

Paramilitaries, Propaganda, and Pipelines  
The NATO Attack on Kosovo and Serbia, 1999

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June 7, 2007

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# Propaganda, Paramilitaries, and Pipelines

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By Francesca Morrison  
June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007

*“The light shone by the media is not the regular sweep of the lighthouse,  
but a random searchlight directed at the whim of its controllers.”*

Former British Foreign Secretary Lord Douglas Hurd.

When NATO launched Operation Allied Force against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the late afternoon of 24 March, 1999, American television screens were filled with images of mass graves, rape victims, and thousands of evacuees fleeing the Yugoslav military. Somber reporters confirmed that there was no alternative to war: diplomacy had been attempted, and had failed. NATO leaders had worked with Balkan leaders to find a peaceful end to the tensions at the Rambouillet Conference but Slobodan Milosevic, the FRY President, had refused to accept the terms. He had left the negotiation table and a humanitarian catastrophe was looming ahead.

There are many Western sources that justify the NATO attack against Serbia in 1999 on moralistic, humanitarian grounds; however, there are an ever increasing number of new opinions that are defying these grand narratives and their images of one-sided genocide and human rights atrocities. These new sources discuss pipelines, politics, and paramilitaries, and offer new perspectives regarding the New York public relations firm, Ruder Finn, and how it manipulated the US public, and the US media, into supporting the attack on Serbia and Kosovo, based on humanitarian grounds.

The US and NATO had a different motive for the attack. Their agenda was to establish a security corridor for pipelines to transport oil from the Caspian Sea, through the Balkan region and onto the Mediterranean. (see map 1) This quest for oil would bring the U.S. government into a ring of drug cartels, liars, known terrorists, and armed insurgencies, and may also have jeopardized U.S. national security by installing permanent bases in the Balkans.



Map 1

[www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/balkans.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/balkans.html)

Interviews with Rudder Finn, the media firm in New York, who were hired by the Kosovo Liberation Army, (KLA) acknowledge that the ultimate goal of the KLA marketing campaign was for NATO military intervention against Serbia, independence for Kosovo Albanians, and the re-establishment of a Greater Albania. (See map 2).



Other interviews that demonstrate this manipulation by Rudder Finn include confessions of captured KLA members. They admit that human rights atrocities were being committed equally by both Serbians and Albanians alike. New research into the KLA underground reveals that they have established financial and political networks throughout the world and are supported by politicians, drug dealers, and even Osama Bin Laden. These contacts supply the KLA terrorists with money, weapons, intelligence, or training.

Eye witness accounts from NATO forces allege that the KLA staged attacks for the US media cameras in order to gain US public support for the attack on Serbians. Racak, in

Kosovo, is one such staged attack. The media reported that a massacre had taken place however, when the truth later surfaced, it revealed that bodies had probably been relocated from the region to Racak, and that the bodies were probably dead soldiers. The event was considered staged by experts however, the media omitted to inform the US public that the Albanians were fabricating such genocide scenes to manipulate popular opinion.

Public opinion to support the attack was vital and, hence, politicians and profiteers have endeavored to hide the critical truth that military security was key to the success of the pipelines in the Balkans. Without it, potential investors would not be satisfied that the oil would be safe from sabotage as it crossed the region and therefore could not commit. These investors and corporations were eager to solve the security issue, build the pipeline and share in the profits. Large contracts, worth billions, were awarded based on the US and NATO's attack and occupation of Kosovo. Camp Bondsteel, the largest US military base built since Vietnam, was to be built in Kosovo and other contracts were awarded for other military bases across the Balkans and in Albania. A security platform would be brought to the region: a protectorate for the trans-Balkan pipeline and huge profits for Halliburton and its subsidiaries.

An examination of sources reveals that Serbia and Kosovo were attacked by the US, and NATO, ultimately to ensure access to oil reserves in the Caspian Sea. With Russian and Greek competition for oil pipelines across the region, speed was of the essence to establish routes. So, when the experienced Ruder Finn presented an account of genocide at Racak, in January 1999, that outraged the US public into supporting an attack on Serbians, the US government was grateful for the genocide angle but they already had a plan anyway.

President Bill Clinton's administration had already decided to attack Kosovo. On May 18, 1999, less than one month after the attack, Jim Jatras, a foreign policy aide to Senate Republicans, reported in a speech at the Cato Institute in Washington D.C., that he had it "on good authority" that a "senior Administration official told media at Rambouillet, that "We [the USA] intentionally set the bar too high for the Serbs to comply. They need some bombing, and that's what they are going to get."<sup>1</sup> It was pre-planned that the diplomatic negotiations for peace at the Rambouillet conference would fail on 23 March, 1999, and that the bombing of Serbia and Kosovo would take place, without NATO approval, the very next day. Serbia had declined occupation of their sovereign state in a previous peace negotiation: they would refuse it again.

Paramilitaries, propaganda, and pipelines were critical influences upon the decision by NATO to bomb Serbia and Kosovo for 78 days. Approximately 2,500 people were killed from the NATO bombs, including 557 civilians, and over 12,000 were wounded. Material damage was estimated at \$100 billion.<sup>2</sup> The US government, the Kosovo Liberation Army, international oil companies and politicians were all involved in the decision to bomb, yet remarkably, they all had their own specific agendas, each with independent motivations and long term goals.

The memories of the brutal Bosnian war of March 1992 – November 1995 were still vivid in the minds of the US public and the scenes from Kosovo being shown on the television and in newsprint were the same images of empty homes, destroyed villages, and refugees carrying children and suitcases, that had left 200,000 dead and 2 million

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<sup>1</sup> Seth Ackerman, "What Reporters Knew about Kosovo Talks." *Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting*. June 1999. <http://www.fair.org/press-releases/kosovo-talks.html>

<sup>2</sup> Glas Javnosti, "Milosevic Found Dead in his Cell." *Kosovo News*. March 2007 [http://www.kosovo.net/news/archive/2007/March\\_25/1.html](http://www.kosovo.net/news/archive/2007/March_25/1.html)

displaced.<sup>3</sup> Inspired to help the Albanian Kosovars escape the clutches of Milosevic, whose Yugoslav military forces were supposedly committing genocide and other unprovoked violent acts, the US people chose to support Clinton's new doctrine and the attack on Serbia: they believed they were preventing a humanitarian catastrophe, not supporting a corporate security decision.

The attack on Serbia and Kosovo was needed however, as justification for American soldiers to be stationed in the Balkan region. This was the critical component of security in the region in order to satisfy the fears, and to encourage the foreign oil investors. If the US press and therefore the people of the US had not been manipulated by Ruder Finn, employed by the KLA, into believing that there was a one-sided genocide taking place, there would have been no bombing of Kosovo or Serbia. The attack was created by public relations manipulation and was not for genocide reasons.

President Bill Clinton, had visited Kigali, Rwanda, in March, 1998, and had become the first US leader to apologize to the Rwandans for the failure of his own administration to intervene in the ethnic slaughter of up to 1 million people<sup>4</sup>. The United States generally avoided intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign nations, especially in secessionist issues, regardless of any human-rights issues. Clinton, however developed, a bold new doctrine that urged intervention in order to prevent such crimes... "where our values and our interests are at stake."<sup>5</sup> The US intervened in the Balkans for oil values and corporate interests. Serbia already had allegiance with Russia: the US had no alternative than to build the pipeline to the Mediterranean through Albania.

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<sup>3</sup> Breaking News English. *Milosevic War Crimes*. March 2006.  
<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0603/060312-milosevic-e.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Frank Smyth. *The Genocide Doctrine*. May 1999.  
<http://www.franksmyth.com/A5584C/clients/franksmyth/frankS2.nsf/3f410d0a3f7450d885256b6c00561187/49236a501337c1c685256b7b007906a7?OpenDocument>.

<sup>5</sup> Smyth.

The American Association of Jurists, (AAJ) a non-government association with consultative rights before the United Nations, along with a body of lawyers and law professionals in Toronto, Canada. Recognizing these interests on May 7, 1999, as the bombs of this great NATO action fell onto innocent civilians, the AAJ laid a complaint before the War Crimes Tribunal in Brussels. They charged President Clinton, Prime Minister Blair of the UK, and all the NATO leaders with "willful killing, willfully causing great suffering ... serious injury to body or health, ...employment of poisonous weapons...[all] to cause unnecessary suffering, ...not justified by military necessity, attack, or bombardment, by whatever means."<sup>6</sup> This professional body of educated middle class North Americans sought legal accountability for the NATO actions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), which they perceived as aggressive, and more importantly, illegal.<sup>7</sup>

The AAJ's opinion was one of many heard as the world considered the roles of the US government, the KLA, the media, and NATO in the attack on Kosovo: scholars and historians alike are still scrutinizing the realities behind the events. The immediate reports and analysis' issued after the attack mostly came from journalists and must be considered bias themselves, for the journalists and media were manipulated by the Ruder Finn-KLA campaign too. Also, journalists were not familiar with the historical, political or financial depth of the Kosovo attack. Five narratives; three books, a documentary, a journal essay, and an interview with a Bulgarian student, have been considered in order to understand the manipulation of, and the role of, the media in the attack on Kosovo and Serbia in March,

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<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of FR Yugoslavia. "International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia." <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/icty.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair. "NATO War Crimes Complaint Filed." *Counter Punch*. 1999. <http://www.counterpunch.org/natocrimespr.html>.



1999.

The first, “*Spinning Kosovo: Media and Propaganda in a Post Modern War*”, by Srdjan Stojanovic,<sup>8</sup> a journalist at the London School of Economics, who lives both in London and Yugoslavia, explores the influence of the *new* media on war. He argues that the Kosovo war was the first international conflict to be fought on the Internet, the airwaves and on the television screens, and questions the moral and political aspects of this approach of media war.

In a personal interview with former British Foreign Secretary Lord David Owen, less than a week before the NATO bombing started, Stojanovic establishes that even without the necessary UN Security Council Resolution, the intervention would go on; that NATO had already decided to go to war, and that the traditional media was simply trying to form public opinion by using television reports of Albanians being murdered by Serbian soldiers.

Stojanovic questions the policies of the US media networks that, in 1998, reported that the KLA was a terrorist and Muslim organization, supported by organized crime with “established links with Osama Bin Laden,”<sup>9</sup> yet, in 1999, the same media networks dropped the Muslim reference and exchanged it for “an ally inside Kosovo.”<sup>10</sup> Stojanovic continues to identify, and to place blame on, America’s “bold and inconsiderate actions and conduct [which] undermine the whole international order ...and their flawed US policies [make] media manipulation necessary to cover dubious actions”<sup>11</sup> while solving none of the problems. Stojanovic recognizes the manipulation, however, he assumes that

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<sup>8</sup> Srdjan D. Stojanovic, “Spinning Kosovo: Media and Propaganda in a Post Modern War”, The Center for Peace in the Balkan, 1999, 13 March 2000, <http://www.balkanpeace.org/library/spinn1.html>.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>11</sup> Stojanovic, , 8.

the media networks are aligned with the US government when they were in fact a part of the manipulative plan of Ruder Finn: the government was simply allowing the manipulation to perpetuate because they already had the Rambouillet plan.

Stojanovic's resources include interviews with government officials, including Margaret Thatcher, many monographs from historians, and reports from such journalists as Tim Marshall (Sky News), Brent Saddler (CNN), and Tom Walker (The Times). "*Spinning Kosovo*" is an informed report and concludes that the media are poised to "transform in to tools of propaganda, promoters of dubious national interests [and] fierce proponents of very undemocratic actions".<sup>12</sup>

Although Stojanovic identifies the media networks as "tools of propaganda" he does not illuminate the benefits of such manipulated publicity or that US trade embargos, placed upon Serbia, prevented FRY from employing a public relations corporation: a critical fact which Michael Ignatieff, a London-based journalist, discusses.

In his book, "*Virtual War*," Ignatieff identifies Milosevic's plight of no media propaganda and brilliantly notes that when NATO bombs hit the Belgrade Television and Radio station on April 23, Milosevic surprised the world by inviting CNN and the BBC to broadcast the disastrous event, which killed 14 people, in order to gain some media influence and, hence, popular support for Serbia.

Ignatieff argues that Serbian intelligence had identified the station as a target for NATO prior to the attack because many journalists had started to utilize its technological resources and transmit contradictory images of the situation in Kosovo to the west which would not be good for the US-NATO image. He also argues that Milosevic was playing the same game of virtual war when some employees were ordered, by Serbian leaders, to stay

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 10.

in the building for the sole purpose of having innocent victims when the attack came:

“instead of fighting NATO in the air he [Milosevic] fought NATO on the air-waves”.<sup>13</sup>

By having the devastating images of NATO bombing Serbian civilians broadcast throughout the west by CNN and the BBC, Milosevic attempted to represent a challenge to the humanitarian philosophy of the KLA-Ruder Finn campaign and, therefore, destabilize and deflect Western public opinion to the Serbian side, or to at least discredit the fabricated good-NATO, bad-Serbian, image.

Ignatieff's argues that history is wrought with propaganda and modern wars, like Kosovo, are dependent upon the techniques of modern media. When viewed on the screen, like a video game, full of manipulations and technical strategies, Ignatieff states that media manipulation acts as a blinker on the Western spectators' opinion and creates a virtual war: a surreal experience.

Although Ignatieff supports his arguments with many political opinions, through a barrage of quotes, and interviews with the major players of the Kosovo crisis, which includes US negotiator Richard Holbrook, US General Wesley Clark, and British Prime Minister Tony Blair. He interjects their official agenda reports with accounts from witnesses, nationals, and from members of the international media, including Tom Ricks of the *Wall Street Journal*; Glyn Jones of the *BBC*; and from NATO members, such as Paul Risley from The Hague. He does not explain however, why, once the truth of manipulations and lies, and the reality of civilian deaths and injustice on both sides was exposed, the media did not seek to find the whole truth but instead continued to promote the lies of genocide.

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<sup>13</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond*. Los Angeles: Graphics Management Press, 1999. p.52.

George Bogdanich, a documentary filmmaker from New York, and Martin Lettmayer, a German television producer based in Munich, sought further details about the attack on Kosovo and produced a provocative documentary, “*Yugoslavia: The Avoidable War*.”<sup>14</sup> They argue that the war in Kosovo could have been avoided and implicate Western media sources for their role in, and their perpetuation of, the multi-ethnic cleansing tragedy of Kosovo.

Winner of "Best Social Documentary" at the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival, the documentary exposes the manipulation of news coverage by all involved in Kosovo. Explosive and brutal footage and interviews with renowned journalists, such as David Binder of the New York Times, and scholars like Susan Woodward and Ted Galen Carpenter, explore the reasoning for manipulative propaganda techniques needed to justify the war by NATO.

Lettmayer and Bogdanich’s editing technique is critical as it clearly reveals contradictions and obvious lies that offer a deeper level of understanding of the KLA’s political agenda, of independence, that promoted the whole bloody and painful political strategy of Kosovo. An example of this editing is the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, talking to CNN, in February 1999, claiming 80,000 Muslim deaths in genocide attacks by Serbians, as she reports to the US public the need for humanitarian intervention. This footage was immediately followed by a NATO report claiming only 2,246 deaths and 3,800 missing persons in Kosovo, including all ethnic groups. Albright had no evidence to support her claim, yet the media were broadcasting it as fact, without research or collaborating facts, which is supposedly a part of their responsibility.

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<sup>14</sup> “*Yugoslavia: The Avoidable War*”, produced by George Bogdanich and Martin Lettmayer, 3 hours, Films for the Humanities and Sciences, 2002, videocassette.

This documentary agrees that the media played a critical role for the Clinton administration by manipulating them, through images and distorted facts, to believe that there was genocide being committed in Kosovo by the Serbs only. The documentary is enriched with resources from NATO documents, interviews with Sir Michael Rose (former Military Correspondent), and former Pentagon Chief of Staff General Colin Powell. It proves many tragedies, not before mentioned, such as the US involvement in the Racak tragedy and the extreme illegal actions the Muslim leaders took there in order to win the media war against Serbia.

The documentary's argument is that the media was critical to the perception of good Albanians over evil Serbians and, therefore, responsible for creating a bias against the Serbians in Kosovo. The US, NATO, Serbian, and Muslim leaders were victims and perpetrators alike: Serbs murder Albanians, US stealth bombers destroyed civilian trains and murdered Serbians, and Albanians dress their dead militia in civilian clothes to imply unjustified murder by Serbs. Each side claims innocence and points to the next while people are deceived in order to justify huge profits from the oil in the Caspian Sea.

Lettmayer and Bogdanich's documentary clearly exposed the thesis that all parties were guilty of foul play in the war in Kosovo, and that the Clinton administration did not attack Kosovo for humanitarian reasons, however, like most narratives on the subject, they omitted to explain that the reason for the attack was to establish US and NATO troops in the region as a protectorate for Caspian oil.

Bulent Gokay, a Senior lecturer at Kelle University, makes this connection and also explains that the dismantling of the USSR, in 1991, released the oil-rich nations around the Caspian Sea from Russian grip and, therefore, transformed global politics. Gokay

acknowledges that “a race has begun amongst the powerful transnational corporations of the world”<sup>15</sup> and that “the US administration sees its military might as a trump card ...over its rivals in the struggle for political hegemony and resources.”<sup>16</sup>

Gokay does not establish the willingness of the US to use this military “trump card” as a deterrent for terrorists along the AMBO pipeline. However, the US Secretary of Energy, Bill Richardson, acknowledged the security issue in November of 1998, when he said “this is about America’s energy security...we’ve made a substantial political investment in the Caspian and it’s very important to us that both the pipeline map and the politics come out right.”<sup>17</sup> US military presence was going to ensure the investments of the pipeline and politics came out right.

Other forms of investments were also coming from the US. In her book, “*Be Not Afraid For You Have Sons In America*,” Stacy Sullivan, a thirty-six-year-old journalist who reported on the Balkan wars for *Newsweek*, reveals an entire network, based in New York, that raises millions of dollars every year for the KLA. In interviews with Albanian Kosovars, who are now US citizens, Sullivan uncovered the plan that “... the West will come round to the idea of a democratic and independent Kosovo...we collect \$365 million dollars a year in the United States alone” says Harry Bajraktari, who sells real estate in New York. This money buys Radio Shack walkie-talkies, US army surplus clothing, and US-made high powered sniper rifles which he transports via Albania, to his family clan, for the guerrillas, in Kosovo.<sup>18</sup>

Although Sullivan misses the oil connection, she reveals critical details regarding

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<sup>15</sup> Gokay, Bulent, “Introduction: oil, war and geopolitics from Kosovo to Afghanistan”, in B. Gokay (ed.), *The Politics of Caspian Oil*, Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2001, 6.

<sup>16</sup> Gokay, 9.

<sup>17</sup> George Monbiot, “A discreet Deal in the Pipeline.” The Guardian Newspapers Limited, February 15, 2001, page 24 [http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?\\_m=10a7e20a6490880248bbcea64065336](http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?_m=10a7e20a6490880248bbcea64065336)

<sup>18</sup> *US News and World Report*, 03/01/99, vol. 126 issue 8, P42, 2/3P, 1c

the political network of the group, which, headed by Florin Krassniqi, an Albanian who fled Kosovo in 1988 and who actively lobbies powerful American politicians to support the Albanian struggle against Serbia. Both Wesley Clark and Richard Holbrooke, and some of Washington's most powerful politicians, recently attended one of their fundraising events, in 2005, which raised \$30 million, money which was used for lobbying efforts. The KLA know that to get independence in Kosovo, they need the influence of US Senators.

The role of politicians was also prevalent in Lettmayer and Bogdanich's documentary, and Stojanovic's work, but was completely omitted by Ignatieff, who instead discussed media manipulation through the omission of facts, which was a huge issue with the US public. The omission of the Albanian atrocities from the Ruder Finn press releases, assisted in leading the US public to believe that they were the only atrocities being committed. If the people of America had known that both sides were committing equal numbers of killings, they would not have supported the attack on Serbia and Kosovo by NATO, and Ruder Finn would fail their client, the KLA, who believed they needed the attack to help in their crusade for independence.

In an interview with Ruzha Todorova, a student at Western Oregon University, in December, 2005, such a discussion regarding lying by omission in the media arose. At the time, Todorova, from Bulgaria, remembered the media coverage during the Kosovo crisis. She said that channels, such as BTV, the Murdock-owned network, showed the images of dead Muslim women and children: the same images that were being displayed by the Western media, however, BTV also impressed to the public that the total destruction of the Kosovo infrastructure, economy, and civilian life, were the prime goals of the US stealth bombers.

Todorova recalls that BTV openly supported the government's decision to make Bulgaria a no-fly zone for NATO military planes, and that they criticized the propaganda techniques of the Western media. BTV repeated images of the NATO destruction of the bridges across the Danube; the NATO bombing of seven civilian homes within Sofia, the capital city of Bulgaria; and televised discussions about the wealth of, and value of, the precious-metal mines in Kosovo. These arguments, found mostly in non-English reports, were not referenced in the west by CNN, BBC, or even the array of independent stations, yet they were closer to the truth: the war was for monetary gain through resources: they just had the wrong resources.

The US and NATO were not after the bauxite or copper that is prevalent in Kosovo and Serbia. The US and NATO were interested in the Caspian oil and they needed a direct route through the Balkans to run the AMBO oil pipeline. The US federal government had made a deal with Albania: they would support the Albanians and assist in gaining independence for Kosovo in exchange for cooperation with the Albanian Macedonian Bulgarian Oil (AMBO) pipeline, that was to run across the Balkans, through Albania, to the Mediterranean ocean.

There are many conclusions to be sought from this array of secondary sources. "*Yugoslavia: The Avoidable War*" supplied the core truth: that the media controlled the attack on Kosovo and Serbia and that all of the players had some aspect of self-serving involvement. This 'guilt by all parties' acknowledges the critical role that Ruder Finn played, for profit, in manipulating the US media and public.

The media is self-serving and biased and will access all resources to support its own argument. However, the basis of the media itself, (i.e., the journalists), are ironically also



misled, lied to, and manipulated by world politicians, PR agencies, terrorists, and corporations, whom have their own agenda to achieve and know that they need the media's powerful influence over popular opinion, in order to achieve it. Ruder Finn, the Public Relations firm, manipulated the journalists, media, and the public for the agenda of their client: the KLA.

The KLA agenda is to extend their borders into Kosovo, Greece, Macedonia, and Montenegro and regain the territory once held as Greater Albania. They are highly motivated in their goal to eradicate current borders and impose those of the Greater Albania that had been established by the Italians in WWII. The US is willing to support this goal for a Greater Albania, as long as it can achieve its own agenda of running an oil pipeline through Albania. According to Serbian historian and author, Predrag Zivancevic, this drive to reclaim lands has inspired the forced eviction of over 400,000 Serbians from Kosovo by 1990.

The Kosovo Liberation Army, (KLA), whose roots lay in Albania, is reported to have ethnically cleansed Kosovo of 50 percent of the Serbian population. This ethnic cleansing is directed at Serbians, but also at Jews, Roma, and Macedonians. Amazingly, it is also against any Albanians who do not support the KLA's violent actions.<sup>19</sup> Christopher Hill, Ambassador to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, (F.Y.R.O.M ) said, in 1999, "we spent the 1990s worrying about a Greater Serbia. That's finished. We are going to spend time well into the next century worrying about a Greater Albania."<sup>20</sup> Pleurat Sejdiu, a KLA representative in London adds " Independence will not be stopped. How it

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<sup>19</sup> Dimitrije Bogdanovic "The Kosovo Question." *Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts*. Volume DLXVI - Presidium N° 2. 1995 [http://www.snd-us.com/history/bogdanovicD-kosovo\\_question.htm](http://www.snd-us.com/history/bogdanovicD-kosovo_question.htm)

<sup>20</sup> Velika Albanija. "Greater Albania: Concepts and Possible Consequences.: Ed Jovan M. Canak, *Belgrade Institute of Geopolitical Studies*, 1998.

will be achieved depends on the international community. They can make it easy or painful.”<sup>21</sup>

The Kosovo Liberation Army, according to the *Jerusalem Post*, grew out of the Iranian support of the Albanian uprising in 1997. The Iranian Revolutionary Guards, (IRG) who had joined forces with Osama Bin Laden, were supporting the insurgency in Kosovo, with plans to “turn the region into their main base for Islamic activity in Europe.”<sup>22</sup> They established an Islamic bank in the Albanian capital of Tirana and the militant Islamic social structure of Ayatollah Khomeini, a powerful Muslim Cleric with theocratic goals and fundamentalist views.

The IRG were directed to train and arm KLA members and select particular fighters to go to Iran to study Islam, to later return and lead in Albania. In 1998, the *Guardian* reported that the KLA, a renowned terrorist organization, had grown to over 30,000 men, armed with sophisticated weaponry such as anti-aircraft and anti-armor rockets.<sup>23</sup>

Bin Laden is believed to have originally established an operation in Albania in 1994, after telling the government that he was head of a wealthy Saudi humanitarian agency keen to help Europe's poorest nation. However, direct proof of Bin Laden's presence, and support, in the region came in March of 1998 when “Claude Kader, 27, a French national, confessed to being a member of Bin Laden's Albanian network, was jailed for the murder of a local translator.”<sup>24</sup> Kader admitted, during his trial, that he was in Albania recruiting and arming fighters for Kosovo, and that he had left four of his KLA

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<sup>21</sup> *US News and World Report*, 03/01/99, vol. 126 issue 8, P42, 2/3P, 1c

<sup>22</sup> *The Sunday Times*, March 22, 1998

<sup>23</sup> Ben Works. “Articles on the KLA.” *Serbian Network*. July 1999.  
<http://www.srpska-mreza.com/guest/sirius/KLA-Drugs.html>

<sup>24</sup> Chris Stephen. “Bin Laden opens European terror base in Albania.” *Sunday Times*. November 29, 1998. [http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?\\_m=2cd7a287ff394730e33d132de835a3ba&\\_docnum=676&wchp=dGLzVlz-zSk VA&\\_md5=bcf05f5a694c37b330adb2fcd55627d3](http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?_m=2cd7a287ff394730e33d132de835a3ba&_docnum=676&wchp=dGLzVlz-zSk VA&_md5=bcf05f5a694c37b330adb2fcd55627d3)

colleagues in the area, with the same goals. In 1998, the *Jerusalem Post*, respected as a well-informed paper, identified Kosovo as a new Islamic bastion in the former Yugoslavia and claimed the KLA financial and military support “includes that of Bin Laden.”<sup>25</sup>

Soon the *London Times* was reporting that the “Islamic fighters who had caused havoc in Bosnia were moving onto Kosovo”<sup>26</sup> and the *Jerusalem Post* confirmed that the Hezbollah and the Afghani mujahedeen were finally also backing the KLA. Reports showed that Muslims from Albania, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other various countries, were fighting alongside them in Kosovo, and training them in guerilla diversion techniques.<sup>27</sup> Finally the *Washington Times* boldly stated “al-Qaeda has both trained and financially supported the KLA”<sup>28</sup> and reported many border crossings of the Islamic jihad from Bosnia, Chechnya, and Afghanistan.

In May of 1999, US Senator Jim Inhofe warned that if the US was to go into Kosovo and support the KLA that they would be fighting alongside a known terrorist organization and would become partners of a sort with Osama Bin Laden.<sup>29</sup> Sadly, the US federal government was blinded by the pipeline race and did not heed the warning because in 2001, the CIA were accused, by Belgrade, of directly funding terrorists in the KLA.

Huge financial support for the KLA also came from the drug trade. According to an intelligence report published in 1999 in the *London Times*, up to fifty percent of the KLA's guerrilla war funding comes from drug proceeds. In fact, European and US law enforcement groups recognize the KLA as "a major force in international organized crime,

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<sup>25</sup> Steve Rodan. "Kosovo seen as a new Islamic Bastion." *Jerusalem Post*, September 14, 1998  
[http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?\\_m=8428d da01e1633cb7c8bd1109b18 bbf&\\_docnum=1&wchp=dGLbVtb-zSkVA&\\_md5=0cce3f242337ac37efd9009d47ab85d0](http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?_m=8428d da01e1633cb7c8bd1109b18 bbf&_docnum=1&wchp=dGLbVtb-zSkVA&_md5=0cce3f242337ac37efd9009d47ab85d0)

<sup>26</sup> *Times of London*, November 26, 1998

<sup>27</sup> David Steinmann. *The Middle East News Line*, April 8, 1999.

<sup>28</sup> *Washington Times*, May 1999.

<sup>29</sup> Srdja Trifkovic. "Osama Bin Laden: the Balkan Connection" *The Chronicles*. September, 2001.  
<http://chroniclesmagazine.org/News/Trifkovic?NewsST091>

moving staggering amounts of narcotics through an underworld network that reaches into the heart of Europe."<sup>30</sup> The *Times* continued: "Albania--which plays a key role in channeling money to the Kosovo Albanians (KLA) is at the hub of Europe's drug trade," and that according to Interpol in 1999, "the Balkan Route is a principal thoroughfare for an illicit drug traffic worth \$400 billion annually." <sup>31</sup>

Such support has brought the KLA to financial stability. Jashar Salihu, a former political prisoner who now runs the *Homeland Fund*, the financial arm of the KLA, said "the rebel force opposing the Serbs is better off financially and militarily. I am a person who can buy guns in Belgrade."<sup>32</sup> Salihu, a former prison mate of Izetbegovic, the Bosnian Muslim leader accused of war crimes against Serbians, continues "even amid peace talks in Rambouillet, KLA representatives were booking flights to Tirana, Albania, where they planned to trek back from with Kalashnikov rifles strapped to their backs."<sup>33</sup> It is ironic that while NATO demands disarmament from the Serbians, the KLA rebels are buying US sniper rifles, German anti-tank bazookas, and Chinese surface to surface missiles. It was irrelevant what the official outcomes were, the KLA were following their own agenda: they are determined to removed Serbians from Kosovo, and regain the Albanian territory.

To gain support for any liberation movement in political circles, it is effective and respectable to have a humanitarian cause as justification. It also helps to have famous and respected people supporting the movement. Senator DioGuardi, (R-NY), himself the son of an Albanian-Italian immigrant, is very active in the D.C. social and political circles, and has access to famous celebrities such as Mohamed Ali, the Pope and Jack Nicholson, and

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<sup>30</sup> The London Times, March 24, 1999

<sup>31</sup> San Francisco Chronicle, May 5, 1999

<sup>32</sup> US News and World Report,03/01/99, vol.126 issue 8, p43

<sup>33</sup> US News and World Report,03/01/99, vol.126 issue 8, p42.

the trust and friendship of some influential members within the House of Representatives. It is these friends, such as Senator Dole and Senator McCain, who gave him support to introduce resolution H.CON.RES.358 in 1986. This “concurrent resolution condemn[ed](ing) the repression of ethnic Albanians by the Government of the Socialist Federated Republic of Yugoslavia,” and placed a demand upon Congress to enforce human-rights for Albanians in Yugoslavia.<sup>34</sup>

Bob Dole, the US Senator for Kansas of 28 years and Presidential candidate, is a supporter of Joseph DioGuardi and the KLA. In their support, he presented the same resolution, H.CON.RES.358, for Albanian rights, to the senate the very day after DeGuardi, and later, with fellow lawmaker, John McCain, the US Senator for Arizona, Dole backed a \$25 million proposal to Congress to arm and train the KLA.<sup>35</sup> Congressman Dana Rohrabacher (R-California), Senators Joe Biden, George Mitchell. and Tom Lantos (D-California), who was the first official to visit Albania since 1946, were all strong supporters of the resolution.<sup>36</sup>

Successful donations and continued support inspired DioGuardi to create the foundation of the American Albanian Civic League, ([www.aacl.com](http://www.aacl.com)) in 1988, a pro- KLA group, within the USA, which promotes the Greater Albania plan of border expansion. The league is a political arm established to propel the Kosovo issue in Washington. With DioGuardi as President, the AACL organized 10,000 Albanian supporters to demonstrate for human rights in Washington D.C. in 1989, with Senators Dole, Pressler (R-South Dakota) and Congressman Gilman (R-New York) amongst the speakers rallying for the

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<sup>34</sup> The Library of Congress. <http://rs9.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/D?d099:1:./temp/~bdsrmY::>

<sup>35</sup> Stacy Sullivan. *Be Not Afraid For You Have Sons In America*. St. Martins Press: New York. 2004, 252.

<sup>36</sup> Pipeline News. “Serbia Found Not Guilty Of Ethnic Cleansing.”2007. <http://www.pipelinenews.org/index.cfm?page=bosnia22607.htm>

Albanian support<sup>37</sup>. Congressman Joseph DioGuardi is compensated \$400,000 p.a. to head the Albanian American Civic League and Senator Robert Dole accepted a check for \$1.2 million from the AACL: for his campaign in 1998.<sup>38</sup> By 1999, George Soros, a well-respected philanthropist from Hungary, was even pulled into the humanitarian propaganda and became a supporter of Albanian independence and ally to DioGuardi, who presented Congress with a petition, signed by 40 prominent policy makers urging US intervention in the Balkans.<sup>39</sup>

Croatia's success had been based on the marketing techniques of the same highly motivated, successful and experienced, Rudder Finn Global Public Affairs, whom they had hired in 1991. Based in New York, this international marketing company's success is based on its ability to "develop and carry out strategies and tactics for communication with members of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Senate [and other] officials of the U.S. government...as well as with American and international news media." They achieve this success with the help of "several hundred journalists, politicians, representatives of humanitarian associations and academics to create public opinion."<sup>40</sup> Ruder Finn understands that to gain the military action that the KLA want, there must be popular support in the USA: Ruder Finn was motivated to market their client's plan by the considerable compensation they received: it was a business deal that did not involve ethics.

According to filings under the Foreign Agents Registry Act of the US Justice Department, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo paid Ruder Finn over \$230,000 in 1998 to "compile[d] background materials and disseminate[d] information regarding the

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<sup>37</sup> American Albanian Civic League. "The First Albanian American is Elected."  
[http://www.aacl.com/AACL\\_history\\_fifteen\\_years.htm](http://www.aacl.com/AACL_history_fifteen_years.htm).

<sup>38</sup> Interview Magazine, January 1, 1988, p. 47.

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.meer.net/~fairelection/documents/Prepart6.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> .Source Watch. "Ruder Finn's work for Croatia." 2007.  
[http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Ruder\\_Finn's\\_work\\_for\\_Croatia](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Ruder_Finn's_work_for_Croatia)

Serbian oppression of Albanians in Kosovo to members of Congress, executive branch, and the international news media.”<sup>41</sup>

The marketing strategy chosen by Ruder Finn for the Kosovo crisis was based on a Holocaust style depiction. David Finn, chair of Ruder and Finn, was quoted as saying “In a single move we were able to present a very simple story of good guys and bad guys...the emotional charge was so powerful that nobody could go against it”<sup>42</sup> Another Ruder Finn executive, James Harff, whilst being interviewed by French journalist, Jacques Merlino, in 1999, claimed “I am helping to bring the historical truth.”<sup>43</sup>

“However, when challenged by Merlino that Ruder Finn were claiming that Serbs were ethnically cleansing Albanian citizens with gas chambers, and were committing genocide, without any evidence as proof that what they were screening was even true, Harff replied: “Our job is not to verify information [it is] to accelerate the circulation of information favorable to us, to aim at judiciously chosen targets.”<sup>44</sup> Harff explained, “We had a job to do and ...we are not paid to be moral.”<sup>45</sup>

After the interview, Jacques Merlino commented that through their contacts within international government and press circles, the Ruder Finn team was able to distribute largely unverified stories of Serb atrocities and that their goal was to induce military action against the Serbs, on behalf of the Albanians, known terrorists and drug dealers. The infamous “camp” photo, which Bill Clinton held up as he promised military action against the Serbs if America elected him, showed an emancipated Muslim man, imprisoned behind barbed wire, was a Ruder Finn creation, and a complete hoax.

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<sup>41</sup> <http://srpska-mreza.com/guest/sirius/Albania-Lobbying.html>

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.vagabondpages.com/may98/golem.html>

<sup>43</sup> [http://www.zoominfo.com/people/Harff\\_James\\_40809241.aspx](http://www.zoominfo.com/people/Harff_James_40809241.aspx) The American Empire

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=James\\_Harff](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=James_Harff)

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.vagabondpages.com/may98/golem.html>

The photograph was taken from a videotape shot on 5 August, 1992, in Croatia, by an award-winning British television group from *ITN*. There was no camp, just a couple of angles that allowed Ruder Finn to create a manipulative photograph and label it “Serbian Concentration Camps in Kosovo.”<sup>46</sup> The men were free men: refugees en route. Ruder Finn intentionally misled the American public to serve their client, the Kosovo Terrorist group, the KLA.

The truth is that the US media thrives on drama and the uglier the information, the better it sells. Ruder Finn are professionals at manipulating media photos and reports, creating stories that make a huge impact in the US market, while conveniently also supporting a predetermined political agenda. Racak was one such story. On January 15, 1999, the tragic news that 45 Kosovo Albanians had been found dead, killed in an execution style, hit the air waves. The story had a powerful impression on the public as TV screens, the internet, and the newspapers showed the bodies laid strewn in dirty ditches, unvalued and unprotected.

The American diplomat who authenticated the "massacre" was William Walker, a war crimes investigator and colleague of Oliver North during the Iran Contra affair, who had years of covert experience in Latin American operations before being assigned to Kosovo. After viewing the claimed massacre, Walker publicly accused Serbian security forces of “having on the previous day executed in cold blood some forty Albanian peasants

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<sup>46</sup> Thomas Deichmann “The Picture that Fooled the World.” *What Really Happened*.  
[http://www.whatreallyhappened.com/RANCHO/LIE/BOSNIA\\_PHOTO/bosnia.html](http://www.whatreallyhappened.com/RANCHO/LIE/BOSNIA_PHOTO/bosnia.html)



in the little village of Racak”<sup>47</sup> A few days after the news broke, *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* and French TV stations questioned the absence of shell casings or blood on the clothes and the ground where the bodies were found: there were no eyewitnesses.

The European Union’s forensic team stated that it was impossible to confirm whether this could be labeled a massacre. When an investigation at the scene implied that there was foul play, Rollie Keith, who was a Kosovo Verification Monitor during February and March of 1999, speculated that the notorious Walker may have been assigned by the federal government to assist the KLA in staging the whole event: putting NATO in line for military intervention. It was even suggested by the *Los Angeles Times* that the massacre was faked by the KLA and that the bodies had been collected from the military actions around the region and moved to Racak for the sole purpose of staging genocide. They suggest the bodies at Racak therefore were KLA military members who had been put into civilian clothes and moved into place to stage the lie.<sup>48</sup>

On February 2, 1999, CIA Director George Tenet, gave testimony of a report , prepared by the CIA, which referenced the Serb "massacre at Raçak," as a pretext for NATO intervention against Serbia.”<sup>49</sup> Racak had convinced the American public that the Serbs were vicious aggressors against innocent Albanian Muslims, which was completely untrue. The KLA had been labeled as a terrorist group by the US State Department and had been conducting bombings, assassinations, and ambushes against Serbs in Kosovo since the late 1970s, only reaching their maximum effectiveness in 1998.<sup>50</sup> The Serb forces

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<sup>47</sup> Girard Renaud. “The Racak Hoax ” *Le Figaro*, January 20, 1999.  
<http://emperors-clothes.com/articles/Johnstone/racakhoax.htm>

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.srpska-mreza.com/Kosovo/hoax/Racak/Tiker/RacakFile.html>

<sup>49</sup> Cliff Kincaid. “Clinton And The Kosovo Whopper.” *Post Chronicler*, October 2006.  
<http://balkanpeace.org/index.php?index=article&articleid=14036>

<sup>50</sup> “KLA Finances War with Heroin Sales.” *Washington Times*, May 3, 1999

would respond to this violence with brutal attacks aimed at the villages, and the entire families, of the KLA members, not in actions of ethnic cleansing but simply in acts of violent revenge. Of the 2000 deaths in Kosovo, there was an equal balance amongst Albanians and Serbians<sup>51</sup>.

There are many other stories of Serbian rape camps, torture chambers and the infamous Pristina Sports Stadium of March 1999 story by Jamie Rubin, who served as the assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and Chief Spokesman for the State Department from 1997 to May 2000 for President Clinton.<sup>52</sup> His report claimed that over 100,000 Albanian men had been herded into the Stadium at Pristina. The *Agence France Presse* reported that the stadium was empty, the grass in perfect condition and the groundskeeper claimed no one has been there. Rubin later simply denied having made the charge, however, the grand narrative was never corrected to the public and the West was left to believe that there had been more ethnic atrocities: once a massacre has been declared, it is rarely corrected if untrue.

While Americans are being manipulated by the power of the media, Serbian civilians were getting frustrated with the Western media: so frustrated that they will throw rocks at them to send them fleeing. Most Serbian officials refuse to even grant interviews to foreign-press reporters because they consider them to be part of an international conspiracy against the Serbian efforts. The Yugoslavs say they are fighting a war on two fronts: “against the separatist Albanians and the foreign press.”<sup>53</sup>

The Federal Secretariat for Information in Belgrade issues press kits to foreign

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<sup>51</sup> <http://www.srpska-mreza.com/Kosovo/hoax/Racak/Tiker/RacakFile.html>

<sup>52</sup> James Rubin. “What about the Pristina Stadium Massacres?” *Balkan Repository Project*, 2002. [http://www.balkan-archive.org.yu/kosovo\\_crisis/html/rubin.html](http://www.balkan-archive.org.yu/kosovo_crisis/html/rubin.html).

<sup>53</sup> Isabel Vincent. “International Media under attack in Serbia.” *National Post*. November, 1998. <http://compuserb.com/bosnia/boslie01.html>

reporters to prevent any misunderstandings. “News has become a dirty business” says Sasa Aksentijevis, head of the foreign press department at the Yugoslav Secretariat for Information. “They are proud of their abilities to manipulate information,”<sup>54</sup> says Dusan Masic, a journalist with the leading radio station B-92 in Belgrade. He adds “you people in the international press really don’t know what you are writing about. You buy into the Ruder Finn line.”<sup>55</sup>

The undeniable truth is that public relations firms hold immense influence over the news stories that reach the general public, the general press, and the political decision makers in the United States. As such they invest considerable amounts of capital, employing celebrities and politicians whom lobby and donate funds to gain influence in congress, the White House, and in the media. It is their agenda to manipulate the system and achieve their own goals. Through their influences and manipulative techniques, the KLA-Ruder Finn propaganda campaign convinced the public that the Serbians were committing atrocities that must be stopped.

This support against Serbia offered the USA federal government and NATO the justification for the bombing, on the grounds of humanitarian intervention, and backed it with their own staged event: the failure of the Rambouillet Peace talks. The reality is that Clinton’s administration had long standing political and financial objectives for the attack, and later invasion of Kosovo: oil pipelines and \$4 trillion profit.

Pipelines from the Caspian Sea had been discussed as early as 1991, when the fall of the USSR brought the oil-rich states clamoring for their independence and oil hungry

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

nations rushing to assist, along with their National corporate oil magnates.<sup>56</sup> There was intense competition to swiftly gain oil contracts and to get oil pumping as soon as possible, to the Mediterranean and onto Rotterdam, The Netherlands, for export to the USA and certain European markets. Competition was tight to establish pipelines and tensions ran high as Nations clashed, combating for the best routes, the necessary alliances with host nations, critical security for the region, and the investor's dollars.

Russia and the US were the most aggressive competitors in the pipeline war of the Balkan region. Russia has established projects with Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia: the US was left with Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Albania. This fact is crucial in that this pre-established relationship between Russia and Serbia dictated Clinton's decision that the US would support the Albanians and the KLA, against Serbia because they were already working with Russia.

These business relationships between Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Greece left no alternative for the US except to run its 550 mile pipeline across the Balkans between Burgos, Bulgaria, and the Mediterranean port of Vlore in Albania, going through Macedonia. It would take four years to build such a pipe, at the cost of \$1.13 billion, of which \$930 million is to be provided by international donors, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the US Export-Import Bank, and the US Overseas Private Investment Corporation.<sup>57</sup> This extremely expensive and difficult project will reap huge profits, estimated at \$4 trillion, and has already attracted the oil giants Texaco, Chevron, Exxon, Mobil, BP, Amoco, Agip, and Total-Elfina, and individual oil tycoons.

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<sup>56</sup> EIA International. "Caspian Sea Regional Country Analysis Brief." 2003.  
<http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/caspenv.htm>

<sup>57</sup> George Monbiot, 'A Discreet Deal in the Pipeline.' [http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?\\_m=10a7c20a6490880248bbcca5](http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?_m=10a7c20a6490880248bbcca5).

By 1992, when Dick Cheney was Secretary of Defense, under President Bush Senior, the Caspian oil had already been earmarked by America's most powerful corporations, the oil conglomerates, to which Cheney, and Bush, are affiliated. This affiliation inspired the administration to award Brown and Root, a subsidiary of Halliburton, a valuable contract to provide the US army with global support. The contract included the construction and maintenance of US military bases in Somalia, East Africa, at the cost of \$62 million, and in Haiti, Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo for a total of \$133 million. Between 1995 and 2000, when Cheney went to work for Halliburton as the CEO, federal contracts for the Balkans nearly doubled from \$1.2 to \$2.3 billion.<sup>58</sup> The plan for Caspian oil is well established in Cheney's political career.

The Balkan oil attracted attention throughout Europe and the USA. In 1994 the European Union's Council of Transport Ministers sanctioned an oil pipeline as a part of the East-West Corridor 8 infrastructure, a communication network that links east to west and includes a highway, railroad, gas pipeline and fiber-optic telecommunications line as well.<sup>59</sup> In 1996, when the US Trade and Development Agency contracted Brown and Root to conduct the first feasibility studies for the 850 km trans-Balkan oil pipeline, millions of US dollars were committed.<sup>60</sup> Dick Cheney was the connection between the US government, and 750,000 barrels a day of Caspian oil: an approximate value of \$600 million a month<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Steve Kroft. "All In the Family." *60 Minute*. September 2003.  
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/04/25/60minutes/main551091.shtml>

<sup>59</sup> Michel Chossudovsky. "America at War in Macedonia." *Anti-War*. June, 2001.  
<http://www.spectrezine.org/war/Macedonia.htm>

<sup>60</sup> Marjorie Cohn. "Balkans Pacification." *The San-Diego Union Tribune*. Aug 16, 2001  
<http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?m=112c9f0a9e313fa0a5082afc55336520>

<sup>61</sup> 2001 estimated value

However, it was still necessary to award the pipeline contract so, in January 1997, Edward L. Ferguson, former Director of Oil & Gas Development for Europe and Africa for Brown & Root Energy Services was appointed CEO and President of the Albanian Macedonian Bulgarian Oil Corporation, (AMBO) located in Pound Ridge, NY. In 1999, less than two years later, a portion of the Trans-Balkan Oil Pipeline project, which held a budget of \$826 million, was awarded to AMBO. Ferguson's responsibilities included identifying fiscal majority partners for the project.<sup>62</sup>

By September 1997 the wealth of the Caspian oil was declared public when the *New York Times* advised:

Forget mutual funds, commodity futures and corporate mergers. Forget South African diamonds, European currencies and Thai stocks. The most concentrated mass of untapped wealth known to exist anywhere is in the oil and gas fields beneath the Caspian Sea and lands around it ... The strategic implications of this bonanza hypnotize Western security planners as completely as the finances transfix oil executives.”<sup>63</sup>

This type of announcement was sure to attract public investors and to increase the confidence of the oil producing nations.

In 1998, Cheney concurred “We go where the business is [and] I can’t think of a time when we’ve had a region emerge as suddenly to become as strategically important as the Caspian.”<sup>64</sup> By January 1999, the republic of Azerbaijan, landlocked between Russia,

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<sup>62</sup> Craig A. Brannagan. “On the Political Executive: Public or Private?” *Peace and Conflict Monitor*. [http://www.monitor.uppeace.org/archive.cfm?id\\_article=347](http://www.monitor.uppeace.org/archive.cfm?id_article=347)

<sup>63</sup> *New York Times*, Sept 1997. <http://search.msn.com/results.aspx?q=September+1997+the+New+York+Times+advised%2C%E2%80%9CForget+mutual+funds%2C+++&form=QBRE&go.x=12&go.y=9>

<sup>64</sup> Marjorie Cohn. “Balkans Pacification.” *The San-Diogo Union Tribune*, Aug 16, 2001 <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?m=112c9f0a9e313fa0a5082afc55336520>

Iran, and the former Soviet republics, and estimated to be worth \$4 trillion by the *US News and World*, sold its huge pool of Caspian Sea oil through 16 contracts with major oil companies. Azerbaijan also invited the USA, and NATO, to establish a military presence in their nation, undoubtedly under advice from the oil companies for security reasons.

The Washington Post noted that “with the Middle East increasingly fragile, we need bases and fly-over rights in the Balkans to protect Caspian sea oil”<sup>65</sup> and, hence, Brown and Root received another global support contract. Worth \$180 million, the company was to build the newest US military base: Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo.<sup>66</sup> Military bases brought security, and security brought investors, and investors would bring the financing for the pipeline.

The attack on Serbia and Kosovo was pre-planned by the US and NATO. Bombing on Kosovo and Serbia stopped on June 10 and on June 21, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency (TDA) had already signed an agreement with the Bulgarian government to build an east-west oil pipeline across the Balkan peninsula. Within three weeks the US forces seized 1000 acres of farmland in southeast Kosovo at Uresevic and construction began on Camp Bondsteel. According to Colonel Robert L. McClure, quoted from the *Bulletin*, “Engineer planning for operations in Kosovo began months before the first bomb was dropped.”<sup>67</sup>

Brown and Root employed over 1,000 former US military personnel to work alongside 1,700 US military engineers and 7,000 Albanian locals 24 hours per day, 7 days a week to construct Camp Bondsteel. Brown and Root offered permanent employment to 5,000 Kosovo Albanians, becoming the largest employer in Kosovo. This local labor is

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> [http://dailywarnews.blogspot.com/2005\\_11\\_01\\_dailywarnews\\_archive.html](http://dailywarnews.blogspot.com/2005_11_01_dailywarnews_archive.html)

<sup>67</sup> <http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/soundoff/comment.asp?articleID=308297&source=mypi>

cheap: Brown & Root pay them just \$1-3 per hour, which they justify claiming that it prevents a perversion of the local economy.<sup>68</sup>

The military refer to Camp Bondsteel as the *Grand Dame* within the new and growing network of US bases that span the borders of Kosovo, Bulgaria, and Macedonia, stretching from the Black Sea through to the Albanian Mediterranean coast, they will follow the route of the pipeline, offering it security. Within the fences and watch towers of Bondsteel lie 25 kilometers of roadway and over 300 buildings, surrounded by 14 kilometers of earth and concrete barriers, 84 kilometers of concertina wire and 11 watchtowers. There are 24 hour gyms, retail districts and chapels, a library, and one of the best equipped hospitals anywhere in Europe. This is a permanent base.

In 2001, well informed sources situated in Brussels revealed that "the American administration wanted to lease certain military bases and buildings for 99 years, including Bondsteel the KFOR base in Kosovo, Yugoslav Army's radar base on Kopaonik Mountain, the military airport near Sjenica and additional buildings on Pester plateau."<sup>69</sup> Russian General Ivashov, the head of Russia's Defense Ministry's Central International Military Cooperation Directorate at the time of the Kosovo war, testified in 2004, that the US National Security Council had already made a plan to attack Yugoslavia by 1997, and to install such bases.<sup>70</sup>

The other bases that are also conveniently located near to the proposed route of the AMBO pipeline are Camp Monteith on the Kosovo- Macedonia border, Camp Able Sentry

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<sup>68</sup> Paul Stuart. "Camp Bondsteel and America's plans to control Caspian Oil." WSWS. April, 2002. <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2002/apr2002/oil-a29.shtml>

<sup>69</sup> Beta News Agency. *The Free Republic*. July 2001. <http://www.freerepublic.com/forum/a3b65338e4363.htm>

<sup>70</sup> Andy Wilcoxson. "General Ivashov is Examined by Milosevic." November, 2004. <http://www.slobodan-milosevic.org/news/smorg112304.htm> by Andy Wilcox



in Macedonia, and a CIA and FBI “Balkan anti-terrorist center”<sup>71</sup> in Sofia, Bulgaria.

These bases are to ensure oil-security for the region by using the US soldiers coming out of German bases, diverting them to the new bases in Hungary, Albania, Bosnia, Macedonia, and Kosovo instead. It is impossible to locate all the US bases in the Balkans because “the outposts where they [US soldiers] may be living [are] abandoned buildings or schools.”<sup>72</sup>

Considerable US military force is on the ground in the Balkans, ready to guard the pipeline through the Balkans. During a visit to Camp Bondsteel in 2001, George W. Bush announced that the US military was committed to stay in the Balkans,<sup>73</sup> even though he had already committed to bring them home during his 2000 campaign.<sup>74</sup>

Approximately one year after the bombing of Kosovo and Serbia, in May 2000, the US Trade and Development Agency casually made its intentions public. A report was published claiming that a US pipeline was to cross the Balkans because the quantity of oil coming from the Caspian Sea would breach the safety limits placed upon the shipping lanes of the Bosphorus (the straits of Turkey.) The agency also acknowledged the “consistent source of oil to US refineries” that would provide “American companies with a key role in developing the east-west corridor 8” and would advance the “privatization aspirations of the US government in the regions.”<sup>75</sup> There was to be an oil pipeline with huge profits for the US corporations that had supported the political process.

The NATO bombs, which were never sanctioned by the UN, include the notoriously destructive cluster bombs, which have a high failure rate from the heights

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<sup>71</sup><http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/camp-montieth.htm>

<sup>72</sup> Heike Hasenauer. “Building up the Base Camps.” *Soldiers Magazine*. February, 2000.  
<http://www.army.mil/soldiers/feb2000/features/kosovo3.html>

<sup>73</sup> *San Diego Union-Tribune* July 25, 2001

<sup>74</sup> <http://truthinmedia.org/truthinmedia/Bulletins2001/tim2001-8-1.html>

<sup>75</sup> George Monbiot. “A Discreet Deal in the Pipeline.”

NATO dropped them, and have subsequently become landmines,<sup>76</sup> and did not constitute humanitarian intervention. According to *The Marine Corps Gazette*: “The resulting deaths of thousands of Serbian soldiers, civilians, and Kosovar Albanians and the displacement of hundreds of thousands more can hardly be considered as a victory for humanitarianism.”<sup>77</sup>

The fighting still may not yet be over because Kosovo has not yet gained its independence. In 2005, Florin Krasniqi, a Kosovo-Albanian roofer who lives in New York and smuggles weapons and supplies to the KLA, told *60 Minutes* that he would continue to run guns to Kosovo till they do [gain independence]. He also said that “if we don’t get independence, there will be another war. Probably in a year or so. We were capable of luring NATO into our war, so I think we’ll be capable of pushing the UN out if we need to.”<sup>78</sup>

The attack on Kosovo and Serbia by the US and NATO has been exposed here as a quest for Caspian oil by the US federal government. This particular quest, as there are others, has brought the government into a ring of drug cartels, liars, known terrorists, and armed insurgencies and may have also jeopardized US national security by installing permanent bases in the region.

As frustration grows for Kosovo independence, there has been increasing Muslim violence that, since November 2002, according to NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson, required “the forces of the Atlantic alliance [to] cooperate with Serbian forces against "terrorist" activities in southwestern Serbia.”<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Joost Hiltermann. “Arms in Serbia.” *Human Rights Watch*. May, 1999.  
<http://hrw.org/english/docs/1999/05/11/serbia915.htm>

<sup>77</sup> The Financial Times, November 30th 2006. USA edition 2.p4.  
[http://cougar.wou:2080/universe/document?\\_m=b7ea0cb45ef](http://cougar.wou:2080/universe/document?_m=b7ea0cb45ef)

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/03/18/60minutes/main681562.shtml>

<sup>79</sup> “NATO pledges Cooperation with Serbs against Terrorists.”  
<http://www.b-info.com/tools/miva/newsview.mv?url=news/2000-11/text/nov30.rfe..> 30 November 2000.

Such terrorist activities in Kosovo are foreseeable, however, it is alarming that there maybe an Albanian Muslim insurgency surfacing within the US because they have not received their independence. According to FBI director Robert Mueller, on May 7, 2007, US federal agents broke the *Fort Dix Six* before the “alleged Muslim terrorists launched their murderous attack on the military installation.”<sup>80</sup> Four of the six men are ethnic Albanians; one was a sniper in the Kosovo war. As the *Financial Times* put it “Now the biggest threat to a fragile peace in the Balkans comes from Albanian extremism.” Is this the war that Krasniqi threatened in 2005?

With such concerns is it feasible to grant Kosovo independence? Since 9/11, attitudes have changed towards known Muslim terrorists such as the KLA and since Spain, France, and England have all recently experienced homegrown terrorist actions, do they want to encourage Muslim states within their boundaries?

On this quest for Caspian oil the US government jeopardized the national security of the USA by affiliating with the KLA terrorists. They also allowed the American people to be manipulated by the media to support a corporate agenda and even bombed a sovereign nation for 78 days, killed 2,500 people and displaced millions in order to justify establishing new US bases across the Balkan region to protect their private oil pipeline.

The deceit and manipulation associated with the attack on Serbia and Kosovo is only despoiled more by the demoralizing fact that the US government deceived US military men and women into sacrificing their lives, believing it was for humanitarian reasons, when they were actually committed to arms purely to support private corporate advancement of profit. This fact needs to be understood by all Americans and those involved need to be held accountable.

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<sup>80</sup> John David Powell. “America at War in Macedonia.” *American Daily*. May 2007.



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