, Pristina is by no means a ghost town ... The city authorities are trying to house [the displaced

Albanians] in schools and community halls. So far, they seem to have succeeded; despite the mild weather, there is almost no one sleeping on the streets."¹⁵⁸ This was a slightly different picture from the one which emerged once NATO troops went into the province!

A number of familiar faces representing the Serb lobby in the Bosnian war resurfaced after the start of NATO bombing. Michael Stenton of the Lord Byron Foundation spelled out for Channel 4 viewers some of the "dangers" of the NATO action, including the destabilization of Macedonia and the risk of guerrilla warfare.¹⁵⁹ Srdja Trifković, also of the Lord Byron Foundation, in a lengthy interview on CNN, was introduced as *Serge Trifković*, a "Balkan affairs commentator" from *Chronicles* magazine. Trifković concluded that partition was the only solution for Kosovo since Serbs and Albanians could not live together, and that Milošević, although currently vilified, will become necessary to guarantee the solution.¹⁶⁰

The Economist produced a number of articles, including leading articles, which at best cast a negative hue on the NATO campaign. Titles such as "Stumbling into war," "Hope for the best, and a spot of golf," "Victim of Serbia – or NATO?," and "The West versus Serbia: The consequences of bombing Serbia are frighteningly unpredictable," fronted articles published in the early stages of the NATO action.

Joan Phillips/Hoey resurfaced on the media immediately after the first NATO bombs fell in Serbia. On CNN on the morning of 25 March 1999, Phillips/Hoey referred to the "skepticism of many" about the campaign and what it was supposed to be about, predicting serious "ripple effects" in the region. A far milder critique of military intervention than in Phillips/Hoey's earlier days with *Living Marxism*, but with the authority of the Economist Intelligence Unit behind her. Laza Kekić, Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe at the Economist Intelligence Unit, argued that Kosovo's Trepca mines were not of much economic significance. The mineral resources were "dwindling" and the cultural monuments had far greater importance for Serbs.¹⁶¹ This was an interesting statement coming from an economist who should indeed have had expert knowledge in that field. Acceptance of that position might lead international policy makers to underrate the vital economic importance of that area of northern Kosovo, and therefore fall into the trap of allowing a "soft" partition to take place, with Serb control becoming ratified in the northern part of the province. Such an outcome would have represented a considerable scoop for Milošević and the Belgrade regime, in view of their long-term schedule of investment for the mines.¹⁶²

David Sells' reports on BBC's *Newsnight* often tended, as in the Bosnian war, to undermine any perceived threat to the Serb position, including the War Crimes Tribunal. In one such report, Sells refers to the Tribunal as having been crippled from birth, therefore needing to resort to "snatch and grab" tactics, and to cut corners. This was on the day that the British Foreign Secretary had announced the handing over of a war crimes dossier to The Hague. Michael Byers, a Fellow in International Law at Oxford University, commented on what he perceived to be the erroneous strategy of announcing to Milošević that he may be indicted, since it would make the Yugoslav leader less ready to surrender.¹⁶³

On BBC Radio, a report on the Kosovo Liberation Army by Sean Waterman painted an alarming picture of its nationalist and Marxist-Leninist origins, funded by heroin smuggling. Tam Dalyell, MP, warned that we should not go to war for the concept of a Greater Albania,¹⁶⁴ and Miranda Vickers outlined some possible wider objectives of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), including redrawing the boundaries of Macedonia, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia, destabilizing the Balkans.¹⁶⁵

The sharp rise in readership and viewing levels during the first part of the NATO campaign demonstrated the potential power of the media in influencing public opinion. Six

days into the war, *The Guardian* and *The Times* reported soaring public interest in news and current affairs programs. The 6 P.M. BBC News gained one million viewers on the first night of NATO action, and the 9 P.M. news rose from its average of 4.2 million viewers to 8.2 million, with ITN News recording 5.3 million, an increase of 2 million viewers.¹⁶⁶ The BBC won the lion's share of the viewers, according to *The Times*, with *Newsnight* viewers up by 50 per cent during the first week of the war. Channel 4 News had an increase of one third, to 1.2 million, and Sky News more than doubled its audience.¹⁶⁷

As has been seen, the criticism of NATO action took many forms. For some critics on the left, NATO was seen as the military bastion of capitalism, with the Kosovo campaign used "to provide a focus for a military and propaganda campaign designed to consolidate a sense of community in Britain and the West."¹⁶⁸ But the problem of the long-term gross abuse of human rights in Kosovo was not addressed, other than by referring to comparable incidences of human rights' abuse in countries where NATO had not acted, or by arguing that NATO action had simply made the humanitarian situation worse.

Traditional antipathy towards NATO, coupled with traditional sympathy for its target, Serbia, in many cases eclipsed the reasons for the NATO action and gave rise to dubious analysis based on inaccurate information and an insufficient grasp of the local issues. Reputable leftwing analysts like Noam Chomsky, John Pilger, and Edward Said, condemned the NATO action on principle without being able to offer plausible alternatives, using theories often based on a world order which no longer exists.¹⁶⁹ In the *New Statesman*, one week into the Kosovo war, Pilger referred to the NATO campaign in this way: "The most powerful and rapacious imperial power in history is rampant," with US motivation stopping at nothing "to dominate human affairs by the most violent means allowed by their technology,"¹⁷⁰ illustrated by the air strikes on Serbia. He saw the rationale for the NATO bombing as a way of demonstrating the purpose of NATO, and shoring up its credibility, while at the same time dispensing with the United Nations, a sentiment which would doubtless find sympathy among leftwing readers with an imperfect grasp of the specific issues involved in Kosovo.

The *New Statesman* was one of a number of British periodicals which chose to adopt a firm anti-NATO stance. In the issue of 9 April 1999, a journalist's account of her journey through northern Albania¹⁷¹ gets sandwiched between the lead article, headed "Let evil go unpunished" and a highly critical analysis of NATO action by Noam Chomsky. The lead article argued that in Yugoslavia, western governments rejected the "unpalatable option," which was to stand aside, and instead chose the "disastrous course," resulting in death, exile, and destitution. In what it saw as a war that was "a cause for shame," the article considered a negotiated settlement as the only alternative to a prolonged ground war.¹⁷² Steve Richards' Westminster column in the same issue of *New Statesman*, entitled "We have only made it worse," assured its readers that the air strikes are not working, while columnist Bill Hayton saw Kosovo as merely the beginning of a series of "out of area" NATO exercises to ensure US leadership worldwide.¹⁷³

Another *New Statesman* article two weeks later, "Think, before it's too late,"¹⁷⁴ cast doubt on NATO's strategy, and on the solidarity of its member states, arguing that it was becoming increasingly harder for NATO to extricate itself from its Balkan quagmire, in a bombing campaign which was "in defiance of military history." This criticism of the NATO action was reinforced in the same *New Statesman* issue by a report from America in which Andrew Stephen claimed that "nobody is in charge" of the Balkan war, and by *Observer* correspondent Nick Cohen, who in a special cover story report entitled "The great Balkan lie" speculated on the government's "bogus concern for human rights."¹⁷⁵

The following month, Pilger wrote in the *New Statesman* that the peace negotiations

at Rambouillet had been stage managed, and the Serbs given an ultimatum with terms they could not possibly meet. He claimed a fraudulence comparable to Hitler's proposal to Chamberlain in 1938 that Germany occupy Czechoslovakia because ethnic Germans had been "forced to flee" or were tortured,¹⁷⁶ calling it a "deliberate provocation." But, if so, why did the Serbs not expose it immediately, or at least once NATO started bombing?¹⁷⁷ Of the many TV appearances by Serbian spokespeople in the first week of the bombing, including Vladislav Jovanović representing Former Republic of Yugoslavia at the UN, Serbian Foreign Minister, Zivadin Jovanović,¹⁷⁸ the Yugoslav *charge d'affaires* in Britain, Milislav Paić, Deputy Serbian leader, Vuk Drasković, Serbian Information Minister, and Marco Gasić and Misha Gavrilović, both from the Serbian Information Office in London, none raised objections to what Pilger called "the amazing NATO plan, tabled at Rambouillet, to occupy Yugoslavia." Pilger saw a UN force to monitor a political settlement as a viable alternative to bombing which was ignored by Washington and Brussels. He did not, however, discuss the plethora of difficulties associated with a similar approach which had been adopted by the international community in response to the Bosnian war!

Edward Said in the same issue of the *New Statesman*¹⁷⁹ advocated developing "the resistance that comes from a real education in philosophy and the humanities, patient and repeated criticism, and intellectual courage." This, again, would simply mean a repeat of the three-year international impasse in Bosnia, no doubt with similar results. Said's article deals principally with an attack on the media which he accuses of being complicit in

a conspiracy of silence [which] has been fobbed on to the public. The media has played the most extraordinary role of propaganda and encouragement, which seems to get worse every day

Said acknowledges the role of Serbian propaganda, but seems to be unaware that his quite inaccurate picture of British media involvement in the war as unblinkingly behind the NATO action is itself a familiar Serbian propaganda ploy.¹⁸⁰

The New Internationalist,¹⁸¹ in an article by Richard Swift, adopted a similar argument on the media's management of the war, claiming that

NATO's propaganda efforts revolved around trying to change our very perceptions of war. They used a specialized military language and technical euphemisms to ease our fears. The media amplified the official line, giving the public reassurance through the illusion of 'special' knowledge. We 'shared' NATO's dispassionate understanding of the conflict.¹⁸²

This was patently not the case. In the first place, the daily Ministry of Defense and NATO briefings¹⁸³ were not broadcast on either the BBC or ITN, so that viewers without satellite access were again excluded from what Swift referred to as the "propaganda efforts" of NATO. Furthermore, the military experts called in by Sky television, which did broadcast the briefings, were frequently sufficiently critical of what they heard at the briefings, and often of NATO strategy as a whole, to allay any reassurance the public might otherwise have had in viewing the briefings alone!¹⁸⁴ Equally, the Sky anchor-people often accorded a degree of respect with regard to the comments of their invited experts which was not always extended to the NATO briefers.

Noam Chomsky's track-record of critical analysis of oppressive political systems worldwide is second to few. Yet, in the case of the Kosovo issue, his writing also falls into the catalogue of leftwing political analysis which has used a theoretical framework inapplicable, for the most part, to the complexities of the current situation in former Yugoslavia. Not least since Chomsky's work has been used extensively by Serb propagandists in support of their cause,¹⁸⁵ his critique of the NATO campaign in Serbia

cannot be lightly dismissed. In his article in the *New Statesman*, "Judge the US by deeds, not words,"¹⁸⁶ in which he argues that humanitarian intervention on the part of the US in Kosovo cannot be justified on the basis of its past track record, Chomsky places the United Nations on a pedestal which, on the record of its performance in Bosnia alone, is hardly merited - and especially not, according to Chomsky's terms of reference. Nor in the article is a clear distinction made between the UN Charter, the UN Assembly, and the UN Security Council, the last an imperfect organ dominated by the five major world nuclear powers. In the case of Bosnia, there were sharp divergences between the latter two, and differences in interpretation of the UN Charter.¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, of the numerous UN Security Council resolutions on the former Yugoslavia, few were adhered to, often because they were either ambiguous or unimplementable.

Secondly, Chomsky argues that if an exception for humanitarian intervention exists "it must be premised on the 'good faith' of those intervening" which, in turn, must be based "not on their rhetoric but on their record, in particular their adherence to the principles of international law, World Court decisions, and so on." But is the main issue not a matter of faith but judgment? Because the US may be judged to have wrong policies in some areas, this is not to say that its policies are *ipso facto* wrong everywhere else.¹⁸⁸ And the quest for historic comparisons (Chomsky cites Colombia, Turkey, and Laos) is not necessarily useful in determining the case for intervention in the former Yugoslavia. On the UN Charter ban on "force violating state sovereignty" cited by Chomsky, does this principle override the universal values of peace and justice? And the fact that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (namely, Serbia and Montenegro) is not a UN recognized state was not discussed in relation to how this might bear the issue of sovereignty.

Finally, in support of his position on US foreign policy, Chomsky cites Samuel Huntington, whose theories on the world order appear otherwise diametrically opposed to those held by Chomsky himself. The international response to ten years of tragedy in the Balkans is too convoluted in many ways to fit into some of the theories evolved by socialist analysts in recent decades.¹⁸⁹ And the situation itself is too complex for observers with only half an eye on the proceedings to tackle. Notably, none of these writers has yet taken up the cudgels after the war to offer a systematic analysis of the situation in retrospect. But the impact of the analyses of respected leftwing writers worldwide has been considerable in shaping the views of individuals and groups who otherwise support their work, a fact well recognized by the Serbian Unity Congress and similar Serb lobbying organizations who often cite their contributions to the Kosovo debate on the internet.

As mentioned above, however, criticism of the NATO action was by no means confined to the Left alone. *Prospect*, a glossy monthly journal of "politics, essays and argument"¹⁹⁰ also entered the Kosovo debate. Having gotten things wrong in announcing in the cover page article in its April issue "The End of War,"¹⁹¹ it compounded the error in the May issue with the publication of several articles offering ill-considered conclusions (Rodric Braithwaite and Carl Bildt)¹⁹² and recommendations (Anatol Lieven),¹⁹³ and a Serb-oriented account of Kosovo's history (Tim Judah).¹⁹⁴

The only article in April's *Prospect* addressing, even tangentially, the Kosovo crisis (a lack of foresight by its editors?) was by Mary Kaldor, "A Benign Imperialism," which discusses some of the theories on "ethical imperialism" developed in her recent book.¹⁹⁵ However, as with the abovementioned contributions to the May issue, Kaldor gets a number of things wrong. She envisages a new kind of intervention with NATO troops as peace enforcers, seeing Kosovo as a suitable candidate for the experiment. But, in opposing air strikes as likely to increase support for extremist leaders and, in the case of Kosovo, cause the war to spread, Kaldor does not elucidate on how the proposed peace

enforcement troops would gain access to Kosovo in sufficient numbers to be effective without the assistance of air power in the absence of an agreement or, indeed, how an agreement would be likely to be reached without the use of air power. A half-way solution such as, for instance, introducing NATO troops into Kosovo, following an agreement with Milošević, but without the *prior* withdrawal of Serbian forces, would merely have set the scene for a replay of the Bosnian impasse of 1992-1995, probably with more serious long-term implications.

Clearly, many of the contributions described above cannot be considered as emanating from Serb lobbyists. But any critical analysis offering alternatives which are not fully thought out - and therefore less likely to succeed - is grist to the mill of the Serb lobby, especially when it originates from an established scholar or diplomat in the western community.

Similarly, the argument to introduce ground troops into Kosovo at the earliest possible opportunity assisted the Serb lobby in its efforts to discredit NATO's strategy, which rested on air strikes.¹⁹⁶ In March 1999, the ground troop option would not have worked, both for logistic reasons and because it would have risked the collapse of the fragile consensus achieved within the NATO Alliance. "Wobbly" partners, such as Greece and Italy where the consensus was already weak, would probably have pulled out of the ground troop option, as might Germany have done, with its delicate internal political power balance, thereby contributing to the Serbian bid to profit from the western disarray so evident during the Bosnian war. Yet supporters for the ground troop option came from many divergent quarters, some of them totally in support of the Albanian cause, others favoring partition, or some kind of "safe haven" arrangement, which, in the absence of extensive air power, would also have led to a Bosnia-type scenario.¹⁹⁷ In any case, the main argument offered by all defenders of this position, namely, to forestall further atrocities by the Serb forces against the Albanian civilian population, was unfortunately not a viable one, since the time it would take to assemble the forces required would have enabled the Serbian military to proceed with the ethnic cleansing at an even faster pace, while the air strikes at least had the advantage of forcing the Serbs to lie low.

But the argument for sending ground troops into Kosovo was quickly ratcheted up when it became evident that Milošević was not intending to succumb immediately following the first wave of air strikes. There was much confusion attached to this argument, which had several prongs. Firstly was the proposition that the deployment of ground troops should at least be on the table, and the forces be seen to be arriving at the borders to establish serious intent, rather than being ruled out from the outset. This was a reasonable argument. However, it is doubtful whether sufficient numbers could have been secured from NATO member states to make the proposition credible, and perceptible failure here would also have been damaging to the NATO campaign, and to its unity.

Secondly was the proposal to insert ground troops into the war zone without the acquiescence of the Belgrade government. This was not feasible for the reasons mentioned above. But the insistence that it was the right way forward, coming from a number of "authoritative" sources, somewhat overshadowed the air campaign, and put a question mark over its validity, both in practical and moral terms.¹⁹⁸

Thirdly was the argument that ground troops should be introduced in a peacekeeping role, following a negotiated solution. In other words, the NATO bombing should cease, and a compromise be reached with Milošević. This was, of course, the favored solution of most Serbs and their apologists, as well of as some commentators who had perhaps been influenced by reports from Belgrade of the civilian casualties resulting from NATO bombardment, or who doubted the ability of NATO to prevail by air power

alone. In both of these cases, Serbian propaganda played a considerable part.

There was a fourth solution proposed by General Sir Michael Rose, which was essentially a containment policy, namely, to place NATO troops at the borders of Kosovo, backed up by humanitarian aid to the province. General Rose had apparently not learned the lessons of Bosnia, despite the impression gained by some commentators that he spoke from a position of exceptional expertise. Apart from the destabilizing effect of tens of thousands of NATO troops stationed indefinitely in Albania and Macedonia, there was no effective way of sealing the borders and blocking reinforcements and supplies from Serbia proper into Kosovo. Such a strategy would merely contain the atrocities. And it was somewhat disingenuous to suggest that amassing NATO troops on the borders of Kosovo could prevent a humanitarian catastrophe in the province. What would the NATO troops in neighboring countries do if Milošević called their bluff and carried on regardless with the ethnic cleansing? General Rose is on record as casting doubt on the NATO operation as early as 24 March,¹⁹⁹ and by mid-April he announced that air power had failed, and that continuing the air strike course of action would "reinforce failure," advising that NATO should seek to "extricate itself with some honor" from the situation.²⁰⁰ The NATO briefings by Jamie Shea, pointing out, for instance, that Milošević was weakening, were dismissed by Rose as fairy tales.

The observations of Sir Michael Rose on the NATO campaign came with the authority of a British general who had served in Bosnia,²⁰¹ and therefore carried significant weight. During the NATO action in Kosovo, Rose was interviewed frequently on BBC and ITN television and on the radio, and wrote a number of articles in the broadsheet press, reiterating the views outlined above. But his judgment was proved wrong. If it had been followed, it would have led to yet another compromise with President Milošević, and the appeasement by the international community of an ethnic cleansing strategy orchestrated by an indicted war criminal.²⁰²

The role of the BBC World Affairs editor

One of the controversies surrounding General Rose's tour in Bosnia related to a film made for *Panorama* by BBC World Affairs Editor, John Simpson in 1994.²⁰³ During the Kosovo war, Simpson became a major media player, being one of few western correspondents to remain in Belgrade throughout the NATO bombing campaign, reporting daily to the BBC TV and radio news, while expressing his impressions more fully in a weekly column in *The Sunday Telegraph*. It was less than a week into the war when Simpson's media role in Serbia became the subject of contention, as the British government, through its press office, expressed concern at the BBC's coverage of the NATO campaign,²⁰⁴ and particularly the daily dispatches of John Simpson from Belgrade.²⁰⁵ Since much has been broadcast and written on this subject, it is proposed to focus here on some less well-documented aspects of the issue.

The central question raised by the British government was whether the BBC was impartial in its broadcasting of the war, an accusation in itself unusual, in view of traditional media support for British governments at war. It raised all sorts of questions. Was it right to broadcast from Belgrade at all during the NATO action, in view of the severely restricted conditions? In this context, it is perhaps not irrelevant that the Serbian government expelled the vast majority of foreign media correspondents. At one point it was announced that John Simpson was the only foreign correspondent not to be expelled!²⁰⁶ It might therefore be reasonable to assume that the Belgrade regime viewed the dispatches of those permitted to remain as fulfilling a propaganda purpose. There were reminders by the BBC of Serbian

restrictions, but these could be forgotten by viewers being shown film from Belgrade hospitals of victims, allegedly resulting from NATO bombing. Then there were the reports from Kosovo, again subject to strict Serbian supervision, showing selective video footage of the (again alleged) results of NATO bombing, reports which were generally neither comprehensive nor verifiable.²⁰⁷

On his return to Britain, Simpson responded to Tony Blair's press spokesman, Alastair Campbell, through an article in *The Sunday Telegraph*.²⁰⁸ In his article, Simpson insinuated that the spin doctors (Campbell et al.) were using the media as scapegoats for NATO's errors which, according to Simpson, included letting the war linger for eleven weeks, wasting enormous sums of public money by hitting the wrong targets, and probably killing "five times as many civilians as military men." As Simpson rightly pointed out, it was, of course, mainly through television that the scale of the ethnic cleansing became publicly known. But his claim that it was due to the media that the public knew the war was right and backed the government was surprising in the light of some of his earlier comments. Just three days after the NATO bombing began, Simpson had asserted that "NATO's objectives are crumbling."²⁰⁹

Any assessment of John Simpson's contribution to public perception in Britain of the war and NATO's handling of it, should take into consideration his professional standing, his reputation earned over years of broadcasting from dangerous places and, not least, his position as a senior correspondent of the BBC. The influence he would bring to bear on the basis of these factors alone is considerable.²¹⁰

One of the claims made by Simpson in his book, which includes reminiscences of his stint in wartime Bosnia, is that "much of the reporting from Sarajevo was openly one-sided."²¹¹ This would assume that he considers his own reporting to have been impartial. But was it? According to Simpson, a number of people apparently questioned his position when in Bosnia. A local BBC translator accused him of being pro-Serb, a senior ABC producer from New York saw him as "just another Chamberlainite stooge, anxious to appease today's Nazis,"²¹² the head of a leading Los Angeles radio station accused him of being pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic,²¹³ and film producer, Marcel Ophuls, with whom Simpson had spent time in Sarajevo distanced himself from Simpson's views.²¹⁴

Simpson's view of the war is confused from a logical (as opposed to an emotional) standpoint. On the one hand, he acknowledged that it was the Bosnian Serbs, with Milošević's support,

who were guilty of the war crimes we saw enacted in front of us. The Bosnian Serbs were unquestionably the aggressors, and the Bosnian government and its people were equally unquestionably the victims: unprepared for war, peaceable, non-sectarian...and the government ... still had the support of Croats and Serbs who lived in the City. There were no witch-hunts.²¹⁵

This was a view generally shared by most outsiders who visited the area at the time. On the other hand, he had a problem with the reporting of many of his colleagues, which he saw as "anti-Serb," agreeing with Nik Gowing of BBC World that "some of the strongly anti-Serb reporting in Bosnia is the secret shame of journalism."²¹⁶

There were several ways that Simpson sought to square his position. One was by separating, as he put it, the people who had power from the people who had not. In this vein, he accuses the Bosnian government of firing at their own citizens in order to pin the blame on the Serbs, of preventing repairs to electricity stations in order to attract international sympathy at the expense of the citizens,²¹⁷ and of filtering off food aid for their own families.²¹⁸ He even discusses the possibility of the Bosnians having been responsible for the mortar shell which killed dozens of people at the Markale Market place in Sarajevo

in February 1994, in order to attract international sympathy.²¹⁹

Another way of explaining his position was to emphasize the generally low quality of international reporting in Sarajevo. Referring to the "young and adventurous tyros who had come here early on because it was dangerous, and had been offered jobs by famous organizations who couldn't get anyone else to go there,"²²⁰ Simpson points out that "[s]econd-rate journalism is a herd activity" which, in Bosnia, "began to monopolize the foreign policy of the major Western powers." This assertion he supports by examples of poor or misreporting. For instance, he points to the news-breaking discovery of the Serb-run camps in Trnopolje and Omarska by an ITN team in August 1992, commenting that the skeletal figures of Muslims which had shocked the world were outside, not inside, the barbed wire fence. In other words, they were not prisoners. Simpson explains further: "There was a serious food shortage, and everyone went hungry at that time; but the most skeletal of all the prisoners, Fikrit (sic!) Alić, was just as thin weeks after his release." Had Simpson seen Fikret Alić months after his release when he was no longer skeletal, having had more time to recover, he would probably not have recognized him! (Significantly, Simpson did not discuss the somewhat more portly appearance of some of the Serb guards who seemingly had no problems with the food shortage.) But then, Simpson was not in Bosnia in August 1992. His information tallies suspiciously with the controversial reports of the event in *Living Marxism*, a journal which espoused an extreme pro-Serb position throughout the war and with its "barbed wire" argument helped to confuse the main issue, namely, that in 1992 there was a considerable number of Serb-run camps²²¹ where the inmates (mainly Bosnian Muslims and some Croats) were being starved, beaten, tortured, and murdered.

Simpson's personal cameo sketches in his book were mainly of Serbs, such as "a burly Serb woman, jolly and hardworking" at the old peoples' home in the Serb-held part of Sarajevo, and a 94-year old Serb inmate of an old people's home who was shot between the eyes by Bosnian government forces from 30 yards away while he was chopping wood.²²² In reference to the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by Gavrilo Princip, Simpson describes the "concrete footsteps with which the Serbs had proudly commemorated the killer's position ... ripped up by an angry crowd of Bosnian Muslims."²²³ In his visit to Sarajevo in January 1993, Simpson recorded just two personal interviews, one with an elderly Serb civilian woman, and the other with Radovan Karadžić, in Pale. Of his visit to Pale immediately following the mortar bomb explosion on Markale market place in February 1994, from where he broadcast extensively on BBC News and *Newsnight*²²⁴ on the Serb view of the crisis, Simpson did not comment in his book, other than, as mentioned above, to intimate that the shell may have come from the Bosnian side.²²⁵ On *Newsnight*, Simpson reported from Pale on the Serbs' reluctance to hand over their weapons, pointing out that the Serbs had a long partisan tradition, and did not necessarily play by the rules. It was explained by friendly looking Serb soldiers that they feared Muslim attacks, and had to defend their homes. But, as Simpson pointed out, Pale was like an Alpine skiing village, totally unscathed by the war. *Newsnight* showed video footage of the emergency hospital in Pale, with kind-faced doctors and members of the Red Cross.

Simpson's conclusion after three years of intermittent reporting from Bosnia was

I didn't enjoy it ... to be honest, I didn't like the place at all ... I ... found each of the population groups - Serbs, Croats, and Muslims equally unattractive. The Serbs overall, were the least lovable, but I found the international media's demonization of them outrageous ... There were no good guys ... When I think back to those days, it is with a sense of dull dislike.²²⁶

Much of his commentary endorsed this sentiment.²²⁷ More recently, Simpson expressed a

different view of former Yugoslavia.²²⁸ Could it have been perhaps because he was now reporting from Belgrade, not Sarajevo?

It is obviously not possible, from his account of his experiences in Bosnia between 1992 and 1994, to pass conclusive judgment on John Simpson's position on NATO action in Serbia in 1999. What might have been fair to expect from such an experienced correspondent, however, was a sketch of the background to the hostilities Simpson reported on in December 1992, perhaps the most important factor being Milošević's victory the previous month in the Serbian elections, with Vojislav Šešelj, Radical Party leader, holding the balance of power. Šešelj's expressed territorial ambitions extended to the whole of Bosnia and Hercegovina (and more than half of Croatia).²²⁹ By this time, an estimated 150,000 people had been killed in Bosnia, with well over one million displaced. Perhaps the Bosnian government's bid to raise the stakes to gain support for western military intervention should be viewed also in this context.²³⁰

Parliamentary lobbying

In the House of Commons where, as mentioned above, a cross-party consensus had been reached on government policy in Kosovo. Concerns with other issues of Members mainly centered on NATO strategy and the possible overstretch of the British Army. The contributions of the Serb lobby, on the other hand, already active in Parliament during the Bosnian war, came from several quarters, although its overall primary concern was, of course, to bring a halt to the NATO bombing.

One of the most frequent arguments against NATO intervention made by Serb lobbyists was the allegation that the NATO powers were not acting even-handedly, in the light of the lack of NATO action, or even international censorship in response to the alleged ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Serbs from Croatia four years earlier.

Since this issue was frequently raised on the media and elsewhere by the Serb lobby as well as by other commentators, some comment on the claim to moral equivalence between that event and the Serbian ethnic cleansing of Albanian Kosovars in 1999 may be called for. Firstly, the argument, which supported the claim of "ethnic hatreds" between equally guilty "warring factions," obscures many of the facts. Croatia's "Operation Storm" in early August 1995 to reclaim territory held by the Serbs since 1991, followed four years of internationally-sponsored negotiations in an attempt to reintegrate the Krajina into Croatia, with substantial autonomy for the Serbs. When it became clear that the Serbs would lose militarily,²³¹ orders came in the form of a circular communiqué from the Commanding General of the Krajina Serb army, General Mile Mrksić, commanding Serb citizens to leave the area, and issuing instructions on the routes to be taken. This communiqué *preceded* the Croatian army attack, and resulted in the flight of approximately 180,000 Croatian Serbs to Serb-occupied territory in Bosnia and Serbia.

The political context in which both the exodus of Serbs and the Croatian army offensive took place is also relevant here. In the first place, contrary to the impression that the Serb-occupied areas of Croatia were almost entirely populated by ethnic Serbs prior to the war, the border regions of Croatia which came under Serb attack in 1991²³² taken together comprised, in the census of 1981, a total population of almost one million, 50.9 per cent of whom were Croats, and only 30 per cent Serbs.²³³ Moreover, the majority of Croats expelled during 1991 were unable to return to their homes for four years, despite the guarantees accorded through UN Security Council Resolutions, and the presence of UN troops. Even leaving aside the casualty toll in the 1991 war, the impasse which neither the UN nor the ED were able to address effectively became a legitimate source of concern and

resentment within Croatia.

A further factor was the situation on the ground in Bosnia at that time. The UN "safe area" of Srebrenica had fallen to the Serbs the previous month, with around 8,000 men and boys declared missing. The international response to this was the British-initiated London Conference where, significantly, no guarantees were offered for Bihać,²³⁴ another UN "safe area" threatened with extinction by General Ratko Mladić. Krajina was also being used by the Serbs as a launching pad for attacks on the UN safe area of Bihać,²³⁵ which had come under a systematic three-pronged attack for over three years.²³⁶ The fall of Bihać to the Serbs would, apart from the dire consequences for its Bosniak population, have had serious implications for Croatian territorial integrity.²³⁷ Neither had there been any progress in facilitating the return of hundreds of thousands of Croats expelled from Krajina in 1991, nor in securing a peace settlement.

All of this in no way excuses the acts of revenge, including murder, arson, and looting, which accompanied the rout of the Krajina Serbs in 1995, to which the Croatian officer corps turned a blind eye. Nor did it absolve the Croatian government which deterred Serb civilians from returning to their homes in Krajina and elsewhere, turning Croatia into a monocultural backwater. And it did not in any way justify President Tudjman's continued policy supporting the division of Bosnia and Hercegovina,²³⁸ which resulted in ostracizing Croatia from the international community.²³⁹ But to portray "Operation Storm" as an act of ethnic cleansing on a par with, say, the fall of Srebrenica, or the brutal expulsion of over a million non-Serbs from northern and eastern Bosnia in 1992, is a travesty of the facts. A lack of in-depth analysis of the events of 1995, however, has enabled the Serb lobby to portray Serbs as victims on an equal level with those they have attacked, besieged and otherwise discriminated against, over the last decade.²⁴⁰

Over the years, the numbers of Serbs alleged to have left the Krajina region in 1995 has become somewhat inflated. Robert Wareing, MP, for instance, referred to 280,000 Serbs as having been driven out of Krajina,²⁴¹ while Tony Benn increased that number to 300,000, placing them all in Yugoslavia!²⁴² These were not the only factual inaccuracies from Benn and others. Benn's remark that "the House contributes experience and knowledge to issues in a way that a Foreign Office brief cannot"²⁴³ was promptly spoiled by asserting that "Kosovo has been in Yugoslavia for many centuries. The Yugoslavs were under the Turks for a long time ... then they were under the Austro-Hungarian empire."²⁴⁴ Benn also took up the familiar myth of Serbian wartime resistance: "The Serbs took on the Nazis," admonishing the House on "its lack of knowledge of history. I was in a debate on television with a fellow Labour Member of Parliament who said that he thought that the Serbs had fought with the Germans."²⁴⁵ Perhaps that MP (unlike Tony Benn, it seems) was aware of the role of Ljotić, Nedić, and other Serbian leaders who collaborated with the Nazis during World War II, and of Belgrade's doubtful distinction of being declared Europe's first *judenfrei* city. John Maples was under the impression that there is a UN force in Bosnia,²⁴⁶ while another MP claimed that China and Albania had continued to be major friends for many years.²⁴⁷

Significant support for Tony Benn's position came interestingly from one of the main architects of Conservative Party policy in former Yugoslavia since the outset. Douglas Hogg, former Conservative Foreign Minister with responsibility for the Balkans,²⁴⁸ announcing that the prognosis was bleak, referred to two fatal mistakes, one being the decision to go to war in the first place, and the other the failure of the strategy;²⁴⁹ this tacitly confirmed the fact that some of the apparent dissenters from government policy on the left, including the founders of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, had in fact endorsed the main precepts of the Major government's Balkans policy throughout. It was also ironic that

Douglas Hogg should now join the chorus demanding a division of the House on the issue since, during the whole of his government's administration, no division was permitted on the Balkans policy. Nor was endorsement sought from the House for its policies on Bosnia and Croatia, until after decisions had been made.²⁵⁰ Hogg's demand for "a substantive motion" was, therefore, somewhat misplaced.²⁵¹

Along with inaccuracy, there was a degree of selective history, not least from Edward Leigh, MP, who quoted Serbian sources as his authority.²⁵² Other lines of argument interjected into the Commons debates were already familiar from the Bosnian war. It was claimed by a former defense minister that half a million ground troops would be needed for an international protectorate,²⁵³ that the whole conflict had begun with the recognition of Croatia by Germany,²⁵⁴ and that the conflict arose from ancient ethnic hatreds.²⁵⁵ Several MPs stressed that Milošević's position would be strengthened in Serbia as a result of the bombing, including Robert Wareing and Andrew Robathan, both of whom had been guests of the Serb regime in Serb-held territory of Bosnia during the Bosnian war.²⁵⁶ Sir Peter Tapsell, accusing the Prime Minister of gross incompetence and misjudgment, asserted that most of the refugees would not go back,²⁵⁷ while former Armed Services Minister, Archie Hamilton, doubted that they would want to.²⁵⁸ Crispin Blunt accused ministers of "emotional, woolly thinking" referring to military historian John Keegan as "my mentor ... who taught me at Sandhurst."²⁵⁹ John Randall who, prior to the NATO action, had often reminded the House of the militancy of the Kosovars, declared that the NATO operation was not legitimate, having not been authorized by the UN Security Council.²⁶⁰

Alan Clark was characteristically more forthright:

Our service men are clear about the credentials of those who oppose Serbia. I know from my immediate contacts that many of them regard the Kosovo Liberation Army as a bunch of thugs deeply involved in the drug trade who operate refugee rackets in this country.²⁶¹

Clark went on to comment that "an expensive, sophisticated propaganda machine has operated over a long period in one direction," recommending Sir Michael Rose's book as "an impartial, objective look at these things."²⁶² Interestingly, John Swinney of the Scottish National Party, adopting his leader's line on Kosovo, also endorsed General Rose's assessment, paying tribute to his "military experience and caliber."²⁶³

Alice Mahon, chairman and founder member of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, who validated her position as a member of the civilian affairs committee of the North Atlantic Assembly for seven years, and chair of the sub-committee for security and co-operation in South-East Europe for the last two years, has been one of the most persistent lobbyists for the Serb cause in the House of Commons. Mahon visited Serbia at the height of the NATO action. She informed the House that in Yorkshire²⁶⁴ was the largest Serbian community in the country, with Serbs "heavily represented in organizations such as ex-service men's clubs and the British legion ... I go to the cenotaph and see Serbs there."²⁶⁵ The prevalence of Serbs in these organizations may contribute to explaining the strength of the Serb lobby in some parts of Britain, and amongst the British forces, especially those old enough to remember World War II. Following her visit to Serbia, Mahon related to MPs the plight of the workers at the Zastrava (sic!) "car and tractor factory" and Pancevo which had been bombed by NATO, referring to them as civilian targets.²⁶⁶ She did not inform the House that these and other seemingly civilian targets were in fact also producing military hardware.²⁶⁷ Neither was Kosovo part of her itinerary in her Serbian visit.²⁶⁸

The extracts of parliamentary discussion cited above, indicating criticism of, and dissent from, government policy on Kosovo over the last few months, are not altogether

representative of the debates on the issue as a whole, where the majority of Members of Parliament across the political spectrum expressed full or qualified support of the government's policy. During those months, as many full debates took place in the House of Commons as over the whole period of the Croatian and Bosnian wars, from 1991 to 1995.

The influence of the Serb lobby after 2000

As elsewhere, the Serb lobby in Britain assumed a new dimension following the NATO bombing of Serbia, and the subsequent fall from power of Yugoslav president Slobodan Milošević. The role of Serbs as victims in contemporary as well as historic terms, both of the world's most powerful military machine and of Western 'imperialist' designs, now became more sharply articulated.²⁶⁹ Much of the turmoil of the previous decade, especially the Bosnian war, was relegated to the background, the legitimacy of the UN International Tribunal at The Hague was challenged, and the legality of the NATO intervention questioned.²⁷⁰ Kosovo's Albanians now became the main target, accused of genocide against the minority Serb population in the interests of creating a 'Greater Albania', and singled out as the main source of regional instability, terrorism and wide-scale corruption.²⁷¹ Interestingly, the symbiotic relationship between sections of the British establishment and the Serb lobby became tacitly reaffirmed, while much of the fresh evidence emerging from analyses of aspects of the Bosnian war was received virtually without comment by British officials and others involved in the shaping of international policy during that time.²⁷²

Reconstruction and investment became the buzzwords, perceived as a right in light of the damage to Serbia's infrastructure by NATO bombing. This was by no means a new objective. Following the Dayton Peace Agreement, and the partial lifting of sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in late 1995, Serbs in Britain and elsewhere had argued persuasively for the need for foreign aid and investment to prevent the implosion of the FRY.²⁷³ With the removal of Milošević, however, the bid to reconstruct Serbia's infrastructure and economy through large-scale foreign investment gained a new momentum. Not surprisingly, it also provided a meeting point for Serbs with otherwise divided affiliations, and from across the political spectrum,²⁷⁴ and is now becoming increasingly accepted by many Serbs as a more effective means of accomplishing a 'Greater Serbia' in the longer run, given Serbia's size, its traditional diplomatic links, the potential of its leadership and workforce and, perhaps most of all, its vital geo-strategic position, in European terms.²⁷⁵ Britain's Ambassador to the FRY has, meanwhile, set up an aid co-ordination centre in Belgrade.²⁷⁶ It is also reflected in British and EU policy in the region, where Serbia is mostly now (or again) regarded as "part of the solution,"²⁷⁷ and in British academia.

During the war in Bosnia, academic conferences in Britain on the region were invariably funded, at least in part, by the Foreign Office and/or the Ministry of Defense, and Britain's academic community had tended to adopt, for the most part, a stance of generally muted support of government policy, which was un conducive to clear analysis and, at times, led effectively to revisionism and denial.²⁷⁸ Shortly after the onset of the NATO campaign, over a hundred people had signed an open letter to the heads of NATO governments, calling for an end to the NATO military action.²⁷⁹ Signatories included academics from across Britain, two of whom went on to organize international conferences the following year in their respective universities.²⁸⁰

In some instances, inaccurate information and misleading advice was offered by academics to government bodies, such as the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, and interviews given to the media. An 'evenhanded' approach was recommended, even at the

height of the war, and in face of emerging evidence of Serb-held concentration camps. Books were published, some promoting the Serb viewpoint, or implying symmetry of guilt, while others suggested an equal lack of will amongst international players.²⁸¹

Following the reversal of British policy by the Labor leadership in early 1999, the revisionism and denial prevalent since 1991 within British academic circles became intensified in some quarters,²⁸² drawing in many who had supported the Conservative government's appeasement policy in the early and middle 1990s, and uniting, as earlier, elements to the far left and right of the British political spectrum, some of whom appeared to have no more than a sketchy understanding of the region.

The synthesis of opinion amongst these apparently disparate groups was articulated in an article in the newly-established *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans* by a British academic who, in reference to the NATO action on Serbia, discussed what he termed as "very strong information management within the territory of the main NATO powers [involving] the use of war propaganda: *the subordination of the supply of information to the policy requirements for defeating Serbia*" [italics in original]. He went on to claim that "the entire academic community in Britain which specializes in Balkan affairs has, of course, been acutely aware of this, as have many other parts of the academic community - those concerned with international public law, international relations, media studies, etc." That statement was followed by a discussion of the social function and civic responsibility of British academics in the circumstances described, and the "role of the university in a liberal democratic society."²⁸³ The claim is an interesting one, not least in that it implies a consensus amongst British academics across several disciplines, including Balkan specialists, on the demerits of the NATO campaign. It also in part corroborates the networking which takes place in Balkans circles within British academia, including mutual reviewing and self-congratulation.²⁸⁴

Certainly, the editor of the *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, who heads the Balkans unit within the European Research Centre, had sympathy with those views.²⁸⁵ The journal, run from Kingston University, receives sponsorship from two Greek organizations.²⁸⁶

In May, 2000, the Centre held a two-day international conference on the Balkans, entitled "The Balkans: The Politics of Fragmentation, War and Reconstruction." It claimed to offer "clarity of information about a very turbulent area of international politics" and "an insight into the often-overlooked factors behind the crises". Many of the speakers were either Greek or Serb, and the conference pack issued to participants included the current newsletter of the Lobby for Cyprus and tourist promotion material for Greece Macedonia-Thrace subtitled "4,000 Years of Greek History and Civilization." According to the convener, the conference paved the way to establishing Kingston University as "one of the leading centers of expertise on issues affecting the Balkans and the south-eastern Mediterranean." The following year, the Centre organized a conference on Cyprus, funded by the Bank of Cyprus, is currently developing an MA program in European and Balkan politics, and founded the Association for the Study of Southern Europe and the Balkans (ASEEB).

The general consensus at the Kingston conference was that Serbia should be fully included into the current reconstruction program in South Eastern Europe, irrespective of the regime in power,²⁸⁷ that sanctions should be lifted, or applied selectively, in Serbia, and that Greece and Cyprus are well placed to take a leading role in the reconstruction process. Greece's credentials for such a task might, however, be assessed in light of its track-record on immigration, national minorities, media freedom and other factors relating to democracy and human rights.²⁸⁸ The symbiotic relationship between Serbia and Greece is also interesting, especially in view of initiatives by major Greek companies, some with close

links to the Milošević regime, to take over substantial sectors of the infrastructure and natural resources of Greece's smaller neighbors.²⁸⁹

Greek influence in British academic research on the region is prominent in a number of institutions, including the London School of Economic and Political Science's Balkan Reconstruction Observatory which addresses postwar reconstruction in the Balkans in association with the Centre for the Study of Global Governance, the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (WIIW) and the Hellenic Observatory. Staff members of the Observatory are mostly Greek; three members from Greek banks are represented on its advisory board, and the Annual Lecture 2002 was by the Greek Minister of Defense. In October 1999, a paper entitled *Balkan Reconstruction and European Integration* was published by the Observatory in collaboration with the WIIW, drawing on ideas and discussions generated at a meeting in Vouliagmeni, Greece, from 8-10 July 1999, which had received financial support from the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its authors offered some interesting proposals on reconstruction in the Balkans, arguing for an approach which "isolates the regime while ending the isolation of Serbian society," giving legitimacy to the opposition forces and private businesses in Serbia "financially and economically." It was not clear, however, how these proposals could have been implemented effectively without benefiting the Belgrade regime itself, given its dominance at that time over all sectors of Serbian society. While the paper acknowledged that Serbia under the Milošević regime was the main obstacle to regional stability, it also displayed a degree of moral equivalence in discussing other 'nationalist' leaders at the same level, without acknowledging fully some essential differences between the political status quo in Serbia and other states in the region.²⁹⁰

The conference at Kingston University was followed in June 2000 by a two-day international conference on the Balkans, entitled "Balkan Security: Visions of the Future?" at the Centre for South-East European Studies (CSEES) at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London University (SSEES/UCL), which claims to be one of the leading Western centers for the study of South-East Europe. The conference, partly funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, was attended by around 90 people. The organizers had adopted what was termed a 'holistic' view of security, with themes ranging from the role of kinship in rebuilding civil society to the plight of the Roma. On the other hand, some arguably crucial issues in regional security terms were sidelined or omitted, including the status of Montenegro, the continuing domination of Serbian and Montenegrin institutions by indicted war criminals, the stand-off at Mitrovića and the future of the Trepca mining conglomerate, the tensions in Macedonia,²⁹¹ the potential role of post-Tudjman Croatia in stabilizing the region, the new alliances forged between Republika Srpska and Serbia, and so on. The scheduled talk on Hellenic security was cancelled without notice or comment, despite the timely nature of the theme.²⁹² It was claimed that "[t]he relaxed and convivial atmosphere in the corridors outside the conference... also provided an ideal forum for the exchange of views and the drawing up of longer-term plans for co-operation." Communication did take place amongst like-minded people at the conference, but these emanated mainly from the Serb position. On the other hand, there was little communication between the Serbs (who dominated representation from the region) and the others. Despite the opening talk by former Albanian President Pandeli Majko, and a speech the following day by the Kosovo Albanian writer and analyst Shkelzen Maliqi, the conference was dominated by Serbs and Serb sympathizers. The only paper on Bosnia and Herzegovina argued for a three-way split of Bosnia,²⁹³ without reference to the results of recent elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or to the effect of the Croatian government's revised policy on Bosnia. The scheduled closing session was cancelled at the last minute, which denied

participants any opportunity to discuss the issues raised at the conference as a whole.

At the end of June 2000, the University of Swansea held a 3-day international conference on the Balkans, called *Intersecting Times: The work of memory in South Eastern Europe*, half the contributions to which were Greek-oriented. Others displayed somewhat individual views of 'the work of memory'. One contributor took the assassination of King Alexander in Marseilles as the starting point, basing his paper predominantly on the writings of Rebecca West, whose colorful impressions were based on her relatively brief visits to Yugoslavia, from which she returned with a strong pro-Serb bias. Another paper, focused on Srebrenica, proved to be a personal interpretation by a scholar whose material appeared to rely mostly on testimony from the Serb side. Thus were the massacres of over 7,000 men and boys of Muslim ethnic origin sublimated to the 'memory' of Serbs in the region who recalled the killings of Serbs by Muslims in the early 1990s.²⁹⁴

A fourth international conference on Yugoslavia was held at the University of Bradford, entitled *The Yugoslav Crisis: International Responses and the Way Forward*.²⁹⁵ Supported by the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, the City of Bradford Metropolitan Council, and various pacifist groups, the conference was advertised on several Serb lobbying websites, and preceded by a silent candlelight vigil to commemorate those who had died in the NATO bombing campaign in Serbia. According to the conference publicity material, the organizers seemed to be under the impression that in March 1999 "European cities were under air attack for the first time in over 50 years", an assumption implicit in other academic analysis on the Kosovo war, leaving Bosnia out of the equation.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that during the recent war Serbs have often had favored access to British academic institutions, although there is no ethnic breakdown available of scholarships awarded to students from former Yugoslavia during this time.

In 1997, the Chevening Society of Yugoslavia was set up by a group who, as British Government scholars, had received training in British institutions. The declared aim of the Chevening Society was to "serve as a rallying point for all individuals and organizations willing and able to further promote and diversify the scientific business and cultural ties between Yugoslavia and Great Britain." The then UK Ambassador to Belgrade, Brian Donnelly was awarded an Honorary Presidency, and the current British Ambassador to Belgrade, Charles Crawford, has also endorsed the magazine. Initiated in 1998, and published in Belgrade, it had produced 7 issues by 2001, 6,000 copies of each being distributed free four times annually by airmail to "top management" of business organizations in the FRY, Britain and other English speaking countries. Also featured in the magazine, however, is background information on Serbia offered by Dr Slavenko Terzić, Director of the Historical Institute of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences (SANU). While Dr Terzić's articles for the Chevening Society magazine may have been modified for the occasion, much of his output elsewhere reflects the ideology contained in the infamous Memorandum produced by SANU in 1986, generally recognized as a blueprint for the Greater Serbia project.²⁹⁶

While a clear Serb or Greek bias is evident in many of the international academic conferences on the Balkans in the UK, a number of academic centers dedicated to the study of Eastern Europe have virtually ignored the issue of Yugoslavia and its successor states. At a recent British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES) Annual Conference (6-8 April 2002), out of more than two hundred papers delivered, there were none on any aspect of the former Yugoslavia.²⁹⁷ Previous years' conferences reflected a similar pattern. The Centre for Russian and East European Studies of the University of Birmingham (CREES), reputedly one of the world's leading research institutes in its field, and the Institute for Central and East European Studies at the University of Glasgow

(ICEES), do not include former Yugoslavia in their curricula.²⁹⁸

On the other hand, obstruction to 'non-consensual' scholarship was also in evidence. In 1997, for instance, the newly-appointed Director of the Institute of Russian and East European Studies (IREES), Glasgow University, contacted the European Commission in Brussels and intimated that funds applied for by the University on behalf of IREES for a project on confidence building in former Yugoslavia may not be desired by the Institute. The later release of confidential documents by the Secretary-General of the EC showed correspondence in existence, including a file note initialed by a British EC official, strongly recommending against the further funding of Glasgow University projects on that issue.²⁹⁹

Equally, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the UK's leading research and training agency addressing economic and social concerns, has provided negligible funding for research on Yugoslavia and its successor states. A £4 million 26-project program funded by the ESRC, *One Europe or Several?*, which, according to its promotion literature, examines "contemporary processes of political, security, economic, social and cultural change across the European continent, as well as issues of convergence and divergence and prospects for integration and fragmentation," hardly touches on former Yugoslavia, the one area which, for the past decade, has frustrated all attempts at any meaningful European integration, created millions of refugees, and now absorbs billions of Euros annually in stopgap security measures. It is difficult to see how meaningful conclusions on that subject could be reached without 'a full analysis of the conflict in former Yugoslavia, and its consequences for Europe as a whole.

Post-September 11

In the wake of the events in the United States on September 11, anti-Islamic sentiment swept across Serbia, Republika Srpska and Macedonia. A number of senior Serbian politicians and others indulged in a degree of cynical scare-mongering, alluding to the danger of imminent terrorist attacks on Serbia by bin Laden supporters from Kosovo and Bosnia,³⁰⁰ where it was argued that an elaborate Islamic terrorist network had developed.³⁰¹ Meanwhile, new life was injected into white supremacist and other segregationist groups in Europe and the US which found common cause with sections of the Serb lobby in promoting racist and anti-Islamic views. Serb lobbyists and extremist rightwing organizations with overlapping interests and affinities, such as the Rockford Institute, League of the South, and Serbian Unity Congress in the US, the Northern League (*Lega Nord*) in Italy, and the Lord Byron Foundation for Balkan Studies in the UK, peddled similar historical distortions, in their shared rejection of diversity, multi-culturalism and pluralism.³⁰² The aims and objectives of some of these organizations, and links between them, may be worth noting.³⁰³

The Rockford Institute, founded in 1976, claims to stand alone amongst think tanks as "the authentic voice of the American Heartland." Its aims include "the renewal of Christendom through the defense of the family, the promotion of liberty, the decentralization of political and economic life, the adherence to Truth, revealed through Scripture and tradition" (sic). Described as a "centre of paleo-conservative endeavor and source of intellectual firepower," it prefers "to shape attitudes and opinions rather than to react to events." The Institute runs a monthly on-line magazine, *Chronicles*. Thomas Fleming, the editor of *Chronicles*, and Chairman of the Rockford Institute, is also on the board of directors of League of the South, and has connections with *Lega Nord*, now a coalition partner in the Berlusconi government. *Lega Nord* had ties with the Milošević regime in Belgrade, and published articles in its journal, *Padania*, highlighting bin Laden connections

in Kosovo, Bosnia and Macedonia.³⁰⁴

The foreign Editor of *Chronicles* is the Lord Byron Foundation's executive director, Srdja Trifković. Belgrade-born and educated in Britain, Mr. Trifković has been a frequent contributor to the British and US media on the war in Bosnia and Kosovo, and acted as a one-time adviser to Biljana Plavšić. Most of the board members of the Lord Byron Foundation have published in *Chronicles*. Thomas Fleming has published a number of articles with a strong anti-Islamic or pro-Serb bias.³⁰⁵ The week following the US attacks, in an article published by *Chronicles*, he wrote: "Islam is a religion of war, especially of war against Christians... which not only sanctions but blesses terrorism... Because they are Muslims, they think it is right to kill innocent people in order to bring war home to the enemy."³⁰⁶ The League of the South stands for a "free and prosperous Southern Republic... our own nation founded on private property, free association, fair trade, sound money, low taxes, equal justice before the law, secure borders, and armed and vigilant neutrality," rejecting "the crass bigotry that drives this ceaseless campaign of cultural genocide against the revered Anglo-Celtic symbols of Dixie."³⁰⁷

The Lord Byron Foundation and Serbian Unity Congress have succeeded in penetrating a number of political institutions, including the Foreign Affairs Select Committee of the House of Commons (FAC) which incorporated seven appendices from Serb lobby groups into its Kosovo Report in 2000.³⁰⁸ The Serbian Information Centre, which describes itself as having "absolute political and financial independence," reflects similar views to the other Serb lobby groups represented in the Foreign Affairs Committee report, perpetuating the civil war myth in its memorandum to the FAC, referring to the massacres in Kosovo as a "violent police crackdown," asserting that many more Serbs were murdered in Krajina in 1995 than Albanians in Kosovo -"a small number"-in 1999, and that 'Albanian separatists were the first in Yugoslavia to resort to the policy of "ethnic cleansing."³⁰⁹ The FAC published four submissions by The Lord Byron Foundation, in which the latter offered "expert witnesses" to testify before the Select Committee, including Sir Alfred Shennan and Michael Stenton of Cambridge University, requesting confirmation that all submissions be forwarded to FAC members.³¹⁰

The Serbian Unity Congress (SUC) submitted a memorandum of some 2,300 words, which also accused the Albanians (referred to as "*schiptars*" who 'overwhelm[ed] the Serbs by their birth rate') of the ethnic cleansing of Serbs in Kosovo throughout the century, and alluded to an alleged US government agenda from the beginning of the war to "destabilize Yugoslavia and get a foothold into the Balkans."³¹¹ The FAC quoted the SUC in its final report.³¹² Would it have done so with equal confidence had it been aware of the endorsement by Radovan Karadžić at the SUC 7th Annual Convention at Milwaukee, offering warm acknowledgment for SUC support?³¹³

Mr. Radomir Putniković, Vice President of the SUC, lobbied a number of British MPs from an address in Edgware, Middlesex.³¹⁴ He also officially complained to the BBC that a filmed report on *Newsnight* was biased against the Serbian side, and had failed to report events in Kosovo fairly and accurately. The complaint was not upheld by the Head of Program Complaints, nor was the subsequent appeal to the Governors' Program Complaints Appeals Committee.³¹⁵

In the Foreign Affairs Committee report on British government policy in the region after the fall of Milošević, published the following year, a seven-page report by the Serbian Unity Congress was included,³¹⁶ and a Memorandum by the Serbian Information Centre.³¹⁷ The Lord Byron Foundation also wrote individual letters to MPs, the media, and others, including this author.³¹⁸ The inclusion of these submissions in the FAC Report lends them credibility by association, when quoted in parliamentary debates and elsewhere.³¹⁹ Serbian

Unity Congress has given prominence to its report to the FAC on the news page of its website.

The Serb lobby has penetrated the British parliament in other ways, too. In a committee room of the House of Commons in October 2001, Dragos Kalajić was offered a platform by the Committee for Peace in the Balkans. Introduced as a distinguished literary figure and artist, Kalajić muted his views for the benefit of his British audience. Elsewhere, however, Kalajić enjoys a somewhat different reputation. Characterized by some fellow-Serbs, including the well-known writer Teofil Pancić, as a "Belgrade dandy, snob and fascist, sympathizer of certain 'racial theories', and extreme-right movements around Europe,"³²⁰ Kalajić could be said to have lent credence to some of those claims in his address to a rally in Republika Srpska in support of Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić.³²¹ According to several analysts, Kalajić has also embraced the ideas of Ljotić's ultranationalist *Zbor* movement, set up in 1934, calling for the abolition of parliament, to be replaced by an authoritarian monarchy.³²² He took active part in a *Lega Nord* gathering,³²³ and is also known to peddle the theory of a Jewish/Masonic conspiracy.³²⁴ Kalajić has also on occasion argued that Bosnia's Muslims do not belong to the "European family of nations" exhibiting, as a result of their origins "a long list of inherited character flaws."³²⁵

A debate on the Foreign Affairs Committee's Fourth Report on Yugoslavia after Milošević was held in December 2001 in the House of Commons.³²⁶ In a 26-minute speech, the Chair of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, Alice Mahon MP, presented the House with her personal picture of the situation in Yugoslavia and its successor states, quoting information supplied to the FAC by the Serb lobby.

Ms Mahon is also a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, a position she has at times recalled, to authenticate some of her arguments.³²⁷ Her biased, and essentially flawed, account to the House of the current status quo in the Western Balkans had more than a whiff of Kalajić-style propaganda. In defending her references to the memoranda submitted by the Serbian Unity Congress, Ms Mahon reminded the House that many in the Serb lobby are not Milošević supporters.³²⁸ Indeed not. Their sympathies lie, as those of Kalajić himself, somewhat closer to the Karadžić camp. The curious bond which has emerged between ultra-rightwing Serbs, on the one hand, and much of the European Left, on the other, is probably one of the greatest achievements of the Serb lobby, and one of the main obstacles to a *coherent* critique of developments in the region in the aftermath of the NATO intervention in Serbia.

Conclusion

We are not in the business of going to war with the Serbs."³²⁹

The words of Archie Hamilton, then Minister of State for the Armed Forces, in a House of Commons debate on former Yugoslavia in November 1992, defined Conservative government policy in Britain on the war from its very outset in 1991. The government endorsed the blanket arms embargo imposed by the UN on Yugoslavia in September 1991 and continued after the outbreak of war in Bosnia, despite the clear imbalance of weaponry.³³⁰ It also supported (and led) the EC/UN peace conference which, in practice, excluded the use of combat troops or airpower in endeavors to bring the war to an end. This policy, often oddly referred to as "evenhanded," prevailed for four years,³³¹ despite evidence on the ground of widescale ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and genocide, and the conclusions of international agencies,³³² and of British Ministers themselves, as to where the main responsibility lay, both for initiating the war and for most

atrocities committed.³³³

Operating at various levels of society and taking advantage of traditional affinities and allegiances and ideological illusions, the Serb lobby in Britain adopted a distortion of historical fact and fiction, mainly aimed at keeping that policy on track. Its efforts also depended, however, on access to channels of communication, to politicians and their political advisers, the media, academia and, not least, the general public. Prompt access to the relevant decision-making bodies and the media was paramount at crucial stages of the war. In this regard, it is not insignificant that Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadžić and his coterie³³⁴ were received by EC Peace Conference Chairman, Lord Carrington, at Christies in July 1992, and held several press conferences in London, just weeks before the news broke of Serb-led concentration camps. During this visit, a list called "Concentration Camps in the New Europe 1992" was circulated, where Serbs were allegedly being held, together with details of Serb-majority Bosnian towns which, it was claimed, had fallen to Muslim and/or Croat forces.³³⁵ These allegations were not substantiated and, for the most part, were obviously fabricated.³³⁶ On the other hand, the existence of Serb-run camps under appalling conditions was not revealed until exposed by US Pulitzer Prize winner, Roy Gutman,³³⁷ and an ITN news team which found its way in, in early August 1992, and emerged with video footage of the camps. Only later did it emerge that evidence of the camps had already been in the hands of leading international agencies for several weeks.

Although the degree of success of any lobbying activity cannot be measured in an absolute sense, it can point to tendencies in the political decision-making process if analyzed in relation to events on the ground and the response at international level. In the case of the conflict in former Yugoslavia, it may be concluded that the British response is beyond coincidence. The greatest asset of the Serb lobby in the UK was the perception of the nature and causes of the conflict in a number of political and establishment circles, whose members viewed the Serbs as a positive force within Yugoslavia. This logic was extended to conclude that the Serbs desired a unified Yugoslavia, without careful analysis as to what kind of Yugoslavia was envisaged.³³⁸ The case for a unified Yugoslavia was legitimate and possibly desirable. However, in the realization that this was no longer possible, particularly by mid-1991, the British preferred position appears to have been for the Greater Serbia model, although not necessarily under that name, without entirely anticipating the methods through which that might be achieved. The limitations of the British pragmatic approach coincided well with the desires of the Serbs and their attendant lobby. The difficulty, however, for the British became the damage limitation exercise which, again, substantially coincided with the position of perceived Serb interests, partly expressed in its lobbying efforts, until Britain had to concede to the US initiative, firstly in the formation of the Bosniak/Croat Federation, and later military intervention, which in each case brought the hostilities to a speedy conclusion.

Britain's diplomatic response to counter alternative international initiatives was, initially, to introduce the notion of consensus on the issue within Europe and, later, to bring Russia on board, which was to frustrate the preferred approach of the United States and some European countries to resolving the conflict. The Serb lobby, judging by its tactics, understood this position extremely well, and used the opportunities readily presented to air its position, to counter calls by those analysts and commentators who were too heavily relying on the moral aspects of the war, and demanding an appropriate response. The Serb lobbyists developed their strategy according to the demands on the ground, and adjusted their position accordingly. From the denial of the atrocities, the camps, the existence of the project for a Greater Serbia, and the attacks on defenseless cities such as Dubrovnik, they

moved to an insistence on the symmetry of guilt, seeking from the international community an evenhanded approach to all protagonists on the ground.

In this latter aspect, the lobby seems to have gained some ground. The legitimacy of the Serb cause, or political aspirations, is not at issue. However, the difficulty for those who accept the arguments of the Serb position is that the pursuit of political objectives was accompanied by unacceptable practices, such as concentration camps, ethnic segregation, and large-scale civilian displacement and slaughter, as a method of achieving those objectives. And in the conflict in former Yugoslavia, the objectives and the means remain inseparable, until such time as they are fully accounted for through such limited channels as the Criminal Tribunal at The Hague. The danger is, however, that legitimizing objectives and aspirations which have adopted unacceptable methods for their attainment may open the way to legitimizing the means themselves.

There is not, as yet, full access to channels of information from which a complete assessment could be made of the impact of the Serb lobby on British government decision-making, during and since the recent war. Evidence already in the public domain, however, suggests that key sectors of British society have become quiescent or neutralized in the face of what may be considered, in foreign policy terms, to be one of the most important and complex issues of the era.

Traditional alliances have played their part in shaping Britain's crucial role in the international decision-making process, as have contemporary considerations. These are, however, outside the scope of this paper to examine in any depth. So, too, is the rationale governing much leftwing thinking in defending the Serb position. The fact remains that the labor movement in Britain, including the Labour Party itself, has been a prime target of the Serb lobby since 1991. The degree of its success was evident to a group of officials from the Tuzla independent trade unions when, in a tour of British labor organizations in March 1995 they learned, contrary to their expectations, that the British TUC supported neither outside military intervention to stop the war, nor the lifting of the arms embargo.³³⁹ In parliament, the war split the Labour Party down the middle. While a significant number of Labour MPs lobbied John Major's government for a change of policy in the region,³⁴⁰ many others supported the Conservative government position. The achievement of the Serb lobby in this instance was in managing to contort the traditional leftwing anti-imperialist argument to fit a new theoretical straitjacket which saw the Serbs as the main victims of major power (especially US and German) manipulation in the Balkans, following the collapse of the Soviet Bloc. And in British politics, as Serb lobbyists were well aware, the lack of an effective opposition³⁴¹ of any size to challenge government policy in former Yugoslavia was paramount in keeping it on track.

The war in Bosnia, and Croatia, and the unrest in Kosovo, Macedonia, and elsewhere in the region, transcend the region itself, since what happens in the Balkans has a direct bearing on European security. It is generally recognized that former Yugoslavia in this decade has witnessed some of the worst crimes against humanity in Europe since 1945. It is less often openly acknowledged, however, that the ramifications of these events impinge on East/West relations, the future of NATO, relations between the United States and Europe, and with the Islamic world, on the development of the European Union, and on the future viability of the United Nations in terms of the purpose for which it was set up. We must also keep in mind the potential political and social implications of a genocidal war based on ethnic discrimination. Yet in spite of this, and the fact that there are several thousand British troops still engaged in Bosnia on a virtually open-ended mandate, consuming one percent of Britain's defense budget, there was little public debate on these issues in parliament, the media, the academic world, or elsewhere in the UK until after the

NATO campaign.

Perhaps, though, that was the true measure of the success of the Serb lobby in Britain: the formation of a British public and parliament which, through sustained exposure to disinformation, revisionism, and denial, compounded by a lack of access to accurate information, became virtually anaesthetized to genocide in Europe in our time.

The way forward for the Serb lobby in Britain and elsewhere in the aftermath of the NATO action in Kosovo will greatly hinge on the orientation of the international community in South Eastern Europe. Britain's change of policy in former Yugoslavia, strongly cemented by US resolve, led to a remarkably successful conclusion in the short term, in respect of stemming Serbian aggression on its neighbors in the foreseeable future.

But there are many vital ends to be tied up. Much could still go wrong in Serbia where mafia practices dominate, in Montenegro with its dichotomous political allegiances, and in Kosovo itself where Albanians and Serbs are still polarized. Macedonia's continued multi-ethnicity hangs on a fine thread. Bosnia and Hercegovina, meanwhile, remains, to all intents and purposes, an ethnically divided state. These are just a few of the uncertainties which the Serb lobby may exploit, in order to draw from the chaos some leverage in aid of their cause.

The end of the NATO bombing by no means signified a slackening of the work of the Serb lobby in Britain and elsewhere, which has become focused in two main directions, one being the shaping of Serbia's future, in order that it does not emerge as a long-term, as well as a short-term, loser. The other concerns what might be termed as presentational issues, both of the NATO operation and of the Serbian people in its aftermath. One member of the Serbian community who has worked assiduously on this in Britain is Marko Gasić, a British born Serb³⁴², member of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, former director of the Serbian Information Centre in London. In a recent interview in *Politika*, Gasić spelt out his proposed strategy directed towards "marketing" his nation, presenting the Serbs in the aftermath of temporary defeat.³⁴³ He attributes part of his success to responding to "aggression" with irony, assuming at interviews a cool, haughty demeanor, using sarcasm to foil the interviewer.³⁴⁴

The relative success of Gasić's technique may partly be measured in the number of times he managed to be interviewed on the leading international TV and radio networks, and the praise he received in an article in *The Times* for his presentation of the Serb side of the argument.³⁴⁵ (He has also appeared on his own phone-in program on Sky News). Gasić stresses the importance of creating a new image of the Serbian people, who no longer need expensive tanks, but now need to make war with western minds, with Serbian history, culture, and tradition as the strongest weapons: "If we want to reconstruct our state, we have to reconstruct our image." Judging from the speech by Zoran Djindjić at the London School of Economics in April 2002, it appears that the Serbian Premier has taken some of this advice. Djindjić emphasized Serbia's strength and capability to lead in the region, whilst brushing aside the need to come to terms with the atrocities of the past, committed in the name of the Serbian people.

A section of the British elite and public opinion in the UK seems to be uniquely vulnerable to the perception of Serbian historical and contemporary victimhood. The reasons for this lie partly in the reading and understanding of history, often served to scholar and layperson alike in such a way as to invoke sympathy for the "plucky little nation" in the middle of the Balkan historical quagmire. This is at times heavily laced with myth and deliberate distortion, precisely for that purpose. The glorification of the Serbian past has become entrenched in the popular "understanding" of the region. It is for this and other reasons that, in Britain, direct and indirect lobbyists find the most fertile ground for the

dissemination of information most favoring the imperatives of the Serbian political and military elites. The thread of support for the Serbian "cause" goes through generations of the British establishment and it is, therefore, no surprise that the effort invested into lobbying activity has in the past borne fruit.

The lobbyist will no doubt explore this notion of victimhood in further detail, with the ready support of those who find themselves wrong-footed by the relative success of the NATO Kosovo campaign, including the issue of Serb civilian refugees from Kosovo. The sporadic incidents against Serbian civilians which are regrettably taking place will store ammunition for a further onslaught on public opinion, as well as on those in the position of political decision-making. However, in this instance, the lobbying efforts may not instantly result in the recognition of the terms that the lobby campaign may offer, for the simple reason that it took ten years for the international community to recognize the extent of the plight of the Kosovars, in parallel with the atrocities in Bosnia and Croatia, and thereafter to act.

NATO intervention in Kosovo was concerned with stemming a humanitarian catastrophe and preventing a wider regional war. It was also about the political future of Europe and the role of NATO, fifty years on. These issues are not mutually exclusive, but there are likely to be divergences ahead, within Europe, between Europe and the United States, and with Russia, all of which have a stake in the Balkans, over the future political configuration of Kosovo, the role of Serbia in the Balkans, and the degree and nature of compromise required to meet the main objectives.

End Notes

¹ For historical and other reasons, there was also a strong Serb lobby in France and Greece, in contrast to Germany where the Croatian lobby, drawn partly from the large *gastarbeiter* population, was more powerful.

² The question of Allied military support to Serbia in World War I entered many parliamentary debates of the day, evoking emotional responses from both sides of the House for "that gallant little Serbian Army, contesting every inch of their beloved land against the hordes that are pouring in on them from every side." See Captain Amery, 2 November 1915, *Hansard*, House of Commons (Great Britain), col. 598. British Special Operations Executive (SOE) liaison officer, Michael Lees, who was dropped into Axis-occupied Yugoslavia in 1943, became a supporter of Draza Mihailović's Četnik movement, which he defended in *The Rape of Serbia* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990).

³ Supporters of World War II Serbian nationalist resistance leader, Draza Mihailović (1893-1946).

⁴ Among these were said to be some of the former Serbian State Guards, a paramilitary organization set up by General Milan Nedić to police the German occupied Serbian state, and others members of the quisling force of the Serbian fascist, Dimitrije Ljotić. The Nedicites who came to Britain after World War II set up a press where they continued to publish apologies for Nedić and Ljotić and the fascist *Zbor* through the *Iskra Press*, from an address in Northampton. See Tim Judah, *The Serbs: History, Myth, and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 124.

⁵ According to the 1951 Census, 9,264 Yugoslav males born abroad had settled in the United Kingdom, compared to only 1,992 females, a male/female ratio of 4.65, considerably greater than for any other country listed, which might be accounted for by the 1947 migration. See Census 1951: England and Wales (HMSO, 1956); and Census 1951: Scotland, Volume III (HMSO, 1954). There are now reportedly twenty-six branches of the Association of Serbian Chetniks throughout England and Wales. When the Vice-President of the Association, Milan Popovich, died in 1996 as a result of mugging in a Leeds suburb, the incident was widely covered in the British press, with family photographs and reports of his wartime bravery as a Chetnik who "survived battles against Hitler and Tito," fleeing across Italy and Germany to Britain after the war. See, for instance, reports in *The Daily Telegraph* (8 April 1996), p. 3; *The Times* (8 April 1996), p. 3; *The Independent* (8 April 1996), p. 5; and *The Guardian* (8 April 1996), p. 3.

⁶ Such as, for instance, the small refugee group which settled in Hungerford.

⁷ Captain Mike Stanley, alias Milos Stanković, was one of these. Son of a Serbian refugee who fled to Britain after World War II, he spoke Serbo-Croat, and worked as an interpreter for UNPROFOR in Bosnia from early 1993, then as chief liaison officer between the UN forces and the Bosnian Serbs, under the two British UN Commanders in Bosnia, General Sir Michael Rose, and his successor, General Sir Rupert Smith. In October 1997, Stanković was arrested under the Official Secrets Act, under suspicion for his contacts with indicted war criminals, Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić. The Crown Prosecution Service later decided not to press charges because of insufficient evidence. A number of MPs, including Martin Bell, made a strong appeal on behalf of Stanković. See "Major Milos Stanković," 14 July 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 378. However, General Rose's comments on Stanković offer a slightly different slant to his character and, perhaps, his suitability for such a sensitive position: "His dark, brooding looks concealed a volatile temperament and he could be extremely touchy, especially if someone insulted the Serbs. The Bosnian Government knew of his Serb royalist origins and greatly distrusted him. Although he spoke Serbo-Croat fluently, he found it difficult to act as an interpreter during meetings, and I therefore decided to employ a separate interpreter." See Michael Rose, *Fighting for Peace* (London: Harvill Press, 1998), p. 159. "Mike in translating ...looked furious at being called a Muslim and replied that he was as good a Serb as anyone." *Ibid.*, p. 164.

⁸ Private interviews conducted by the author. In Glasgow, the main interpreter employed by the Scottish Refugee Council was associated with a subsidiary of one of Serbia's largest companies, Genex, during the time when sanctions had been imposed by the UN on Serbia and Montenegro.

⁹ A company established by the Yugoslav secret services.

¹⁰ The schedule of licenses granted for the export of military goods from Britain for Yugoslav Air Force military aircraft in 1990 amounted to over £20 million and in early 1991 to £10 million. This ceased on 5 July 1991 after the EC embargo on exports of military goods to Yugoslavia. "Miscellaneous radar equipment and spares" to the same end-user in 1990 was recorded as £24,286,700. (Written Answers, 16 February 1993, *Hansard*, cols. 128-134.)

¹¹ Michael Robinson, "Managing Milošević's Serbia," *Discussion Paper 54* (The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1995), p. 9.

¹² Academic and literary Serb *aficionados* in the interwar period also played some part in determining Britain's Balkan allegiances. Probably the most notable figure in the academic world was the historian, Robert Seton-Watson, who was an active participant in Foreign Office circles and elsewhere in the Balkans debate. See, for example, *Sarajevo: A Study in the Origins of the Great War* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1926), and his more rare contributions, including *Serbia, Yesterday, To-Day and To-Morrow: A School Address* (London: Vacher & Sons, 1916). Dame Rebecca West's travelogue *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: The Record of a Journey Through Yugoslavia in 1937* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1941), which became a best-seller, eulogized the Serbs at the same time demonizing the Germans at a propitious moment in history. A thorough survey of traditional British Serbophiles can be found in Daniele Conversi's analysis of the British response to the recent war: "Moral Relativism and Equidistance: British Attitudes to the War in Former Yugoslavia," in Tom Cushman and Stipe Mestrović, eds., *This Time We Knew: Western Responses to the War in Bosnia* (New York: New York University Press, 1996).

¹³ Many on the Left also believed that, in supporting Serbia's adversaries, they would inadvertently be propping up US imperialism and/or German hegemony.

¹⁴ A phrase often applied to the Serbs, in particular by Lloyd George, and incorporated into the title of a book by R.G.D. Laffan, who describes the epithet as "a summary of the services which the Serbs have always done their best to render to Christendom: for their country is, indeed, one of the gateways of civilized Europe." See Robert George Dalrymple Laffan, *The Guardians of the Gate: Historical Lectures on the Serbs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1918). Laffan's book, republished in 1989 by Dorset Press, came onto the market in Britain in the early part of the war.

¹⁵ Lord Carrington chaired the European Community Peace Conference, initially based at The Hague, from September 1991 until August 1992. Thereafter, Lord Owen took over, co-chairing the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia between September 1992 and June 1995.

¹⁶ Compare, for instance, the following two statements: "The danger with all the military options ... is that in such terrain ... it is hard to work out a practical scheme which would not merely add to the number of people killed without ending the fighting" (Douglas Hurd, 25 September 1992, *Hansard*, Commons, cols. 125-6) and "Any outside military intervention in Yugoslavia, prior to its acceptance by all the belligerent parties, would have been futile and, indeed, counterproductive" (John Zametica, "The Yugoslav Conflict," *Adelphi Paper*, No. 270 (Summer 1992), p. 67). Zametica left Britain in 1993 for Pale where he became political adviser to Bosnian Serb leader, and later indicted war criminal, Radovan Karadžić.

¹⁷ The precursor of the UN Criminal Tribunal at The Hague.

¹⁸ "Yugoslavia," 5 March 1992, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 470.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, col. 471.

²⁰ In an emergency debate at the House of Commons, called at the height of the hostage crisis in May 1995, when over 350 UN personnel, including 33 Royal Welsh Fusiliers in the UN "safe" area of Goražde, were being illegally held by the Bosnian Serb Army, Dalyell recalled Amery's words in a powerful argument opposing military action against the Serbs: "Our colleague, Julian Amery, who knew a good deal of this, would go into detail about the strength, determination, and training of Yugoslavian soldiers." See "Bosnia," 31 May 1995, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 1049. Dalyell later qualified his position: "I speak as someone who, perhaps misguidedly and, perhaps in retrospect, wrongly, was against committing British troops into the mire of Yugoslavia." See "Bosnia," 18 June 1997, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 258.

²¹ "Yugoslavia," 5 March 1992, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 477.

²² David Leigh and Ed Vulliamy, *Sleaze: The Corruption of Parliament* (London: Fourth Estate Limited, 1997), p. 110. The Conservative Party also reportedly received funds from Giovanni di Stefano, an international entrepreneur of Italian extraction, who helped to run the Serbian Tigers, the ruthless paramilitary unit headed by indicted war criminal, Zeljko Raznjatović, alias Arkan. According to di Stefano, who claimed he had met John Major on several occasions, he paid £30,000 to the Tories in two tranches, before and after he served three years in jail, having been convicted of fraud at the Old Bailey in the mid 1980s. One check to the Conservative Party was drawn on an account di Stefano held at Aitken Hume, the merchant bank run by Jonathan Aitken, the disgraced former Tory cabinet minister. Di Stefano threatened that any attempt to arrest Arkan by British troops would result in their being killed. See *The Sunday Times* (27 July 1997), p. 5.

²³ According to *The Observer* (18 May 1997), p. 11, during the Conservatives' last year in office, Malcolm Rifkind vetoed an American plan to hand over intelligence intercepts collected Jointly by Britain and the US, despite a direct plea by Antonio Cassese, then President of the UN Criminal Tribunal. The intercepts, obtained by GCHQ British intelligence staff based in Cyprus, may have indicated links between Milošević and the ethnic cleansers of 1992 in Bosnia. Rifkind also reportedly refused to change the orders of British peacekeeping troops to enable them to arrest the two main indicted war criminals, Karadžić and Mladić.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

²⁵ In a letter to Brian Mawhinney, dated 20 June 1996, Wilson wrote: "It is now essential for you to state whether you regard a man with a record of association with indicted war criminals as suitable to hold any public office in the United Kingdom."

²⁶ *The Sunday Times* (3 November 1996), p. 4.

²⁷ *The Guardian* (29 January 1997), p. 16. Kennedy later turned with apparently undiminished zeal to the production of a new volume of the Almanac de Gotha, once the social bible for world monarchies, launched in 1998 at, predictably, the Claridges Hotel. See *The Independent* (14 March 1999), p. 9.

²⁸ Labour's substantially bipartisan stand was confirmed by Tony Blair in Australia where he was meeting Rupert Murdoch, just after the fall of Srebrenica in July 1995.

²⁹ The Conservative MP, Peter Fry, was Chairman of the British-Yugoslav Group till he was ousted in early 1994 by Robert Wareing, who co-opted a Conservative, David Faber, and a Liberal Democrat, Don Foster, both of whom had visited Bosnia as guests of the Serb authorities the previous year. Wareing was under investigation in 1997 for failing to disclose a Russian business interest with a Serb connection in the "Register of Members' Interests." This led to his temporary suspension from the Labour Party. The Standards and Privileges Committee also insisted that he apologize to Parliament for his "oversight." See Committee on Standards and Privileges, Fifth and Sixth Reports, "Complaints against Mr Robert Wareing," HMSO, 29 July 1997 and "Standards and Privileges," 30 October 1997, *Hansard*, Commons, cols. 1051-2.

³⁰ "Bosnia," 29 April 1993, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 1232.

³¹ *Ibid.*, col. 1233.

³² "Yugoslavia," 26 July 1993, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 868.

³³ This was a statistic frequently used by Karadžić's Serbs, which may have influenced David Owen in drawing up the Vance-Owen Peace Plan, the first detailed plan to be based on ethnic division.

³⁴ See *Okovana Bosna* (Zurich: Bosnian Institute, 1995), which published records indicating that until 1991 Bosnian Muslims had owned 1,049,535 hectares (20.5 per cent) of land in Bosnia and Hercegovina, Serbs had owned 998,338 hectares (19.5 per cent) and Croats 343,019 hectares (6.7 per cent).

³⁵ In April 1993, the late Labour leader, John Smith, distanced his party temporarily from British government policy, in calling on the UN to authorize air strikes against Serbian lines of communication in Bosnia and Hercegovina, in the absence of an effective ceasefire agreement. However, his Foreign Affairs Spokesman, John Cunningham, appears to have had less confidence in this new policy, choosing to convey it by quoting the Labour leader's words almost verbatim. See "Bosnia," 29 April 1993, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 1183. Labour's Shadow Defense spokesman, David Clark, showed similar reticence in spelling out Labour's new position (*Ibid.*, cols. 1244-1245).

³⁶ In the July 1997 British government reshuffle, John Reid was unexpectedly transferred from the Defense Ministry to the Ministry of Transport. In view of his expertise in the Armed Services, this surprised a number of observers. He was also known to have enjoyed the job.

³⁷ David Clark, in the same government reshuffle, lost his ministerial post altogether.

³⁸ *The Sunday Times* (29 June 1997), p. 1.

³⁹ Another British MP on the same trip who had stayed at that hotel reportedly chose to pay his own expenses, aware of Kennedy's connection with Karadžić. Reported in *The Sunday Times* (15 August 1993), p. 17.

⁴⁰ Apart from the Serb-financed visits to Serbia and Republika Srpska, the only other expenses funded by former Yugoslav republics, according to the Register of Members' Interests for that year, was an all-Party visit by several MPs to Macedonia in January 1993 paid for by the Macedonian Government, and one visit to Bosnia (12-17 December 1992) by Paddy Ashdown, who records receiving assistance with travel expenses from the Croatian Government. There is no record of Bosnian Government-funded trips during that time.

⁴¹ "Register of Members' Interests," 1993.

⁴² "Bosnia," 6 May 1993, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 287.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, col. 288.

⁴⁴ Personal interview with John Reid.

⁴⁵ Tory MP, Harold Elletson, also records visits (a total of four) to the area at the Serbs' expense between December 1992 and January 1994.

⁴⁶ *The Times* (10 September 1993), p. 13.

⁴⁷ UNHCR Bulletin, No. 10, 3 October 1993.

⁴⁸ "Statement on the Defense Estimates," 18 October 1993, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 56.

⁴⁹ A mortar shell killed 68 people at the Merkale marketplace in Sarajevo on 5 February 1994.

⁵⁰ "Army," 23 February 1995, *Hansard*, Commons, cols. 525-530.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, col. 579.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, col. 571.

⁵⁴ David Faber is currently adviser to Shadow Foreign Secretary, Michael Howard.

⁵⁵ John Bums, "The Media as Impartial Observers or Protagonists: Conflict Reporting or Conflict Encouragement in Former Yugoslavia," in *Bosnia by Television*, ed. James Gow, Richard Paterson, and Alison Preston (London: British Film Institute, 1996), pp. 92, 96.

⁵⁶ Some three weeks before the war in Bosnia started (mid-March 1992) Zametica, in the presence of the then Yugoslav Ambassador to Berlin, Svetozar Rikanovie, was heard to "encourage and support the war option of the Bosnian Serbs and offer his intellectual services in pacifying British public opinion." He stated that everything was ready and it would all be over in ten days. See *Borba* (10-11 April 1993), p. 1. In 1994, Zametica (now known as Jovan Zametica), as Karadžić's political adviser at Pale, was threatening to down NATO planes over the safe area of Bihać, which included British Tornados and Harriers.

⁵⁷ President of the Association of Serbs in Belgrade. These and similar claims before long became common currency among Serb lobbyists in the UK, in portraying the Serbs as a wronged and misunderstood nation whose actions in no circumstances merited international military intervention. It was a line which fooled many outside the Serb lobby.

⁵⁸ "Information Minister" of the self-styled Serbian Republic of Krajina, 1991.

⁵⁹ BBC 2 Television, 5 July 1991.

⁶⁰ In interview with Jeremy Paxman on *Newsnight*, BBC 2, 5 July 1991.

⁶¹ Referring to the Hague Peace Conference on Yugoslavia, launched on 5 September 1991.

⁶² Channel 4 News, 19 September 1991.

⁶³ Karadžić managed to have several other letters published, including one in *The Times* on 16 April 1993, during the first Serb onslaught on Srebrenica where, in response to the US-favored 'lift-and-strike' policy, he warned of a "broader Balkans conflict" in the case of Western military intervention.

⁶⁴ On Karadžić's visit to London on 15 July 1992, Zametica escorted him, together with John Kennedy, to his press conference at the Carlton Hyatt Hotel. Channel 4 News, 15 July 1992.

⁶⁵ Zametica was interviewed on BBC 2's *Newsnight*, for instance, where he warned of the danger of outside military intervention in what was "a complex situation."

⁶⁶ *The Independent* (5 August 1992), p. 8.

⁶⁷ Zametica, *The Yugoslav Conflict*. This paper is now omitted from the IISS list of Adelphi publications.

⁶⁸ *The Financial Times* (10 August 1992), p. 12; and *The Guardian* (12 August 1992), p.16. See also *The Herald* (12 August 1992), p.11.

⁶⁹ This thesis, based on dubious evidence of the number of German divisions needed to quell Yugoslav resistance in World War II, inhibited the arguments even of some of the most vocal proponents of military intervention in the early stages of the war. During the NATO campaign in Kosovo, Jonathan Eyal declared "we are committed to a policy which is quite frankly idiotic but which would have to be continued to save credibility. See *The Observer* (18 April 1999), p. 17.

⁷⁰ The success of the Serb lobby in arguing against intervention, to which Zametica also contributed at this time, is evident here. Ironically, it contradicts the assessment of Serbian generals themselves of their forces' potential, even in Croatia in 1991, failing the total mobilization of Serbia. See Borisav Jović, *Poslednji dani SFRJ* (Belgrade: Politika, 1996, unpublished version), p. 387.

⁷¹ *The Guardian* (10 August 1992), p. 21.

⁷² *The European* (7-10 January 1993), p. 9.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *The European* (30 December 1992-3 January 1993), p. 10.

⁷⁵ *The Guardian* (10 August 1992), p. 19.

⁷⁶ Broadcast between 1-8 August 1993, twenty-eight programs, covering a broad range of approaches to the war in Bosnia. Over 35 per cent of the population tuned into at least part of the season. See Gow, *Bosnia by Television*, p.28.

⁷⁷ Douglas Hurd made a similar speech in Germany during the same week.

⁷⁸ Until 1997, *Living Marxism* described itself as the "Monthly Review of the Revolutionary Communist Party." From January 1997, it changed its image and became known as *LM*.

⁷⁹ British politicians have also used this argument, which neglects two salient facts: (i) that Bosnia was considered a potential European security risk, and (ii) that Britain had already intervened decisively and affected the course of the war.

⁸⁰ In January 1995, however, an article by Joan Hoey appeared in *The Nation*, suggesting that American diplomacy "fanned the flames of the war and provoked world power rivalries on the Bosnian stage." See Joan Hoey, "Policy without Principle: The US 'Great Game' in Bosnia," in *The Nation* (30 January 1995), pp. 130-132.

⁸¹ The Economist Intelligence Unit, "The Former Yugoslav Republics," *Country Risk Service* (1st quarter 1995).

⁸² Joan Phillips, "Tomahawks for Peace," in *Living Marxism* (October 1995), p. 12.

⁸³ The Executive Director, Srdja Trifković, was interviewed on Sky News, the BBC World Service, *Newsnight*, BBC 2, and Radio 4 on numerous occasions, including just after Karadžić and Mladić were first indicted by the UN Criminal Tribunal, when he took the opportunity to question the validity of the Tribunal. When Karadžić's forces were holding several hundred UN troops hostage in May 1995, Trifković warned the British public over the air of the dangers of NATO military intervention. Representatives from the Serbian Information Centre also appeared frequently on British television during the war but, as overt Serb lobbyists rather than "Balkan specialists," were probably less effective in putting across their views.

⁸⁴ See Michael Stenton, "Europe at the Drina: the Context of the war in Bosnia" (a lecture delivered in Moscow 16-18 January 1996). Another British organization which has adopted the German hegemony theory is Intelligence International Ltd., a publishing company based in Gloucestershire, UK, which argues that Germany, backed by America and a militarily-reinforced Croatia, aims to be the sole great power of Europe. See "The Dangers

in US-German European Policy, Intelligence Digest: A Review of World Affairs," ed. J. DeCourcy, 11-25 August 1995.

⁸⁵ This conspiracy theory gained currency amongst some of the older generation of parliamentarians in the House of Commons, and the alleged ulterior motives of the Germans was a theme taken up forcefully by some of the founder members of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans in June 1995. The "premature recognition of Croatia" thesis (i.e. faulting Germany) is the most popular in Britain in discussion on international responsibility for the war, and has found favor with much of the British establishment, including many on the Left. BBC war correspondent-turned-MP, Martin Bell, also subscribes to the thesis. But a fully convincing argument for this has yet to be made. In fact, it was the introduction of UN troops (through the Vance Plan) into Croatia in early 1992 to protect Serb territorial gains, thereby releasing the Yugoslav Army for other duties and facilitating their withdrawal to Bosnia, that made possible the massive Serb "ethnic cleansing" campaign in the early part of the Bosnian war, from April to June 1992. See Daniele Conversi, "German-Bashing and the Breakup of Yugoslavia," *The Donald W. Treadgold Papers*, No. 16, March 1998, for a fuller discussion of this question.

⁸⁶ *Vojska* (8 July 1993), p. 13.

⁸⁷ *Intervju* (16 September 1994), pp. 54-57.

⁸⁸ *NIN* (16 September 1994), pp. 18-20.

⁸⁹ Notorious for its "Memorandum" of 1986, considered by many analysts as the Greater Serbian "manifesto" and theoretical forerunner of the conflict in former Yugoslavia.

⁹⁰ *Borba* (15 February 1995), p. 1.

⁹¹ *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy* (29 February 1996).

⁹² *Ibid.* (30 April 1994), editorial.

⁹³ For instance, it referred to the US Ambassador to Croatia, Peter Galbraith, as Peter Fulbright (July/August 1995) and to former EC envoy David Owen as the "United Nations mediator in the conflict" (30 April 94), and, in reference to the late August 1995 mortar attack on the Sarajevo market place, stated that it was "a pre-positioned charge... placed by the Bosnian Izetbegović administration," against all evidence to the contrary.

⁹⁴ "Engleski srboljubi," in *Vreme* (5 April 1993), p. 30.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ See Sir Alfred Sherman, "What Is Good for America" (address delivered at the international conference "America's Intervention in the Balkans," Chicago, 28 February-2 March 1997). The conference was hosted by the Lord Byron Foundation and the American magazine, *Chronicles*. Thomas Fleming, a participant in the conference, is editor of *Chronicles*.

⁹⁷ For instance, London News Radio, BBC World Service TV, and Sky World News, interviews with Srdja Trifković on 24 April 1995, and Thomas Fleming, "Today Sarajevo, Tomorrow Chicago: The Tyranny of Human Rights," 28 February-2 March 1997.

⁹⁸ The need for large-scale foreign investment in Yugoslavia was taken up at an international conference at the School for Policy Studies, Bristol University, 27-28 June 1996: "Economic Reconstruction and Development in former Yugoslavia," by four out of the twelve contributors, all Serbian economists. One argued the case for privatizing the Serbian telecom industry. (Just one month later, Douglas Hurd and Pauline Neville-Jones, later both senior executives with NatWest Markets, visited Milošević in Belgrade to discuss a deal whereby NatWest Markets would privatize Serbia's post and telecommunication services for a fee of around \$10 million, a deal which later went ahead). The Conference was not well-attended. Its 26 participants included, however, representatives from the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development and the Know-How Fund. Unfortunately, the only paper on Bosnia was limited to small-business development, and delivered by a visiting research scholar at the London Business School, a Hercegovinan Croat!

⁹⁹ According to his interview with Marko Lopusina, "Karadžić se sam pozvao u Belu Kuću," in *Intervju* (Belgrade), 11 November 1994, p. 56. Hatchett, an ex-US Air Force Colonel, is also a self-avowed member of Šešelji's Radical Party, Card No. 35665. On 4 April 1999, Hatchett told the state-run Belgrade daily *Večernje Novosti* that "the American people have been deceived ... we want to show that Kosovo is Serbian land."

¹⁰⁰ This description, following an inquiry to the University to verify Stenton's status, was found to be incorrect and was shortly afterwards deleted from the organization's website.

¹⁰¹ At the launch of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, House of Commons, 26 June 1995.

¹⁰² Serbian Unity Congress, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," 1993.

¹⁰³ Brad K. Blitz, "Serbia's War Lobby: Diaspora Groups and Western Elites," in *This Time We Knew*, pp. 187-243. According to Blitz, in February 1995, SUC delegates conducted an extensive lobbying campaign on Capitol Hill, advocating Karadžić's policies.

¹⁰⁴ After the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, an interview with Princess Katherine appeared in the Serbian press, describing her close friendship with Diana, and the many personal letters received from her. See *Ilustrovana politika* (4 October 1997), quoted on Serbian Unity Congress Website <www.suc.org>.

¹⁰⁵ According to *Private Eye*, there was evidence to suggest that Marks and Spencer was trading with Serbia, in violation of UN sanctions, at the height of the war. *Private Eye* (15 January 1993), p. 26.

¹⁰⁶ For instance, Martin Bell, then BBC war correspondent, was pictured in Lifeline's leaflet flanked by its co-chairwomen, while Bentley & Co., the Bond Street jewelers, hosted a highly-publicized campaign in 1995 for unwanted jewelry which was smelted. The cash value was donated to Lifeline.

¹⁰⁷ On the contrary, the inhabitants of these towns were free to pursue their daily lives, attend school and work, go shopping or till the fields, all without fear for their lives. See *UNHCR Bulletins*, 1992-5; and Carole Hodge, "Slimy Limeys," in *New Republic* (9 January 1995), pp. 21-22.

¹⁰⁸ Hollingworth described how, on being transferred from Sarajevo to Banja Luka, he was struck by the colors of the fruits, the kilometers of fields sown with crops, and the abundance of food for sale in the market. See Larry Hollingworth, *Merry Christmas Mr. Larry* (Cambridge: Mandarin Press, 1996).

¹⁰⁹ Non-Serbs who survived in Serb-held territory in Northern Bosnia related how they were consistently excluded from international humanitarian aid, distributed by local (Serb) agencies. (Private interviews).

¹¹⁰ Lecture delivered at the British/Southern Slav Society, Edinburgh, on 4 February 1998.

¹¹¹ According to two separate analyses, Republika Srpska in 1997 represented under 20 per cent of the population of Bosnia and Hercegovina, based on the 1991 census. See Murat Praso, "Demographic Consequences of the 1992-95 War," in *Most*, No. 93 (March/April 1996), reprinted in *Bosnia Report* (July-October 1996), pp. 5-6.

¹¹² The current defense minister of Republika Srpska, Manojlo Milovanović, was General Ratko Mladić's Chief of Staff during the war. Milovan Stanković was Mladić's adviser for part of the war. According to the Balkan Institute (Military Watch, Vol. 3.3, 12 February 1998), he was reported to have been captured on film with Mladić during the Serb assault on Srebrenica in 1995. In what may be a significant statement made by Stanković in Doboj in the lead-up to the 1996 elections, he declared "in pre-election campaigns parties must not be enemies, only political rivals who after the elections will become political partners" (SRNA, 20 August 1996). Dodik's Justice Minister, Petko Cancar, was formerly mayor of Foča (now Srbinje), one of the worst affected areas of ethnic cleansing and systematic rape during the war, while RS President, Biljana Plavšić, has publicly allied herself to "Arkan," the leader of one of the most extreme Serb paramilitary groups, during the first Serb attack on Bjeljina. See, for instance, *Duga*, 22 January 1994. In July 1999, General Momir Talić, chief of staff of the Bosnian Serb Army, was arrested on charges of persecuting Bosnian Croats and Muslims in the 1992 ethnic purge, along with former RS Deputy Prime Minister, Radislav Brđjanin, also arrested for war crimes charges.

¹¹³ Clarke has also had a regular syndicated column in the *Los Angeles Times*, and has published a number of studies on US foreign policy.

¹¹⁴ The Washington-based Hellenic-American public relations firm, Manatos and Manatos, was hired in September 1992 to engage the Greek community in a joint lobbying effort, which in fundraising terms was relatively successful. For the Greek involvement in the US Serb lobby, see Blitz, "Serbia's War Lobby," pp. 187-243.

¹¹⁵ Jonathan Clarke also published an article in *Los Angeles Times*, suggesting that if America wished to pursue the role of world "moral pathfinder," it should take on China as well as the "politically friendless" Bosnian Serbs. Clarke attacked the US for its part in linking economic aid to RS with human rights at the Donors' Conference in July. Clarke's

new position as media consultant for SUC was not indicated in the article. See *Los Angeles Times* (Washington edition), 5 August 1997, online version <www.newsservice.com>.

¹¹⁶ This press release was issued the day following the British-led NATO operation in Prijedor, in which the secretly indicted Serb war criminal, Sime Drljača, was killed, and Milan Kovačević was arrested and sent to The Hague. That day also marked the second anniversary of the fall of Srebrenica to General Mladić's forces.

¹¹⁷ Although Biljana Plavsić, however, also expressed interest in RS participation in the program. Interestingly, the idea of both entities taking part in "equip and train" was mooted as early as December 1996 by a research team at the Department of War Studies, Kings College, London.

¹¹⁸ See for instance, Serbian Unity Congress (SUC), "The Gelbard Mission to Bosnia: Evenhandedness is the Key," Press Release No. 7 (4 August 1997). Dozens of press releases have been issued by the SUC since Clarke's appointment as media consultant, as well as a number of articles and other analyses.

¹¹⁹ The SUC also claimed to have reached out to new groups that hitherto were stridently anti-Serb. The International Crisis Group was cited in this respect. (Jonathan Clarke, report at the Eighth Convention of the Serb Unity Congress, Pittsburgh, 16-28 September 1997).

¹²⁰ Holbrooke used the term as many as three times, according to the Serbian Unity Congress. (Jonathan Clarke, report at the Eighth Convention of the Serb Unity Congress, Pittsburgh, 16-28 September 1997).

¹²¹ According to Aisling Byrne, representative of the Office of the High Representative, the international community have jointly assessed the situation and have decided that the political conditions and the commitment to cooperation necessary to the granting of aid now exists." (Transcript of Joint Press Conference, Coalition Press Information Centre, Tito Barracks, 12 February 1998). In Eastern RS, however, pictures of Mladić and Karadžić still abound. See Duncan Bullivant, Office of the High Representative, Transcript of Joint Press Conference, 20 February 1998.

¹²² As well as urging that the "train and equip" program be extended to the RS army, British politicians have (1) suggested that Karadžić might go to trial in Bosnia, as opposed to The Hague (Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, August 1997); (2) led the call for Republika Srpska to receive aid, and even condemned international belatedness in this (Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, February 1998).

¹²³ At this point Kosovar Albanians were being expelled at the rate of several thousand a week.

¹²⁴ The Kosovo Verification Mission was hastily introduced into Kosovo to oversee Serbia's adherence to the Holbrooke/Milošević agreement of October 1998. It is often argued that the withdrawal of this mission led to a dramatic upsurge of ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. However, while its presence may have slowed down the rate of expulsions, it was unable to prevent the massacre at Racak. Neither was it at any time in a position to monitor much of what took place outside the main communications areas.

¹²⁵ A number of factors, including the escalation of the situation in Kosovo during 1998, led the British foreign and defense ministries to review policy options. In May of that year, a report was commissioned by the foreign office with a view to assessing the potential future for Britain in Europe. A key recommendation of the report was to involve British military assets in developing a European defense capacity within NATO. This marked a major change of British government thinking on European defense. Another aspect of this new orientation was perhaps illuminated in an article by Charles Grant, entitled "Can Britain lead in Europe?" in which it was noted that if the British wanted to lead in European defense and appear "better Europeans ... they might win considerable credit with their partners and... in the strange world of EU politics, it is possible to buy goodwill by making concessions that are more symbolic than substantial." Quoted from Western European Union, document 1636. "WEU and European Defense: beyond Amsterdam," Report submitted on behalf of the Political Committee by De Puig, President of the Assembly and Rapporteur, 15 March 1999. In October 1998, at an informal meeting of the European Council, Prime Minister Tony Blair stated Britain's revised position.

¹²⁶ But according to most opinion polls, the government retained the support of around two-thirds of the British public throughout the campaign.

¹²⁷ Serbian Unity Congress press officer and former British diplomat, Jonathan Clarke, produced press reports which echoed the arguments against NATO air strikes of Serb apologists everywhere. (See, for example No. 10/99, 1 April 1999, "Serb Unity Congress condemns calls for American ground troops in Kosovo.")

¹²⁸ The university campus at Glasgow, for instance, became a target for some of the most vitriolic propaganda material, some questionably libelous. A group calling itself Oppose Genocide accused western leaders of perpetrating genocide against Serb civilians, in a war masterminded by the Germans! In a widely distributed leaflet, NATO was accused of killing 250,000 people in Krajina in 1995, an action which Glasgow MP, Maria Fyfe was alleged to have defended. *The Socialist Worker* paper chose to focus exclusively on NATO "slaughter" in Serbia (as opposed to the slaughter by Serbian forces' in Kosovo), while the Socialist Workers Party held meetings in dozens of locations throughout Britain, mainly focusing on the Kosovo issue. See *Socialist Worker*, 8 May 1999.

¹²⁹ The Socialist Worker Student Society held meetings on the Glasgow University campus under the title: "The Balkans: Why Capitalism breeds War." As the title suggests, the Balkans war was used as a springboard in the SWP crusade against capitalism, an approach familiar to a number of other leftwing groups. When questioned on specific aspects of the war in Kosovo and Bosnia, its spokespeople were mostly unable to defend their positions.

¹³⁰ The Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) set up The Committee to Stop the Bombing in the Balkans, with public protests, and regular weekly campaign meetings in Glasgow.

¹³¹ The only party in Britain that officially opposed government policy was the Scottish National Party (SNP) whose leader, Alex Salmond, in a highly publicized speech at the outset of the NATO action, characterized it as "an unpardonable folly." It may be debated

whose was the folly as the Scottish elections which followed weeks later registered a significant drop in the SNP vote, signaling perhaps the split in opinion which occurred amongst Scottish voters on the merits of the speech. Salmond reiterated his opinion two months later in an article in *The Sunday Herald* but, as with a number of other detractors of NATO policy in Kosovo, he got a few facts wrong. He asserted, for instance, that "The first thing that happened to facilitate the action was the withdrawal of the 2,000 United Nations and Red Cross monitors who were the only protection the Kosovars had." See *The Sunday Herald* (23 May 1999), p. 12.

¹³² Perhaps striking a particularly poignant note at Easter time.

¹³³ Jovanović was often referred to as the Yugoslav Ambassador to the UN. This may have belied the fact that Yugoslavia was not a not a recognized member of the United Nations.

¹³⁴ For an analysis of the role of Douglas Hurd in the formation of international policy in the Croatian and Bosnian war, 1991-95, see Carole Hodge, "The Hurd Mentality," *The New Republic* (7 August 1995), pp. 18-19.

¹³⁵ Pauline Neville-Jones was Political Director at the Foreign Office from 1994-96. She was later party to the infamous "breakfast" meeting whereby NatWest Markets, her then employers, agreed to advise on the privatization of Serbian telecom, half of which was later sold to Italian and Greek companies, the proceeds boosting the coffers of the Belgrade regime, just months before the start of the Kosovo atrocities.

¹³⁶ "The history and the background of that part of the world is very brutal. They've done that sort of thing to each other before." Panorama, BBC TV, 29 March 1999. Pauline Neville-Jones is a governor of the BBC.

¹³⁷ "Ethnic cleansing is the predictable outcome of air attacks." Lord Owen, *Panorama*, BBC TV, 29 March 1999. Owen, referring to his "hundreds of meetings" with Milošević, spoke with some amusement, bordering on affection, of the day he and his wife had spent as guests of Milošević and his wife, Mira Marković, at one of Tito's country residences on the Danube, in 1994. Former Foreign Secretary, now Lord, Douglas Hurd, reminisced on the inscrutability of Milošević.

¹³⁸ Apart from the extra coverage, regular news bulletins were extended. For example the 9 o'clock BBC news was extended from twenty-five minutes to one hour. *News at 10* was extended by twenty minutes.

¹³⁹ For instance, two weeks into the war BBC 1 coverage of the Gulf War was recorded as dropping to "only" nine and a half hours daily!

¹⁴⁰ The then managing director of BBC TV, Sir Paul Fox, commented that it was the corporation's public duty to report the war fully. See *The Times* (26 January 1991), p. 1.

¹⁴¹ *Prospect* carried an article entitled "The end of grand narrative," which argues that people in Britain are becoming far less interested in serious news. This was part of *Prospect's* argument that since 1991 people are no longer living under the threat of world war, and that the consequences of current wars are being borne "by foreigners with ragged

clothes or by a few professional soldiers." See Godfrey Hodgson, "The end of grand narrative," in *Prospect* (August/September 1999), pp. 18-20. Hodgson is the ex-foreign editor and director of the Reuters Foundation at Oxford. The danger of this kind of assumption, of course, is that the public will be offered less news, and therefore be less informed.

¹⁴² Sky News, 25 March 1999.

¹⁴³ The day after the Gulf war started, *The Times* (16 January 1991), pp. 1-10, devoted 10 pages to the war, and in the *The Sunday Times* two weeks after the Gulf war began (27 January 1991), pp. 1-16, there was a sixteen page pull-out briefing on War in the Gulf, in addition to daily coverage and commentary.

¹⁴⁴ For instance, in *The Sunday Times* of 27 January 1991, on page 5, there was just a small paragraph reporting many thousands of peace protesters who held a march and rally in central London, while in the Kosovo war, dissenters were offered ample space to state their case, both in the electronic and print media, and through televised internet mail.

¹⁴⁵ There were also times when MPs were caused embarrassment by inaccurate media reports. Tam Dalyell, MP, quoted a damning *New Statesman* report on the ethnic Albanians on 9 April 1999 which, according to an intelligence report by the German Federal Criminal Agency, "are now the most prominent group in the distribution of heroin in western Europe." Dalyell later admitted that he should have referred specifically to the KLA. See "Kosovo," 17 June 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 643.

¹⁴⁶ This was picked up by Shaun Woodward, MP, who informed the House of Commons that "two thirds of the 16,000 people involved in today's BBC poll were against military action in Serbia." See "Kosovo," 19 April 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 589. This gave a reverse picture of British public opinion on the NATO action to most other polls conducted during that time (no doubt unintentionally). Shaun Woodward, a Conservative MP, offered critical support on Kosovo to the government in his speech.

¹⁴⁷ This presents an interesting comparison with media handling of the accidental loss of life of British troops by US "friendly fire" during the Gulf War.

¹⁴⁸ On the same day (26 March 1999), *The Times* launched the first of several extensive articles by Sandra Parsons, a British subject married to a Serb in Britain, who describes emotively her fears for her in-laws in Serbia.

¹⁴⁹ *The Daily Telegraph* (27 March 1999), p. 6.

¹⁵⁰ *The Scotsman* (25 March 1999), p. 19. In August 1999, Carrington went on record as alleging that NATO strikes on Serbia caused, rather than prevented, ethnic cleansing. He also questioned the branding of Milošević as a war criminal.

¹⁵¹ *The Sunday Times* (28 March 1999), p. 23.

¹⁵² *The Financial Times* (31 March 1999), p. 20.

¹⁵³ *The Times* (1 April 1999), p. 6. In one of Serbia's worst atrocities of the Second World War, hundreds of Serbian children were massacred in Kragujevac in retaliation for the death of a Nazi.

¹⁵⁴ For instance, an article taking up the cause of western journalists reporting the NATO action from Serbia (where Walker spent the first weeks of the war), "Why Mr. Campbell is wrong - and offensive," in *The Times* (10 July 1999), is recorded on NATO-Yugoslavian War: Internet Resources web site <www.users.bigpond.com/agitprop/stopnato.htm>. asis his earlier article "Taken in by the NATO line," in *The Independent* (7 July 1999). Other pieces recorded on that website include Robert Fisk's article in *The Independent* (13 July 1999). Picking up the story on the Downing Street Press Secretary's speech, it claims that Campbell's remarks were "clearly intended to inhibit the reporting of the truth." Another example is John Pilger's piece entitled "Nothing in my 30 years of reporting wars compares with the present propaganda dressed as journalism," *New Statesman* (12 July 1999), p. 17.

¹⁵⁵ *The Times* (15 April 1999), p. 22.

¹⁵⁶ See "Licence to rile," in *The Guardian Weekend* (15 May 1999), pp. 32-38.

¹⁵⁷ *The Sunday Times* (16 May 1999), pp. 2-3.

¹⁵⁸ *The Times Weekend* (29 May 1999), pp. 1-2.

¹⁵⁹ Channel 4 Television, 25 March 1999.

¹⁶⁰ CNN, 11 April 1999. In an article in *The Times* just before the NATO action commenced (18 March 1999, online version at <www.sunday-times.co.uk>. Trifković wrote that Serbia was threatened with bombing by Britain and America "simply because it acts as any proud nation would - it refuses to have foreign troops colonizing its soil." Again, Trifković, described merely as foreign editor of an American cultural magazine, might appear an objective commentator in his assessment of the situation at that crucial time. Another director of the Lord Byron Foundation for Balkan Studies, Ron Hatchett, conducted the first TV interview in English with Milošević since the start of the NATO bombing. Billed as a "military analyst" who had been "reporting from Belgrade for the Houston TV station," Hatchett has denounced critics of Milošević as "neo-imperialist."

¹⁶¹ CNN, 27 March 1999.

¹⁶² See articles by the author in *The Scotsman* where this is discussed: "Potential Wealth Plays Hidden Role in Conflict" (3 April 1999), p. 8; and "Longer View Rules Out a Quick Fix for the Balkans" (17 May 1999), p. 9. See also "Learn the Bosnian Lesson," *The Herald* (9 May 1998), p. 11. In *The Scotsman* (11 September 1999), p. 12, Hodge discusses the implications of the soft partitioning of Kosovo already taking place with the division of Mitrovića.

¹⁶³ *Newsnight*, BBC 2, 20 April 1999.

¹⁶⁴ Tam Dalyell, a founding member of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, visited Belgrade in September 1999, along with another British MP, Alice Mahon, reportedly to see

first-hand the effects of the NATO air campaign in Serbia, and declared his willingness to meet Milošević.

¹⁶⁵ BBC Radio, 14 April 1999.

¹⁶⁶ *The Guardian* (30 March 1999), p. 5.

¹⁶⁷ *The Times* (30 March 1999), p. 7.

¹⁶⁸ Mick Hume, "If the Kosovo crisis did not exist, Blair would have to invent it," in *LM* (6 April 1999), online version <www.informinc.co.uk>. This View was not adopted by a number of prominent leftwingers, however. See, for instance, MP Ken Livingstone's speech: "If I had seen any sign over the past decade that all this was part of some imperial plan by America, I should oppose it ... At every stage, Britain and America have been reluctant to act, and slow to act. There has been no grand imperial grab for power." See "Kosovo," 25 March 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 573. Jimmy Hood, MP, informed the House: "I have no problem with being on the left of politics and supporting action to defend a humanitarian cause, as we are doing in Kosovo. I just wish that honorable Members who argue against the NATO action in Kosovo, which they have a right to do, would not slant their arguments against America. These arguments lose credence when they are articulated in such a way." See "Kosovo," 19 April 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 621.

¹⁶⁹ It is interesting that Pilger in his 650-page book *Hidden Agendas*, published in 1998, addresses East Timor, Burma, the Gulf War, Cambodia, and other international issues, but makes only passing reference to Bosnia, and none to Kosovo.

¹⁷⁰ *New Statesman* (2 April 1999), p. 13.

¹⁷¹ Melanie McDonagh, "Journey from the Balkan inferno," *New Statesman* (9 April 1999), pp. 8-9. McDonagh, however, appears to have been the only writer to have braved the thick of the action.

¹⁷² The position of the *New Statesman* on the Kosovo war was, interestingly, in direct contrast to its stance in the Bosnian war when, under a different editorship, it had argued consistently for military intervention.

¹⁷³ *New Statesman* (2 April 1999), pp. 11-12.

¹⁷⁴ *New Statesman* (26 April 1999), p. 4.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-17.

¹⁷⁶ *New Statesman* (17 May 1999), p. 17.

¹⁷⁷ Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, in answer to similar allegations on Rambouillet from MPs replied that "all that was included in that text was the standard status of forces agreement, which used identical language to the status of forces agreement of the previous Government, with his advice, agreed for the forces in Bosnia. I tell the House that not a single complaint was raised by the Serb side at Rambouillet about that annex. Complaints

have been raised only since then." See "Kosovo," 18 May 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 884.

¹⁷⁸ Zivadin Jovanović gave lengthy interviews on Channel 4 News at 7 P.M. and on the BBC TV 9 P.M. news on 26 March, but did not offer this argument in Serbia's defense for having rejected the Rambouillet Agreement.

¹⁷⁹ Edward Said, "The blind misleading the blind," in *New Statesman* (17 May 1999), pp. 13-14.

¹⁸⁰ Edward Said also inaccurately suggested that most TV broadcasters advocated the bombing of RTS, the Serbian television station. In fact, the British media almost unanimously came out against that action. Edward Said's texts opposing the NATO action have been extensively used by the Serb lobby. See for instance the Serbian website <www.serbia-info.com> dated 4 August 1999.

¹⁸¹ Richard Swift, "Lies and the laptop bombardiers," in *New Internationalist*, No. 314 (July 1999), pp. 24-25.

¹⁸² The *New Internationalist* which purports, *inter alia*, to "focus attention on the unjust relationship between the powerful and powerless in both rich and poor nations," has in fact never tackled the issue of former Yugoslavia except in brief articles, although it has produced special issues on Northern Ireland, East Timor, and similar, with studies on Indonesia and Iraq projected over the next few months. Notwithstanding this, *New Internationalist* chose to include in No. 312 (May 1999) a "stop the bombing" leaflet, which contained a number of contestable assertions. On enquiry, one of the editorial staff (Anouk Ride) confirmed *New Internationalist's* opposition to NATO bombing, but did not amplify on that position.

¹⁸³ The NATO briefings were also held on Saturdays and Sundays.

¹⁸⁴ Military expert, Duncan Bullivant, after both MOD and NATO briefings on 2 June, when a settlement was approaching, commented that "it makes sense to have the Russians in the northern part ... essential for Slobodan Milošević to sell it as a deal." (Sky News, 2 June 1999). This would, of course, have meant the de facto partition of Kosovo, an outcome not openly endorsed by NATO. Bullivant also, rather dubiously, recommended Carl Bildt as the interlocutor between NATO and Milošević who "have a problem talking to each other" and that "people with deep knowledge of the regime like Carl Bildt [are needed] to pull things back together again." (Sky News, 10 May 1999). The jury is still out on Carl Bildt's term in Bosnia, but the fact that, just four days before the fall of Srebrenica in his meeting with General Mladić (both hosted by Milošević) in Belgrade, Bildt merely pointed out that "it was inhuman to try to strangle Sarajevo, Goražde, Žepa, Srebrenica and Bihać" spoke volumes of his role as EU envoy in former Yugoslavia. Bildt's record as the first High Representative, monitoring the civilian implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia, was little better. See Bildt's own account of that crucial meeting in Carl Bildt, *Peace Journey: The Struggle for Peace in Bosnia* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998), p. 53; and of his term as High Representative. Chris Bellamy had earlier actually suggested the partition of Kosovo "which would allow Serbs to keep sacred areas...the only compromise I can see at the moment." (Chris Bellamy, commenting on the NATO briefing of 8 May 1999, Sky

News). Colonel Bob Stewart, former UN commander of British troops in Bosnia, consistently argued for the insertion of NATO ground troops from the beginning. Following an MOD briefing of 9 May 1999, Stewart commented: "Milošević is increasingly seeing that he will win. Politically it seems to be a mess - we have mishandled it all the way through." (Sky News, 9 May 1999).

¹⁸⁵ It is cited in detail, for instance, on the Serbian Unity Congress website <www.suc.org> under "NATO aggression against Yugoslavia."

¹⁸⁶ *New Statesman* (9 April 1999), pp. 11-13. Cover story.

¹⁸⁷ The UN Assembly, for instance, repeatedly opposed the arms embargo on Bosnia and Hercegovina, to no effect. It was sidelined by the Permanent Five at the Security Council who maintained the embargo from 1991 until 1995, although (significantly) America unilaterally broke it in late 1994 on the Adriatic.

¹⁸⁸ In the case of Somalia, for instance, the widely held perception of US failure in its recent intervention is based on the killing of a number of US troops. But it is often overlooked that the intervention at the time ended the turmoil in that state.

¹⁸⁹ Noam Chomsky, similarly to John Pilger, omits mention of the Balkan war, apart from a couple of passing references, in *World Orders, Old and New* (Sydney: Pluto Press, 1997 edition), p. 343, a study of global politics, which offers in-depth analysis of the situation in the Middle East and Central America, and discusses foreign intervention, the United Nations and Russia, and other areas and issues central to 'the Balkans debate.

¹⁹⁰ According to its front cover.

¹⁹¹ The May edition editorial (Foreword, p.3) attempts to justify Robert Cooper's thesis by explaining that the Kosovo war is "exactly the kind of limited, tactical, pre-Clausewitzian war that Cooper predicted would puncture the 'long peace. ",

¹⁹² Rodric Braithwaite, Britain's last ambassador to the Soviet Union, in a gloomy prediction of the consequences of the NATO campaign considers that "even if a halfway decent settlement is now cobbled together for Kosovo, it will be more difficult to get people to support a repetition of the trick in another European crisis." Yet it is arguably NATO's success in the Kosovo crisis which will prevent a repetition in another part of Europe. See "Can we win the peace?," in *Prospect* (May 1999), pp. 11-12. Carl Bildt suggests that the opponents of air strikes in Bosnia (Bildt was presumably one of them) are being vindicated: "The problem with these smart wars conducted from the air is that they are often difficult to relate to political objectives, and so far have not proved a great success in achieving those objectives." Bildt, who has a very personal view of how the Bosnian war ended ("Clearly, it was not the military might of the RRF or the NATO air forces that turned the situation around ... it was the political initiative that really created the conditions for a peaceful settlement," in *Peace Journey*, p. 383), argues that in Kosovo the massacres carried out during the NATO bombing might exceed the war crimes in Srebrenica. The point is surely that without decisive NATO intervention, they might have been a lot worse.

¹⁹³ Anatol Lieven, in *Divide and Survive*, proposes, as suggested by the title, the partition of

Kosovo, offering a number of precedents in support of his thesis, arguing that the alternative to partition in the Balkans (he implies this principle should be applied to Bosnia, too) is the indefinite presence of a large external force. He does not explain how redrawing boundaries would eliminate that requirement, either in Kosovo or in Bosnia. See *Prospect* (May 1999), pp. 22-27.

¹⁹⁴ Tim Judah's five-page article entitled, "A short history of Kosovo," touches only briefly on the February 1989 miners' strike, and omits altogether Vaso Cubrilović's paper, "Iseljavanje Arnauta," written in 1937, which recommended the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Albanians from Kosovo. (Full text in *Le nettoyage ethnique*, eds. Mirko Drazen Grmek, Marc Gjidara, and Neven Simić (Paris: Fayard, 1993), pp. 161-185.)

¹⁹⁵ Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).

¹⁹⁶ This option was supported at the outset of NATO air strikes by Mary Kaldor (see *Guardian* [25 March 1999], p. 18), Martin Bell, David Owen, and Michael Rose, amongst others, and *The Herald* lead article "Air strikes will not save Kosovars," p. 22.

¹⁹⁷ Bianca Jagger and Timothy Garton Ash of St. Antony's College, Oxford, both supported the immediate dispatch of ground troops to Kosovo from diametrically opposed positions, Jagger arguing from the Albanian side, and Garton Ash supporting the partition of Kosovo, a solution which would benefit the Serbs at the cost of the Kosovar Albanians.

¹⁹⁸ The morality of bombing civilians from 15,000 feet without putting in soldiers on the ground was questioned by a number of observers, including members of the Serb lobby.

¹⁹⁹ On Channel 4 News, General Rose wondered "whether we have thought this thing through" (24 March 1999).

²⁰⁰ General Sir Michael Rose, "NATO must head for the door marked exit," in *The Sunday Times* (18 April 1999), p. 19.

²⁰¹ The verdict on General Rose's tour in Bosnia in 1994 has not yet been passed, although there has been considerable criticism of his record there. See, for instance, "Army," 23 February 1995, *Hansard*, Commons, cols. 525530, which raises serious questions about General Rose's tour in Bosnia, including his unsubstantiated allegations of the massive ethnic cleansing of Serbs in Goražde in 1992. See also a critique of his book, Michael Rose, *Fighting for Peace*, by Carole Hodge in *Sociological Imagination*, Vol. 36, No. 2/3 (1999), pp. 205-208.

²⁰² Since the NATO action in Kosovo, General Rose has continued to express his views through public speaking engagements.

²⁰³ See the debate, "Army," *Hansard*, Commons, cols. 525-530 and John Simpson's account of his film in his book, John Simpson, *Strange Places, Questionable People*, (New York: Macmillan, 1998), p.442, where, however, he omits entirely the Goražde controversy involving General Rose.

²⁰⁴ Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, put it more bluntly: "There

has been carping from the media. They expected instant results and no one to get hurt. During the Second World War, they would have said, 'Mr. Hitler criticized the bombing from his bunker today.' They would have said that the concentration camps were not there when the war began, so they were really our responsibility. Some of that is worrying." See "Kosovo," 17 June 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 650.

²⁰⁵ Member of Parliament and former BBC correspondent, Ben Bradshaw, made an interesting point in relation to John Simpson's weekly column in *The Sunday Telegraph*: "It was always a rule at the BBC that correspondents did not write opinionated pieces for the newspapers because that damaged their impartiality and credibility in doing the job that the license fee payers pay them to do for the BBC." See "Kosovo," 19 April 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 648.

²⁰⁶ ITN News, 26 March 1999. Maggie O'Kane of *The Guardian*, for instance, who had written some penetrating pieces from Serbia at the outset of the NATO bombing, was amongst the majority expelled.

²⁰⁷ Foreign Secretary Robin Cook's challenge to foreign journalists in Serbia to make their own investigations in search of the truth when in Kosovo do not appear to have been taken up.

²⁰⁸ Downing Street had made a point of not apologizing for its earlier criticism of Simpson's reporting, although the Prime Minister's private office did write a mollifying letter to Simpson. The fact that Simpson had threatened legal action may have been a factor there! See *The Sunday Telegraph* (9 May 1999), p. 1.

²⁰⁹ In an article entitled "The strangest war I've ever reported on," in *The Sunday Telegraph* (28 March 1999), p. 25. On the front page of *The Sunday Telegraph* was a photo of Simpson with the caption "I'm sorry, but the war isn't working."

²¹⁰ Many viewers would also have been moved by Simpson's description of the Belgraders' concern to shut out every chink of light before the onset of the bombing raids and even recall, for older viewers, memories of the blackout in World War II Britain. This, in turn, would be likely to evoke a feeling of solidarity with a nation which was alleged to have been among Britain's closest allies in that war.

²¹¹ Simpson claimed that many of the journalists based in Sarajevo, who were "young and inexperienced," lined up not with the people of Sarajevo but with the Bosnian government. See Simpson, *Strange Places*, p. 440.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 444.

²¹³ Not surprisingly, General Sir Michael Rose had a different view of Simpson's position: "It was a breath fresh air for me to spend time with a journalist who had such an objective approach to the war." See Rose, *Fighting for Peace*, p. 235.

²¹⁴ According to Simpson, Ophuls regarded the situation as "Munich all over again," commenting that there was "no need for a sense of proportion where evil is concerned." *Ibid.*, p. 447.

²¹⁵ Simpson, *Strange Places*, p. 441.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 445.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 440.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 437.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 442-3.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 435.

²²¹ Borne out by the accounts of inmates, for instance, see Rezak Hukanović, *The Tenth Circle of Hell: A Memoir of Life in the Death Camps of Bosnia* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), and by the findings of the Commission of Experts and the International Criminal Tribunal at The Hague. There were also camps run by the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian government but they (especially the latter) were in a distinct minority.

²²² Simpson, *Strange Places*, p. 439.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 439. At one point, Simpson manages to spell all three of the Bosnian leaders' names wrongly!

²²⁴ *Newsnight*, BBC 2, 14 and 15 February 1994.

²²⁵ An allegation spread around by a number of Serb sympathizers at the time, which was never proved.

²²⁶ Simpson, *Strange Places*, p. 445.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 434, 439. Simpson referred to the "ugly little wars" and "this nasty little siege in Sarajevo," managing simultaneously both to reduce the significance of the war and to diminish the people caught up in it.

²²⁸ BBC News, 14 April 1999. Published on the Internet at 13:46 GMT as "Simpson answers your questions."

²²⁹ Šešelj also endorsed the ethnic cleansing of all minorities, including Hungarians and Romanians, and demanded that ethnic Albanians, who form the majority in Kosovo, be expelled

²³⁰ The question of drawing up a UN Security Council resolution to enforce the "no fly zone" introduced three months earlier was also being discussed at international level, and received support from the Americans, the UN Secretary General, and the French government. The British government had a not insignificant part in the postponement of both military intervention and enforcement of the "no fly zone." See reports in *The European* (23-27 December 1992), p. 1; *The Times* (2 January 1993), p. 1; and the *International Herald Tribune* (2-3 January 1993), p. 1.

²³¹ The Croatian army had grown substantially stronger by this time, with US and other support.

²³² A situation which was frozen by the UN protection force, instituted under the Vance Plan in late 1991, an arrangement originating in Belgrade.

²³³ See Paul Shoup, "The Future of Croatia's Border Regions," in *Report on Eastern Europe* (29 November 1991), pp. 26-33. Even in the district of Benkovac, for instance, which became one of the central focus points of the Serb offensive, Croats in 1981 constituted just over 40 per cent of the population.

²³⁴ A "line in the sand" was drawn, in the event of further Serb aggression, by the then British Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, at Goražde, where British troops were stationed in a virtual hostage situation. But Bihać and other enclaves were omitted from the British statement. The following week (one week before the Croatian army attack) Bihać came under renewed Serb attack, and the UN safe area of Žepa also fell to the Serbs. The day after the London Conference, Croatia and Bosnia signed a treaty of co-operation, including a Croatian contribution to Bosnia's defense, especially in the Bihać area. A different signal from the London Conference could arguably have prevented the Croatian attack.

²³⁵ The UNHCR recorded severe malnutrition in Bihać as almost no humanitarian aid was delivered to that besieged enclave for eight months in 1994, during General Rose's term in Bosnia. See UNHCR Information Notes, December 1994. In contrast to this, copious unused UN aid packages were found in Krajina following the Serb exodus. In a BBC documentary which offered an otherwise sympathetic portrayal of the exiled Krajina Serb population through the destinies of three individuals, the narrator (Alan Little) records, at the house of the orthodox priest, "shelves literally full of ethnic intolerance" and books on Greater Serbia. See "Assignment," BBC 2, 21 October 1995. Unlike in Bihać and other safe areas of Bosnia, there were no curbs on the delivery of aid to the Serbs in Krajina and, according to UNHCR records, the food target for all the UNPA zones was generally met.

²³⁶ This was from the Bosnian Serb army, Fikret Abdić's renegade Muslim forces, and from the Krajina Serbs, many of whose troops had overrun the Bihać enclave, crossing the internationally recognized border between Bosnia and Croatia.

²³⁷ The Dalmatian coast had been virtually cut off from the rest of Croatia since 1991.

²³⁸ There has, since the Dayton Agreement, been very little advance in integrating so-called "Herceg Bosna" into mainstream Bosnia and Hercegovina.

²³⁹ Nor did it justify Tudjman's domestic policies, which resulted in a strangulation of the democratic process, unalleviated by the events of 1995.

²⁴⁰ It is interesting that former EU envoy, Carl Bildt in his book, *Peace Journey*, castigates the Croats for the rout from Krajina considerably more than the Serbs for the fall of Srebrenica. See Bildt, *Peace Journey*, pp. 73-80. See also Carole Hodge, "Dvije knjige o Bosni," in *Forum Bosnae* (Sarajevo, 1999), pp. 341-347 and Hodge's review of Bildt's book in *Sociological Imagination*, Vol. 36, No. 4(1999), pp 297-301.

²⁴¹ "Kosovo," 25 March 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 544. Wareing, in a later debate, also again recounted the tale of his visit to Bosnia (at the expense of the Serb regime) with John Reid, MP, in 1993 and his discovery of alleged Serb mass graves. See "Kosovo," 18 May 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 958. As earlier, he was unable to offer proof of the victims' ethnic identity.

²⁴² "Kosovo," 19 April 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 607.

²⁴³ Tony Benn, "Kosovo," 19 April 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 563.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, cols. 564-565.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, col. 612. John Maples was later appointed shadow Foreign Secretary, replacing Michael Howard.

²⁴⁷ Bowen Wells, *Ibid.*, col. 562. The Sino-Albanian alliance disintegrated well before the collapse of communism in Albania in 1990.

²⁴⁸ This brief spanned both the Croatian and Bosnian wars, from 1991 to 1995.

²⁴⁹ "Kosovo," 18 May 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 936.

²⁵⁰ For instance, the House of Commons was only recalled in September 1992 after the crucial decision to commit British troops on an undefined mandate to the Bosnian war zone had been made. And in 1995, at the time of the UN hostage crisis in Bosnia, policy had again been decided before reference to the House (30 May 1995).

²⁵¹ "Kosovo," 19 April 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 619. Hogg recommended appeasement of Milošević, in settling for a compromise, and probable partition of Kosovo.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, cols. 597-600.

²⁵³ Alan Clark, *Ibid.*, col. 548.

²⁵⁴ Bowen Wells, *Ibid.*, col. 560; and George Galloway, *Ibid.*, col. 595.

²⁵⁵ Peter Viggars, for instance, refers to "the mediaeval horrors of what is happening in Kosovo." See *Ibid.*, col. 630. George Galloway also spoke of "centuries-old hatreds and enmities of the Balkans" claiming that the NATO operation was "unbalanced and disproportionate" and would "pour petrol on already dangerous flames." Galloway, who claimed experience of the Balkans based on a short spell as president of the British Albanian society, a distant trip to Kosovo, and a book he had written on Romania, proposed sending in tens of thousands of Russian troops to police the peace in Kosovo. He did not expand on how that peace would be reached.

²⁵⁶ This argument, used extensively by Serb lobbyists, was valid but only in the short term.

The following year Milošević was ousted from power. A number of Balkan specialists also adopted this argument. Senior lecturer in Serbian and Croatian studies at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) at London University, Celia Hawkesworth, claimed that the bombing wouldn't work: "I would have said that it would homogenize the country and undermine all those people who have been opposed to Slobodan Milošević in increasingly large numbers. I would have told [Tony Blair] ... of the symbolic significance of Kosovo in Serbian history and culture which Milošević has exploited." According to Professor Hawkesworth, the academics and others in Serbia who had spoken out against the regime in power felt frustrated, saying their task had been put back years. Stephanie Schwandner Sievers, a specialist in Albanian studies also at SSEES concurred. See "Serb experts get the cold shoulder," in *The Guardian*, (25 May 1999), p. 10. These academic Balkan specialists gave no indication of how long it would have taken for the Serbian opposition to succeed in its task, and what the Kosovar Albanians under attack were supposed to do meantime.

²⁵⁷ "Kosovo," 19 April 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, cols. 602-3.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, col. 366.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, col. 643. John Keegan, in fact, was one of few early critics of government strategy who later admitted he had been wrong! See *The Sunday Telegraph* (6 June 1999), p. 33.

²⁶⁰ Many Members put this view forward. However, Robin Cook responded that the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, had commented that the international revulsion "against the violent repression of minorities will and must take precedence over concerns of State sovereignty." See "Kosovo," 19 April 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 886. John Randall is a former student at SSEES, where he studied Serbo-Croat for five years.

²⁶¹ Few, however, put the situation as graphically as James Wyllie, Senior Lecturer in International Relations and Senior Associate, at the Scottish Center for International Security, University of Aberdeen. Wyllie asked why not give war a chance? In discussion later, Wyllie admitted that such an option would probably result in Serbian supremacy in the region, which he saw as a necessary, and not necessarily undesirable, consequence of the balance of power. Conversation with the author, 29 April 1999, Aberdeen.

²⁶² "Kosovo," 19 April 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, cols. 574-5.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, col. 611.

²⁶⁴ Alice Mahon is MP for Halifax, Yorkshire.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, col. 578.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, cols. 616-617.

²⁶⁷ In fact, as early as 1992, much of Serbia's production capacity was converted for military purposes, compounding the difficulties already resulting from the UN sanctions.

²⁶⁸ Alice Mahon also had her own half-hour phone-in program on Sky TV where she claimed

that over a million Serbs had been ethnically cleansed from Krajina in 1995. Her claim to support from constituents was challenged by one who said she was a Labor Party member but, as many other Halifax constituents who supported the NATO bombing, was not represented by Mahon. Mahon retorted that she had no evidence for that assertion. See Sky News, 11 May 1999. Neither, presumably, had the Halifax MP evidence to support her contention that 30 per cent of the 1,200 killed by NATO bombs in Yugoslavia, and 40 per cent of the 5,000 injured, were children. See "Kosovo," 26 May 1999, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 364.

²⁶⁹ See, for instance, *Zasluzujemo bolje*, Vojislav Kostunica, Nezavisne Novine, Banja Luka, 16 June 2000.

²⁷⁰ The Lord Byron Foundation for Balkan Studies conference in Belgrade, 24-26 January, 2000, concluded that the "principle of state sovereignty, and the rule of law itself, has been subverted in the name of humanitarian intervention," and that it was "a disturbing revelation of the West's moral and cultural decay." Participants included Sir Alfred Sherman, Srdja Trifković, Michael Stenton, Thomas Fleming, and former Canadian ambassador to Yugoslavia, James Bissett. (*Liberty*, 10 March, 2000.)

²⁷¹ The position of the Serb lobby in Britain after the NATO action in Kosovo was demonstrated clearly during the visit to London in March 2000 by Father Sava Janjić, aide to Bishop Artemije, who was booed and jeered at the St. Sava church. Fr Sava had accused the Yugoslav army of removing from Kosovo property stolen from Albanians. (Bob Djurdjević, *New World Order and the Serbs - Part XXXIV*, 30 May 2000, <www.beograd.com> and *Večernje Novosti*, 29 March 2000.)

²⁷² The Srebrenica Report, for instance, contained information with serious implications for British policy in Bosnia, both at political level and within the military. (Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 53/35 (1998), Srebrenica Report).

²⁷³ At a conference at the School for Policy Studies, Bristol University, Economic Reconstruction and Development Policies in former Yugoslavia, 27-28 June 1996, several contributors argued for urgent international intervention to rescue the Yugoslav economy. (See footnote 98.)

²⁷⁴ Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjić argued this thesis in a speech at the London School of Economics and Political Science in April 2002, suggesting that some of the funds spent on the NATO security operations in Bosnia and Kosovo could be better spent in Serbia which, he argued, was the power best placed to lead in regional reintegration. (Serbia on the Path to Europe, Zoran Djindjić, London School of Economics, 23 April 2002.)

²⁷⁵ According to Charles Crawford, British Ambassador to the Former Republic of Yugoslavia, "With the Serb Government you have got a team of people who by any standards, and certainly by any transition economy standards, are very impressive people... capable of operating at world-class levels" (Evidence before the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, Fourth Report: Government policy towards the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the wider region following the fall of Milošević, March 2001 (224-225)). See also the British government country profile on Yugoslavia: "With the removal of the

Milošević regime and the lifting of international sanctions Yugoslavia is in a position to rehabilitate its economy and re-establish its position at the economic heart of South Eastern Europe <www.tradepartners.gov.uk/yugoslavia>

²⁷⁶ Foreign Affairs Committee, 1 March 2000 (210,224). Evidence by Charles Crawford, British Ambassador to the Former Republic of Yugoslavia.

²⁷⁷ Unlike the United States, for instance, the EU posed almost no conditionality on its funding to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, despite the lack of cooperation with the UN Criminal Tribunal at The Hague, and the continued domination of the army, judiciary and other organs by remnants of the Milošević regime. "There is conditionality though I do not think it is quite as mechanistic or as precisely calibrated as the conditionality which, for example, the US applies..." [EC Commissioner Chris Patten, Foreign Affairs Committee Fourth Report, *Ibid*, March, 2001 (238)].

²⁷⁸ Brendan Simms discusses the role of British academics in Chapter 6 of *Unfinest Hour* (Allen Lane, 2001).

²⁷⁹ It was argued that NATO military intervention had violated the UN and NATO charters, created a dangerous precedent in international relations, alienated East European states and Russia, and was detrimental to the work of the Serbian opposition. Signatories included members of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, the Lord Byron Foundation, Quaker groups and academics.

²⁸⁰ Wendy Bracewell, Director of the Centre for South-East European Studies, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, and Bob Jiggins of the Research Unit in South East European Studies at the University of Bradford.

²⁸¹ See, for instance James Gow, *Triumph of the Lack of Will* (Hurst, 1997).

²⁸² Some prominent academics and other commentators, such as Michael Ignatieff, however, changed sides at that stage.

²⁸³ Peter Gowan, University of North London. "Placing Serbia in context," Peter Gowan, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 1, No. 2, November 1999.

²⁸⁴ "Strategic players in tactical retreats," Brendan Simms, *The Times Higher*, 23 November, 2001, p.20.

²⁸⁵ In the *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vassilis Fouskas commented in an editorial that "NATO's campaign against Serbia was bound to violate international law and border on double-standard politics .., the main effect of the first 'humanitarian war' in history was to increase civilian casualties, intensify the ethnic cleansing... and destroy Yugoslavia's infrastructure... Europe has... now to display prowess at building bridges, factories and hospitals rather than destroying them," *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 1, No. 2, p.117-118.

²⁸⁶ Institute for Strategic and Development Studies-Andreas Papandreou (ISTAME) and the National Labour Institute, Greece.

²⁸⁷ Serbia at the time was still under the sway of the Milošević regime. Milan Milutinović, accused by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) of war crimes and crimes against humanity, continued as Serbian President; and Nebojsa Pavković, who led the Yugoslav Army in Kosovo, was still a commander in the Yugoslav Army.

²⁸⁸ See *Racism and Cultural Diversity in the Mass Media*, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, Vienna, February 2002, and *Greek Helsinki Monitor* reports.

²⁸⁹ Mytilineos Holding SA of Greece, the largest metals trader active in the Balkan region, signed a 5-year US\$ 517 million deal in Belgrade with the Trepca mines in Kosovo in 1997, and a 7-year contract with RTB-Bor in Serbia which the Mytilineos president, Evangelos Mytilineos, described as "a strategic alliance" (*Mining Week*, 16 May 1997, p.393 and *Mining Journal*, 27 February 1998, p.163 and 13 March 1998, p.206). Greek telecom GTE acquired a 20% stake in Telecom Serbia, described at the time by Milošević as "a lever for Yugoslav economic development." The upgrading of the Hellenic Export Organisation provides investors with insurance against political risk, giving them the edge over other would-be external investors, while the promoting of factoring firms provides trading companies with insurance and facilities.

²⁹⁰ The change which took place on the Croatian political scene after the death of President Franjo Tuđman, for instance, was not conceivable in Serbia where, unlike Croatia, there had been little significant criticism of Milošević's policies in Bosnia and Kosovo, as opposed to his record in Serbia itself.

²⁹¹ This was addressed in a conference held the following year but, unfortunately, with no independent Albanian Macedonian view amongst the 30 or so invited speakers. Correspondence with the director of CSEES on this issue, and on the handling by the chair of an intervention from the floor by an Albanian from Macedonia, did not clarify the issue.

²⁹² The previous week a senior British diplomat had been assassinated in the centre of Athens.

²⁹³ "The Failure of the Dayton Process in Bosnia-Herzegovina" by Sumantra Bose, a Ralph Dahrendorf Fellow at the London School of Economics.

²⁹⁴ Ger Duijzings, SSEES/UCL. Dr Duijzings also contributed to the historical section of the 2002 Netherlands Report on Srebrenica. His thesis is difficult to sustain without a full analysis of the background to the formation of the Srebrenica enclave, and especially in light of the Srebrenica Report (Ibid. 33). the establishment of Serb Autonomous Areas in Bosnia in 1991, and the so-called RAM plan, orchestrated from Belgrade, which involved the distribution of weapons to Serbs throughout Bosnia in preparation for the onslaught on the non-Serb civilian population in 1992 were, arguably, also not irrelevant to the "work of memory," but were not discussed in Dr Duijzings' paper.

²⁹⁵ University of Bradford, 24-26 March, 2000.

²⁹⁶ See WHY - Historical Facts: History of Kosovo and Metohija <[http:// www.why.co.yu](http://www.why.co.yu)>.

Some of the material on the website amounts to pure racist propaganda. See, for instance, the article by John Bums, "Serbs and the West," in which Bums denies the massacre of Srebrenica.

²⁹⁷ There was just one exception, namely a paper on the reanalysis of se-verbs in Serbo-Croat.

²⁹⁸ Out of over 50 associates listed on the ICEES website, none register expertise in the history, politics, or main languages of former Yugoslavia.

²⁹⁹ File Note, 98/179 "Applications from Glasgow University," signed by J.R. Penny, dated 6 November 1998.

³⁰⁰ See, for instance, *NIN*, September 27, 2001, AIM Belgrade, 8 October 2001, and AFP 21 September 2001. Serbian Interior Minister Dusan Mihailović asserted that his ministry had extensive information on the activities of bin Laden in Bosnia, Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia. Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Nebojsa Cović, an apparent moderate who was credited with ending the Presevo Valley crisis, was in the forefront of the campaign, claiming that two terrorist groups, purportedly responsible for attacks in Kosovo, and directly linked to the terrorists responsible for the US attacks, were ready to carry out similar attacks in Belgrade, an allegation supported by the head of the Belgrade police. When challenged, however, the Yugoslav Defence Minister was forced to acknowledge that he had no information on the continuing presence of bin Laden supporters in Serbia. In Republika Srpska, a similar disinformation campaign aimed at discrediting Bosnian Muslims was sharply condemned by UN spokesman in Bosnia, Stefo Lehmann.

³⁰¹ Aim Press, BiH i terorizam, Banja Luka, 27 September 2001.

³⁰² "Osama bin Laden: The Balkan Connection," by Srdja Trifković, *Chronicles*, 19 September 2001.

³⁰³ Michael Sells, "GOP Right, Belgrade Lobby, and Neo-Confederacy Multiple Connections," June 14, 1999, updated July 6, 1999, presents a fuller account of some of the links.

³⁰⁴ Two articles, written just before the Kosovo election of November 2001, in the name of Ibrahim Rugova, leader of Kosovo's Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) party, contained allegations about the Kosovo Liberation Army's links with Osama bin Laden. These articles were repudiated by Rugova, but may have been damaging to his party in the lead up to the elections, and provoked clashes amongst Kosovo's Albanians. See "Il giallo Rugova" by Andrea Ferrario, *Notizie Est*, 467, 7 September 2001 and 480, 8 October 2001, est@ecn.org

³⁰⁵ See, for instance, *Hague Tribunal and Chicago Tribune* taken in by Hoaxters, by Thomas Fleming, *Chronicles*, 1 March 2002.

³⁰⁶ "The American Jihad," by Thomas Fleming, *Chronicles*, 22 September 2001.

³⁰⁷ <www.dixienet.org>

³⁰⁸ Foreign Affairs Select Committee Fourth Report: Kosovo (2000)

³⁰⁹ Ibid. Appendix 27, Annex I

³¹⁰ Ibid. Appendices 32-35.

³¹¹ There were also submissions by non-Serb lobby groups to the FAC. These did not, however, contain the racist overtones or, arguably, the historical inaccuracy, of some of the Serb submissions.

³¹² Foreign Affairs Committee. Fourth Report, 2001 (32).

³¹³ "I am addressing you after six years of struggle for political and military freedom, dignity and statehood. I know that you were with us all the time. That was a tremendous encouragement for us because the Serbs living in the free world are in an excellent position to judge if our path leads to freedom and democracy or back to communist tyranny" Radovan Karadžić, Message to the Serbian Unity Congress, 7th Annual Convention at Milwaukee, 1996.

³¹⁴ Replies are recorded on the SUC website from opposition spokesman for foreign affairs, Francis Maude, and MPs John Wilkinson, Teddy Taylor, Julian Brazier and Robert Wareing. In a House of Commons debate on 4 May 2000, Radomir Putnikovich was quoted in support of his argument of the conditions of Serb refugees from Kosovo by Tam Dalyell, MP, without reference to Mr Putnikovich's function within the SUC. (*Hansard*, 4 May 2000, Col. 371).

³¹⁵ The subject of the *Newsnight* film was the emergence of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), the Albanian guerrilla force in Kosovo. It included, for the first time on the BBC, an interview with a KLA representative. The Committee took the view that this was an appropriate subject for *Newsnight* to focus on, and that it featured an important development in the conflict in Kosovo. Committee members believed that the report might have benefited from the inclusion of a Serbian commentator, although the primary purpose of the report was to present a picture of the KLA and the Committee did not believe that the omission was serious or that it invalidated the report. The film did include sequences presenting the Serbian case.

³¹⁶ Foreign Affairs Select Committee Fourth Report: Government policy towards the Former Republic of Yugoslavia and the wider region following the fall of Milošević, Appendix 6.

³¹⁷ Ibid. Appendix 7.

³¹⁸ Yugo Kovach, for example, writes from an address in Wimbledon on behalf of the Lord Byron Foundation, in response to articles in the media and elsewhere, offering the familiar Serb arguments.

³¹⁹ House of Commons debate, "Yugoslavia," *Hansard*, 6 December 2001, col. 162, and 167-8.

³²⁰ Some to Rome, others to Jail, Teofil Pancić (AIM correspondent, Belgrade). AIM, Podgorica, 9 March, 1999. See also the views of Mirko Kovać reported in *Dani*, 100 (Focus), 26 April, 1999, and a detailed analysis by Andrea Ferrario, *Notizie Est*, 395, 1 February, 2001, "Nero profondo, occasionalmente rosso."

³²¹ "The Greatest Sons of the Republic of Srpska," *AIM*, Banja Luka, 23 February, 1996.

³²² "Radical Politics in East-Central Europe," by Michael Shafir, *RFE/RL*, 15 December 1999.

³²³ "Lega Nord per l'indipendenza della Padania," 14 January 2000, *Museo del Senio*, on the theme: *Il comunismo Russo*.

³²⁴ "Nacisti medju nama," *Danas*, 30 July 2001.

³²⁵ See Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia: the Policy of "Ethnic Cleansing"* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), p.26.

³²⁶ *Hansard*, 6 December, 2001.

³²⁷ *Ibid.* Col. 157WH.

³²⁸ *Ibid.* Col. 162WH.

³²⁹ House of Commons adjournment debate, called by the Liberal Democrat Party. See "Former Yugoslavia," 16 November 1992, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 79.

³³⁰ The view of Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, on lifting the arms embargo was immortalized in his astonishing comment that introducing more weaponry into the area would create a "level killing field."

³³¹ It was in September 1991 that Douglas Hurd first quashed an initiative proposed by the Dutch EC Presidency (supported by France, Germany, Italy, and others) to send an interpositional force to Croatia to stem the aggression. Hurd decisively opposed other international initiatives to end the war until his resignation in June 1995. This policy was finally discarded two months later, when US-led NATO forces conducted airstrikes on Serb positions, bringing hostilities to an end.

³³² This is also borne out by the ethnic ratio of war crimes indictees at The Hague, where the overwhelming majority are Serb, most of whom are still at large. In contrast, all publicly indicted Bosnian Muslim indictees, and all but two Croats, have either surrendered voluntarily or been arrested.

³³³ Douglas Hurd, British Foreign Secretary for almost the entire Bosnian war, frequently cited the Serbs as responsible for starting the war. See, for example, the House of Commons debate following a UN Security Council resolution, imposing sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro in June 1992, when Hurd stated: "The resolution reflects condemnation of Serbia's brutal and expansionist policies under its present leadership ... There was never any justification for that policy. Before the fighting began, there was no threat to the welfare

of the large Serbian community in Bosnia and Hercegovina from either Croats or Muslims." See "Yugoslavia (Sanctions)," 2 June 1992, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 714 and "Bosnia," 29 April 1993, *Hansard*, Commons, col. 1169 where Hurd states: "The Serbs clearly bear the greatest share of the blame for starting the war and for the atrocities that it has produced."

³³⁴ For much of their visit, Radovan Karadžić and his party were accompanied by John Kennedy and John Zametica.

³³⁵ This list, subtitled "Details of concentration camps sites and detention facilities used for the imprisonment or extermination of the Bosnian Serbs," was also made available at a press conference at the House of Commons which, according to Serbian Information Initiative, was chaired by Henry Bellingham MP.

³³⁶ Since they contradicted both the known facts on the ground and the 1991 population census. The data was clearly intended to counter-balance the expected world outrage once the real situation on the ground became evident.

³³⁷ See Roy Gutman, *A Witness to Genocide: The First Inside Account of the Horrors of "Ethnic Cleansing" in Bosnia* (New York: MacMillan, 1993).

³³⁸ Jović, *Poslednji dani SFRJ*, p. 387. Jović records the fierce debate that raged between the Yugoslav Generals, especially Veljko Kadijević, who saw the impending war as one to preserve Yugoslav unity, and Serbian President, Slobodan Milošević, who was more than ready to let Slovenia go (p. 343). As early as March 1990, Jović's diary records: "Yugoslavia can exist without Slovenia ... It will be easier for us with the Croats without them... [Milošević] agreed." (Jović, entry on 21 March 1990, p. 125).

³³⁹ Bill Speirs, then Deputy Scottish TUC leader, confirmed this position, in response to a question from the floor at the TUC headquarters, following a talk by the Tuzla delegation who were, on that occasion, handed a cheque from the unions for humanitarian aid. Campbell Christie, then the General Secretary of the Scottish TUC was, of course, a founder member of the Committee for Peace in the Balkans, initiated three months later.

³⁴⁰ Labour Friends of Bosnia was founded to this end, chaired by the former Labour Party leader, Michael Foot.

³⁴¹ The Liberal Democrats sustained a consistent stand for more effective action, but were neither numerous nor at times soundly-argued enough to make a difference.

³⁴² According to *Glas Nedelje* (28 August 1999), Marko Gasić's father, Mitar Gasić, was a member of the infamous Četnik leader, Momčilo Djujić's division, emigrating to England in 1947. Djujić operated in Northern Dalmatia and Western Bosnia during World War II where, as early as April 1941, his Četniks began murdering Croatian civilians. In one massacre up to 200 people from the Gata area near Split were massacred under the command of Momčilo Djujić. See Judah, *The Serbs*, p.129. In 1947, Djujić was tried and found guilty in absentia as a war criminal, but never extradited from the United States where he emigrated after the war. For details of Djujić's activities during World War II, see also *Zbornik dokumenata*, "Borbe u Hrvatskoj, 1944," Vols. 19 and 36 (Belgrade: Vojnoistorijski institut, 1957); Jozo Tomasevich, *The Chetniks: War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941-45*

(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975); Matteo J. Milazzo, *The Chetnik Movement and the Yugoslav Resistance*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975); Jovo Popović, Marko Lolić, and Branko Latas, *Pop Izdaje* (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1988); and Philip J. Cohen, *Serbia's Secret War: Propaganda and the Deceit of History* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1996).

³⁴³ Gasić outlines in the interview how his study of music helped him to achieve mental and physical harmony, which he directed towards presenting himself, a Serb, as a human and "superior" discussant, tasked with overcoming the demonization of his people.

³⁴⁴ One example Gasić gives relates to a BBC TV interview, where the presenter showed video of burned corpses as proof of Serbian atrocities, asking for Gasić's comment, to which he replied: "Excuse me, but are these people your friends?" When the presenter answered in the negative, Gasić asked how she knew who they were, to which she was also unable to reply. He admitted he did not know who they were either, but he did know that whether they were Serbs, Albanians, Turks, or Roma, they would still be alive were it not for the NATO bombing. Gasić describes how, in his handling of that brief interview, he was able to transmit a number of messages, namely that Kosovo is a multi-ethnic province and other ethnic groups were there which the British public had probably not known about beforehand. These messages thereby supported the Serbian government's position for autonomy for those groups.

³⁴⁵ Gasić was given a two-star rating by *The Times* just a week after the start of the NATO campaign in Kosovo, which described him as a "polished and plausible performer with [an] immaculate English accent." See *The Times* (3 April 1999), p.7.