

**12th CONVENTION - BELGRADE - SEPTEMBER 20-22, 2001**

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# US forces get settled in Kosovo

By Neil Barnett

*The Budapest Sun - April 26, 2001*

The US government is negotiating to secure a more permanent status for Camp Bondsteel, its main base in Kosovo. Currently the legal status of the property is unclear due to the destruction of property records in the war.

The negotiations may provide further evidence of a long-term US commitment to the Balkans despite George W. Bush's election rhetoric.

According to Major James Marshall, a US Army spokesman, "We want UNMIK (the UN interim government) to re-establish property ownership titles.

At present there is a temporary arrangement under the Military Technical Agreement between the UN and Yugoslavia."

There are unconfirmed reports in Kosovo that the US government is seeking a lease of up to 75 years, although Marshall refused to comment on possible future contracts.

The 900-acre (360,000 sqm) base is located near Urosevac, 25km south of the provincial capital Pristina. It acts as the headquarters of the US contingent and logistics base for the US-led sector of the province. Some 4,800 troops are accommodated in Bondsteel.

The size and apparent permanence of Camp Bondsteel has been a source of speculation in Kosovo for some time. Although at present it has only helicopter facilities, sufficient real estate remains unused to build runways large enough for B-52 bombers, which could make Bondsteel a forward staging post for US out-of-area operations in the Middle East. "About 55-60% of the camp is developed," leaving around 150,000 sqm so far unused, Marshall said. The camp has a command center, a hospital, two education centers, three fitness centers, three dining halls, a cinema and two chapels.

It generates its own electricity and purifies two million liters of drinking water per day. Outside the camp's Burger King restaurant, American soldiers sun themselves while listening to Britney Spears and Eminem.

Evidence of an apparent long-term commitment to Kosovo sits oddly with a growing US reluctance to perform the occasionally hazardous task of peacekeeping.

The US Army in Kosovo has been criticized recently for its obsession with "force protection" (i.e. prevention of US casualties) at the expense of the peacekeeping mission. In February, Britain's 1st Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment (1PWRR) was rushed into the US sector to secure the Presevo Valley border area after an upsurge in activity by ethnic Albanian rebels in southern Serbia.

Then in late March, as fighting between ethnic Albanian rebels and government forces erupted in northern Macedonia, the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment (2RTR) was sent into the border area to prevent cross-border activity by insurgents.

In both cases, it was mainly US reluctance to deal with dangerous situations that necessitated British intervention in the US sector. The difference in approaches between US troops and others is clear in Kosovo. British troops patrol on foot, wearing berets and no body armor, allowing them to interact with the local population and win their confidence.

The American soldiers, by contrast, seldom venture out of their Humvee 4x4s, and travel in convoys, with helmeted and flack-jacketed soldiers training roof-mounted machine guns on the surrounding area.

Privately, some KFOR officers are concerned that over time, as the Kosovar Albanians delight at NATO's intervention wears off, the US approach will cause a deterioration

of relations between KFOR and the local population. Bush said during his election campaign that he would review the US commitment to the Balkans and seek to

hand a greater share of European peacekeeping to Europe. But US Secretary of State Colin Powell recently said that there was no exit date for US forces in Bosnia or Kosovo.

# The Balkans: Always volatile and emotional

By Peter Worthington  
*The Toronto Sun* - Sunday April 15, 2001

For those interested in knowing how the Balkans got that way - Bosnia and Kosovo - a rare, three-part TV documentary concludes tomorrow (April 1) at 10:00pm on the History Channel.

Yugoslavia: The Avoidable War is a product of New York's Frontier Theatre and Film Inc. co-produced by George Bogdanovich and German TV producer Martin Lettmayer. Four years in the making, the documentary has been amended as events unfolded, including the Kosovo war and its effects, and was judged the Best Social Documentary at the New York International Independent Films and Video Festival.

There is a minimum of editorializing or unsubstantiated comments in the documentary - unusual for a topic as volatile, controversial and emotional as the Balkans. The segment on Kosovo is of special interest to Canadians, since we joined the war because the U.S. wanted a united front, not because we had a clue as to what was going on, or why.

Canada's former ambassador to Yugoslavia, James Bissett, argued against the war, and history is proving him right. Truth in Kosovo - the Balkans - is cloaked in half-truths and propaganda.

The documentary shows Madeleine Albright, first as UN ambassador and later as U.S. Secretary of State, not only opposing Serbs, but mindlessly endorsing Bosnia and eager for war in Kosovo. She hand-picked Canada's Louise Arbour to be war crimes prosecutor, who had no experience with the Balkans and tended to believe every atrocity claimed by the Muslims.

Video footage shows Albright rejecting evidence that Bosnians bombed or mortared their own people, then blaming the Serbs in order to persuade NATO to attack the Serbs - a ploy as ancient as warfare itself, and repeatedly proven both in Bosnia and Kosovo.

The supposed massacre at Racak, in Kosovo, which lit the fuse for the 78-day air war, has been shown to be a hoax - dead Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) fighters (since given military funerals) were arranged in a gully to appear as if massacred, complete with mutilations and torture - proclaimed by both Albright and Clinton.

President George Bush (Dubya's dad) was also captive of anti-Serb mania, perhaps because the Bosnian and Kosovo sides hired New York public relations firm Ruder-Finn.

## US ADVISORS

Retired U.S. generals were actively involved in advising and guiding both Bosnians and Croats against Serbs in Krajina, massacring and "ethnically cleansing" some 300,000 of them in Operation Storm - mindful of Desert Storm (the same planner). To his credit, Canada's General Alain Forand

defied orders in efforts to save Serb refugees in Knin from massacre.

In conflicts, we -the allies - like good guys and bad guy to be clearly defined. Who is right, who is wrong: who are victims, who villains. White hats versus black hats.

The Balkans don't work that way. The tragedy of the Serbs (apart from having Milosevic as president) is that their public relations was so inept that they were effectively demonized.

From the start, Croatia got clandestine help and weaponry from the U.S. and Germany, despite reviving NAZI symbols (checkerboard flag) of the Ustashe. The West conveniently forgot - and wasn't reminded - that Serbs were first to fight the Nazis in Yugoslavia and at enormous risk saved downed allied airmen in WWII. In Kosovo, after WWII, 80% of the Serb population was pushed out by Albanians. Post-war Albania was the world's most paranoid country - too recalcitrant for even the Red Chinese.

KLA atrocities to incite reprisals by Yugoslav security forces, in turn incited anti-Serb reaction from the U.S. - overriding European reluctance to get involved. The U.S. pushed NATO from being a defensive alliance into an aggressive one. Interviewed in the documentary are the likes of Lord Carrington, Lord Owen, the New York Times' wise David Binder (with laser-like insight about the Balkans), Generals Lew MacKenzie and Britain's Sir Michael Rose (whose proof that Muslim atrocities were committed against Muslims in order to blame the Serbs was ignored.)

In a perfect world, what the U.S. and NATO did in the Balkans might constitute a war crime. But the International Tribunal in the Hague is winners against losers; a conspiracy of silence among 19 NATO belligerents guarantees protection.

What's done is done, but have lessons been learned? Doubtful.

So far, some 2,100 bodies have been recovered in Kosovo (no mass graves), while the Red Cross lists 3,368 missing among all ethnic groups - a far cry from the 100,000 dead initially announced by U.S./NATO.

Canada's former ambassador Bissett put it succinctly and said: "There's no question that Kosovo was an unnecessary war ... an attempt to bomb Yugoslavia into submission that should be of concern to all people ... We have the United States as a very powerful military force that no longer sees diplomacy and negotiations as worth their while."

In retrospect, if Yugoslavia had been left alone, Balkan people would have worked things out with fewer casualties, less misery and more hope for the future. The U.S. blew it - as it often does when it dabbles in areas it knows nothing about.





# Waist Deep in the Balkans and Sinking: Washington Confronts the Crisis in Macedonia - by Ted Galen Carpenter

The eruption of fighting in Macedonia and in Serbia's Presevo Valley has underscored the bankruptcy of Washington's Balkan policy. NATO cited as its principal reasons for intervening in Kosovo in 1999 the need to stop ethnic cleansing and to prevent a wider war. Yet, since NATO assumed control of Kosovo, there has been a massive reverse ethnic cleansing as Albanian nationalists have driven nearly 90 percent of the province's non-Albanian people from their homes. And now the Kosovo Liberation Army and its offshoots have expanded armed conflict into southern Serbia and Macedonia.

Even as the current round of fighting fades, there are ample signs of trouble ahead. By wresting Kosovo from Belgrade's control, the United States and its NATO allies gave Albanian nationalists a base of operations from which they can foment insurgencies across the borders. Their ultimate goal is to create an ethnically pure "Greater Albania" that includes not only Kosovo and Albania but large portions of Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Greece.

Rather than face that reality, proponents of current U.S. policy circulate far-fetched myths about the nature of the struggle in the Balkans. Having ignored the accurate warnings about the KLA issued by critics of the original Kosovo mis-

sion, interventionists are repeating the same kind of errors. If the United States insists on staying in Kosovo, it faces three unpalatable options. Option 1 is passive accommodation-looking the other way while the KLA pursues its agenda. That approach might minimize the danger to American military personnel, but it would virtually guarantee a wider Balkan war in the long run. Option 2 is assertive mediation. That approach risks getting the United States into the middle of the dispute between Albanian nationalists and the governments of Serbia and Macedonia. Option 3 is aggressive confrontation. The United States would conclude that the KLA is now the enemy and would try to crush the Albanian nationalist cause. That strategy would likely lead to serious armed conflict and American casualties.

Instead of trying to choose the least dreadful option, Washington should extricate U.S. forces from Kosovo forthwith and transfer responsibility to the European Union. America has no economic or strategic interests that warrant the risks it is incurring. U.S. and European security interests are separable. The United States should disengage and let the Europeans grapple with making the hard decisions.

- *Ted Carpenter is vice president for defense and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute*

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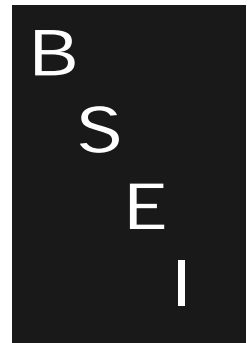
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In order to secure the best possible airfare and convenience for Convention Participants, the Serbian Unity Congress has chosen to work with two travel companies.

Please call these companies directly for the following arrangements:

- 1 We have reserved groupe space, which allows us to travel together and save money. All participants interested in traveling on reserved group space and/or interested in the Monastery Tour should contact **Select International Tours at 800-842--4842**, or e-mail [sales@selectric-intl.com](mailto:sales@selectric-intl.com).

GROUP SPACE HAS BEEN RESERVED ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

- a. Departing on September 15 - Returning on September 23
- b. Departing on September 16 - Returning on September 23
- c. Departing on September 15 - Returning on September 29
- d. Departing on September 16 - Returning on September 30

- 2 Those participant, who are unable to travel on the reserved dates, should call for individual reservations, **TARGA TOUR 1 800 756-7957**

## BECOME A MEMBER - SIGN UP A NEW MEMBER

These days the Serbian Unity Congress has great goals of contributing to the stabilization of democracy and especially the economic revival and development of Serbia. A number of projects of cooperation between the Serbian Unity Congress and the new Yugoslavia are already under way with more being agreed upon. Our next convention will be in Belgrade where these examples of partnership will be unveiled and launched. Therefore, we are wholeheartedly inviting all of you to join us in this exciting and gratifying effort.

Together and in greater numbers we can help the Serbian people rebuild their future. Let us join the ranks of other Diasporas who have been successful in the rebuilding of their people's nation. Become a member and join us in Belgrade in September for an unprecedented celebration of the love among Serbian people at home and those who have become dispersed throughout the world. Plan a vacation around this wonderful event. Belgrade in September is marvelous!

### We appeal to our current members that each one of us brings in one new member

We all know Serbs whose hearts have ached during the last decade and who yearn to help. Have a friend join or simply give a gift of membership to a friend and share the joy of making a difference. Please fill out the form below.

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Your contributions to date have allowed SUC to play an important role in efforts to minimize the effects of the anti-Serb onslaught of the last decade. Going forward SUC will continue to be devoted to remedying the defamation of the Serbian people and heritage. Additionally, our new efforts will be proactive and involved in the constructive rebuilding of a nation and its dignity. If you agree that SUC should and can have a constructive and contributing role in the new dawn of democracy for Serbia please take a moment and consider how much you care, are able to, and would like to contribute to this effort. Then simply fill in the information below and send back to our Central Office.

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Serbian Unity Congress is an organization of Serbs and their friends, created to:

- Garner the talents, skills and capabilities of Serbs and their friends in Diaspora in order to assist and facilitate positive economic, social and cultural change in Serbian Lands.
- Inform and influence the public opinion at large and decision makers world wide about the true goals and aspirations of Serbian people.
- Assure the future of Serbian people and their descendents by preserving Serbian heritage.

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