

NATO bombings push Russia into military mobilization

by Umberto Pascali

After the first week of bombing of Kosova, Serbia, and Montenegro, the “new NATO” — which will be officially unveiled in Washington at NATO’s 50th anniversary celebration on April 23 — has achieved a goal that nobody would have expected: It has de facto revived the Warsaw Pact; gotten the Russian Navy, after ten years, into the Adriatic Sea; pushed the world toward armed global confrontation; and made the United States the target of hatred by the large majority of nations of the world. The main official target of the bombings, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, far from being weakened, has been able to establish near-total control, and to engender a level of popular support as never before.

Foreign journalists still in Belgrade report that even the rock concerts in the Serbian capital (the yuppie strategists of the new NATO see them as a “penetration of Western culture”) turn into spontaneous pro-Milosevic rallies. The opposition has all but disappeared, and the political process that was leading to a political split-off of Montenegro (which, together with Serbia, constitutes rump Yugoslavia), is being dramatically reversed. The Montenegro leadership had reportedly been given guarantees from Secretary of State Madeleine Albright that their country was an “ally of the West.” Instead, Montenegro was one of the first areas to be bombed. At the moment, there is a credible rumor of a coup d’état or, more likely, a realignment of the Montenegro elite back into the Milosevic camp. Some European NATO members, such as Germany, are promising Montenegro that it will not be bombed again, but apparently without results.

And this is only the beginning. The British are determined to block any possibility of stopping the rush toward global war, and are determined to reach, in a very short time, a Vietnam-style situation in Kosova. The trap is at this point ready to suck the United States in deeper, and Vice President Al Gore is apparently convinced that this is his ticket to the Presidency.

A new Vietnam?

At the moment, the British propaganda machine is engaged in a coordinated effort to get NATO, in particular the United States, to deploy ground troops in Kosova. Anybody who has any sense of the military training and doctrine of the Yugoslav Army, its preparation for irregular (guerrilla) total warfare, knows what kind of a trap has been set. British officials are talking about 100-200,000 ground troops to be deployed into Kosova. All responsible military experts see the imminent danger of rivers of blood as the result of a protracted ground war in the woods and mountains of Kosova. The opening of a ground operation will inevitably broaden the war to the other Balkan countries, as Russian President Boris Yeltsin has repeatedly warned.

In neighboring Macedonia, where the new NATO has amassed forces under the leadership of Sir Michael Jackson — the man responsible for the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre in Ireland — the Serb minority has been fully mobilized, and has conducted violent demonstrations, including bombings of U.S. diplomatic buildings. Greece is on the verge of an explosion, and it has strengthened its traditional links with Russia. Similarly, the Turkish elite is in a state of unprecedented tension. “There is a danger of a world war,” Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit warned in an interview with Russian NTV on March 29. “I wish Clinton and Yeltsin would meet as soon as possible and search for a common policy.”

On March 31, the Russian foreign and defense ministers gave a press conference in Moscow on their mission to Belgrade and Bonn the day before. That mission, led by Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov, had extracted some initial concessions from Milosevic, but these were rejected by NATO. Primakov pointed out that, “inside NATO,” there is a faction that has succeeded in imposing its war on the other member-countries.



The atrocities now taking place in Kosovo are no isolated events, but rather the result of systematic policies of the British-steered global financier oligarchy. Those at the British Foreign Office and the U.S. State Department who are suddenly expressing outrage at the expulsion of Kosovars by Serbia's dictator Milosevic (right), must account for why they have done nothing to stop the holocaust in Africa (shown here, far right: children at a refugee camp during the 1997 war in Zaire), or the Israeli atrocities against the Palestinians (above: a wounded child in Gaza).

Russian military machine is deployed

Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergejev outlined the Russian military mobilization: "Today NATO has not only broken the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act, but also the Founding Act on mutual relations, cooperation, and security between Russia and NATO. In accordance with the norms of international law, we see an act of aggression. In the context of the ongoing aggression, the Defense Ministry has taken a number of concrete measures. The Russian military representative to NATO, General Zavarzin, has been recalled, and so have the officers in the Russian coordinating cell under the Partnership for Peace program. The very name of that program, after the strikes that have been launched, sounds blasphemous. Measures have been taken to raise the combat ability of the troops, the assets of the Air Force and the Navy, to strengthen the security of Russia, our allies, and friends."

Sergejev said that he intends to visit Belarus, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan in April, and to hold consultations with his counterparts in China and a number of Commonwealth of Independent States members in Central Asia, on issues of mutual interest. In Belarus, a joint meeting of the boards of the defense ministries will be held. "It is intended to discuss urgent problems of regional and European security, the state and prospects of bilateral military cooperation with the aim

of enhancing the combat readiness of the armed forces. . . . The Russian Defense Ministry is also considering more resolute measures that will be recommended to the leadership in the event of a change in the situation. I am convinced that those who embarked on this military venture bear full responsibility to their nations and the world community for the most grave consequences for international stability," he said.

Sergejev also announced that for the first time in ten years, the Russian Navy will be deployed in the Adriatic Sea. The Turkish government has already been notified about the passage of Russian warships through the Bosphorous. "The situation is developing at a very rapid pace. . . . We must ensure the security of Russia," he said. The long-standing dispute over control of the Black Sea Fleet between Russia and Ukraine had been quickly overcome in the new situation created by NATO. At the same time, it was announced that "general muster" had been "declared in the Navy," the Moscow daily *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* reported on March 31. "Almost 50 ships have put out to sea simultaneously, representing the combat core of Russia's fleets, including ten nuclear submarines."

Russian Vice Admiral Vyacheslav Popov is commanding "a muster and sailing of the main forces of the Northern Fleet." They are practicing strategic, operational, and tactical missions. The flagship of the Northern Fleet, the heavy nuclear

missile cruiser *Pyotr Veliky*, is taking part, along with the heavy aircraft carrier-cruiser *Admiral Kuznetsov* and a dozen or more other ships “capable of carrying out combat actions in modern warfare against any types of enemy air attack.” In the Pacific Fleet, Adm. Mikhail Zakharenko is commanding exercises in the Sea of Japan, with another dozen or more ships practicing anti-aircraft and landing operations.

NATO factionalized

Commenting on his mission, Prime Minister Primakov stated that, “in Bonn, we became convinced of the fact that, inside the Atlantic Alliance, there is a coordinated line of action to continue the war operations. It is a wrong and tragic decision that Russia will continue to operate to stop.” The Italian press agency Ansa commented that “according to the Russian Premier, inside NATO there is a faction that wants to pursue the war at any cost.” Primakov, in coordination with President Yeltsin, had earlier made several attempts to prevent the broadening of the war. His visit to Washington to meet with Clinton was shot down by Gore (see *National*). He had then requested a meeting of the Contact Group on the Balkans—the United States, Germany, Britain, Italy, and France—but this meeting was sabotaged by the British and the new NATO machine which, more and more, works as a supranational blackmail operation inside the member-countries. He called for a dialogue with the European Union, with the same result. The visit to Milosevic on March 30 was Primakov’s last mission. As Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov noted, this was not just a Russian initiative: The mission had received support from many countries, not only China, India, and many Third World nations, but also NATO member-states.

Said Ivanov: “In the course of the telephone conversations that were conducted on the eve of the Russian delegation’s trip to Belgrade, most of our Western partners, I want to emphasize, . . . asked Russia to secure from Belgrade at least some signal that would allow NATO at least to suspend the military operation. I repeat, at least some signal. Such a signal was received from Belgrade. A very definite signal. NATO’s response is known: a new ultimatum and a further escalation of the aggression.”

Strong support for the Russian mission to Belgrade came from the Vatican. From the beginning of the NATO bombings, Pope John Paul II personally had promoted a series of initiatives aimed at securing at least an “Easter cease-fire.” The Pope convoked the ambassadors of NATO and UN Security Council countries, to push the idea of a cease-fire, and had even sent his “Foreign Minister,” Msgr. Jean Louis Tauran, to Belgrade. But, in vain. His messages to President Clinton and the other Western leaders were rejected, paradoxically with the “humanitarian” pretext that “we cannot stop the bombing, otherwise the Kosovars will suffer.”

This refrain came while the leader of the Kosovars, Ibrahim Rugova, was requesting an immediate suspension of the bombings. Several media also made public a report

prepared by the CIA before the bombings, which stressed that, in the event of bombings, the humanitarian situation for the Kosovars would become much worse.

Documentation

Why did a British official ‘execute’ Kosovar leaders?

March 29, five days into the NATO bombings, was a key moment in the complex activities of many countries and institutions trying to stop the bombings before it was too late. In a series of official and unofficial consultations and diplomatic steps, the Russian government, the Vatican, Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, the Italian government, and government leaders in France, Germany, and many other countries, including NATO members, were trying to find a way out of the Kosova crisis. Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov was leaving for Belgrade with the encouragement of many institutional forces “on the other side.”

Would leaders of NATO countries, including President Clinton, accept at least an initial cease-fire? It was at this point that the psywar and propaganda machine of the “new NATO” was put into motion.

Not surprisingly, the operation works through British mouthpieces. It was the top military spokesman of NATO in Brussels, Commodore David Wilby, who communicated to shocked journalists that the Serbs had “executed” the “moderate leaders” of the Kosovars. Wilby went into the details of how Fhemi Agani, the right-hand man and mentor of the elected leader of the Kosovars, Ibrahim Rugova, had been killed after having been spotted by Serb forces at the funeral of a friend. Also “executed” was Baton Haxhiu, the editor of the popular *Koha Ditore*. Rugova was reported to be probably killed or at least wounded.

On the basis of this “information,” at least officially, the leaders of NATO countries rejected any mediation by Primakov, and President Clinton called for phase three of the bombings to begin. “We will hit 24 hours per day, selecting more and more targets . . . to stop the genocide,” stated Her Majesty’s Commodore. It did not matter that Agani’s family, upon hearing the news, called NATO to say that he was alive, and that many other sources were confirming that Wilby’s statement was false. NATO finally admitted that Agani and Haxhiu were not dead. News wires subsequently said that “the disclosure was likely to prove embarrassing for NATO, which has stressed the pains it is taking to release only the information it regards as factually accurate.” But the NATO escalation to the next phase was now under way, a *fait accompli*.

Rugova met in Pristina with foreign journalists, and stated: “We have to stop the NATO bombings,” stressing that

not only the Serbs, but also the Kosovar majority, was the victim. The next day, Rugova met Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, and restated his call to stop the bombings.

While NATO accused Rugova of not really meaning what he was saying about the bombings, the leaders of the Kosova Liberation Army (UCK) accused him of high treason. But government leaders of Italy, France, and Germany, among others, invited Rugova for immediate consultations.

The UCK: a British asset

Wilby announcement of the deaths of the Kosovars' elected leadership, according to sources, could have much more appalling implications. It was around a year and a half ago that the UCK began to emerge with bomb attacks on police targets in Macedonia (already under NATO countries' military control). The UCK was initially promoted, above all, by British media, namely, BBC and the main London dailies, which started a campaign of coverage and clandestine interviews with the "freedom fighters," insisting that these young men went into action because they were "tired of Rugova's non-violent methods." In the beginning, U.S. spokesmen, such as special envoy Robert Gelbard, had called the methods of the mysterious organization "terrorist."

Rugova and his party, the Kosova Democratic League (LDK), warned of possible connections of the UCK with intelligence organizations, including the Yugoslav Army. The fact remained that Rugova had been elected by a very large majority of the Kosovars, and people did not even know the names or the program of the UCK leaders. But following Milosevic's repression against the Kosovars beginning in 1998, the UCK gained support, especially from outside the country. In the United States, the UCK lobbied the Congress and, reportedly, especially conservative leaders, who began pushing the line: "We have to do in Kosovo what we did in Afghanistan. Let's arm some of the people there, they will do it for us." It did not matter that many of the UCK troops—among whom were many sincere Kosovars outraged by Milosevic's bloody repression—were reportedly involved in the black market and smuggling.

U.S. foreign policy, following the British lead, made a sharp turn under the diplomatic whip of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, whose policy became: Push Rugova aside and promote the UCK. Albright selected as her personal protégé the 28-year-old Ashim Taqi, the "political head" of the UCK and part of a clan controlling an area west of Pristina. Albright imposed him as the head of the Kosovar delegation at the peace talks in Rambouillet, and presented him as the "Gerry Adams of the Balkans," with reference to the head of Sinn Féin.

The UCK, according to many sources, had carried out a series of political attacks against the group around Rugova, pushing a process of radicalization. With the British-Albright support came also, according to sources, military and financial support, including a growing number of "military advisers" for the UCK.

The only obstacle to the UCK takeover was Rugova and his group. This is the reason why, when Wilby announced that the Rugova group had been "executed," some parties feared what the "new NATO" special forces could do to them. Taqi and his people were counting on Rugova to just "go away." In fact, while the Rugova people were being "executed" by Her Majesty's Commodore Wilby, Taqi was being interviewed by CNN, apparently untouched in Kosova. Taqi called for stepping up the NATO bombings.

At this point, the news reaching Western TV screens does not come from reporters or observers, but from "UCK sources" that transmit directly to NATO headquarters in Macedonia, i.e., to the head of the Rapid Reaction Forces, led by Gen. Sir Michael Jackson, the man responsible for the 1972 Bloody Sunday massacre in Northern Ireland.

British in the Balkans

1917: Serbia defends British Empire's 'gate'

The following are quotes from "The Serbs—The Guardians at the Gate," by R.G.D. Laffan. Laffan, a liaison between the British Empire and the Serbian Army, explained in lectures in 1917 why Serbia was a vital ally for the British in World War I. The alternative was the creation of an area of economic development from Central Europe to the Persian Gulf, especially through the creation of the Berlin-Baghdad railway:

The plan [of a Berlin-Baghdad railway] was admirably feasible, and has been put in force almost completely in the course of this war (not quite: for our troops are solidly established on the Persian Gulf and hold Baghdad. . .). If Berlin-Baghdad were achieved, a huge block of territory producing every kind of economic wealth, and unassailable by sea power, would be united. . . . German and Turkish armies would be within easy striking distance of our Egyptian interests, and from the Persian Gulf our Indian Empire would be threatened. . . . A glance at the map of the world will show how the chain of states stretched from Berlin to Baghdad. . . . One little strip of territory alone blocked the way and prevented the two ends of the chain from being linked together. The little strip was Serbia. Serbia stood small but defiant . . . holding the gate of the East. Little though we knew or cared in England, Serbia was really the *first line of defense of our eastern possessions*. If she were crushed or enticed into the "Berlin-Baghdad" system, then our vast but slightly defended empire would soon have felt the shock. . . .

1937: Serbia plotted genocide against Kosova

From a memorandum, "The Expulsion of the Arnauts," presented on March 7, 1937 by Dr. Vaso Cubrilovic, political adviser to the then-ruling Serbian monarchy:

The problem of the Albanians in our national and state life did not arise yesterday. It played a major role in our life

in the Middle Ages. . . . From 1918 onwards it was the task of our present Serbian state to destroy the remainder of the Albanian triangle. It did not do this. . . .

It is apparent that the methods of our colonization policy in the south to date have not yielded the results which we ought to have achieved. This will be achieved only through the destruction of the Albanian bloc. From the military-strategic standpoint, the Albanian bloc occupies one of the most important positions in our country—the starting point from which the Balkan rivers flow to the Adriatic, the Black Sea and the Aegean. . . . Therefore it is an imperative duty for all of us that we should not allow these positions of such strategic importance to be in the hands of the hostile and alien element. . . .

The only way and the only means to cope with them is the brute force of an organized state, in which we have always been superior to them. . . . We are left with only one course—that of their mass resettlement. . . .

The 1990s: the British in Bosnia

From Marko Barisic, "Croatian-Muslim Conflict: The Role of British Agents," in the Croatian magazine Danas, July 16 and July 23, 1993:

Seven months ago, in a routine check-up of a bus on the

route from Zagreb to Travnik, the Croatian police discovered 22 British citizens. . . . They said their intention was to join the HOS [Croatian Defense Forces] in central Bosnia. . . . The British were usually leaders of those groups that, by the way, never started a single action against the Serbs. Instead, those commandos, Croats and Muslims, turned against each other, both sides under British command. . . .

From Ed Vulliamy, "Bosnia: the Secret War: How the CIA Intercepted SAS Signals," London Guardian, Jan. 29, 1996:

Among [American intelligence services'] surveillance targets in Bosnia were top-secret communications between the high command of the United Nations military operation in Sarajevo and the British special forces, the SAS, operating under deep cover. What the Americans discovered was that the UN command was engaged in neutralizing NATO air strikes against the Serbs. . . . A controversial order came over the air from [British general Sir Michael] Rose's command to the SAS: hold off, do not identify the targets, thus neutralizing the air strike. The NATO pilots were shown nothing; their planes came and went, impotent. It was a measured instruction, highly secret, defiant of NATO. . . .

Genocide in Africa: 'No one is talking, just looking on'

by Linda de Hoyos

Dolisie, the third largest city in the Republic of Congo, has been turned into a ghost city with foul-smelling streets. One is hit with the smell of decomposing bodies, and the town has been totally emptied of its residents. . . . Several people died in the clashes for control of Dolisie, but the casualty list was never made public, and only the hovering nauseating odor bears testimony to the magnitude of the human disaster this town of 80,000 inhabitants witnessed. On the streets, the carcasses of dogs have replaced the bodies of the victims of the clashes [between the government and militias loyal to former President Pascal Lissouba]. According to several witnesses, the bodies were never removed. They were eaten by dogs and pigs and rains washed away the rest. Buildings and shops have been burned or smashed. The airport and control tower have been completely burned to a cinder. . . . Only 561 residents were able to find refuge in the Kibangist Church. . . . The

families are awaiting without much hope the arrival of humanitarian organizations.

—*Paris Radio France Internationale, March 21*

The permanent commission of the Council Minister [of Angola] has stated that the humanitarian situation in Angola has acquired overwhelming proportions and can actually be described as catastrophic.

—*Lisbon RTP International Television, March 18*

Cholera is sweeping southern Somalia, where a hospital director said Monday that at least 60 deaths have been confirmed and doctors are struggling to treat hundreds of infected people. . . . Many more people are feared to have died in the drought-stricken countryside while trying to make it to the hospital in Bardera. . . . UNICEF donated some crates of porridge and a solution to fight dehydration, but the UNICEF supplies were not nearly