

The US role in the bombing of Yugoslavia: Historical considerations

24 April 1999

Dear Editor,

A milestone--if I may use a term which is usually associated with human endeavour and achievement--was passed on the "road to catastrophe" the WSWs referred to in its April 6 statement.

I cite the bombing of passenger train 393 in South East Serbia on April 12, another example of NATO "collateral damage" as this war, to use your words, develops a "momentum of its own".

One's feeling of revulsion at the murder of civilians, many of whom were returning home from the Orthodox Easter break, is deepened by the knowledge that Clinton and his cohorts refused Serbia's request for a cease-fire for that period. Certain contradictions regarding the coverage of this outrage by the media are also worthy of mention.

I feel there has been an attempt to synthesize this latest barbaric act of the NATO war machine, committed at the behest of those whom you so aptly described as an "utterly reckless ruling elite".

The BBC News informed the world that "sources" from Serbia reported that the train was stationary when hit by two bombs. It had ground to a halt because of a cut to the electricity supply caused by other bombs. The report mentioned at least nine deaths and fifteen people injured, and that the toll would go higher, as indeed it did.

Throughout the next day the media reports continued regarding train 393, but there was no mention of exactly how it had come to be destroyed. Then, on the morning of 14/4 NATO Supreme Commander, General Wesley Clark broadcast a detailed statement. He described how the pilot had launched his missiles before sighting the target. Then, with the aid of a film purported to be the record from the plane's guidance system he said, "all of a sudden he caught a flash of movement and it was the train coming in and he couldn't dump the bomb."

I find it extraordinary that the world media has gone to such lengths to explain this particular "collateral damage" incident. No such exercise was engaged in following the slaughter to the Bosnian Serb refugees at a camp near Belgrade.

Despite all the sanitation, the stench of a monumental blunder persists, not to mention a cover-up. It is worth repeating the perceptive analysis made in 1991 by David North during the Gulf War.

"At the present time," North said, "millions of people are following the events of the day to the best of their ability. What they are being told is determined by the military censors. Everything said on television is part of a very carefully orchestrated plan to feed the public only that which is necessary

for the war interests of the Bush administration and American imperialism. Everything is being done to present to masses of people an image of American invincibility. Attempts are being made to manipulate public opinion in order to facilitate the conduct of the war." [*Desert Slaughter, The Imperialist War Against Iraq*, Labor Publications, Detroit, Michigan, 1991, page 241]

In reading the above quotation, the substitution of Clinton for Bush is enough to update it over eight years later. I recommend the book quoted for anyone who seriously wishes to understand the role of American imperialism today.

Yours faithfully,

RW

Dear Editors,

Here are some of my opinions. Why, in 1989, when the Chinese government killed thousands of student demonstrators at Tiananmen Square didn't the US take any action if it truly cared about human rights?! So the Human Rights theory is 100% not true. Why does the United States always support independence for any Province in other countries!? Why does the United States always stop Quebec and Texas independence activities!? Actually the US just provides imperialist war around the world. It is not a peace maker at all. I would like to remind the editors to point out two other US purposes for bombing Serbia: First, to test and take advantage of Russia's weakness due to its major economic recession during the 90's. The US estimates that Russia won't have enough power for a confrontation. Second, to use Kosovo to establish human rights as an excuse for military action. Next time the US will use the same approach to support Taiwan's independence. The US is telling the Chinese government, "We do have another example". BTW, I think the US has the world's weakest ground troop due to the culture and fake human rights. Recall the Vietnam War. Actually the racial problems will bring more US internal problems. These problems are unseen (I mean even worse than human rights). Why do the American people still trust this shameful President? Why does Clinton still have creditability?!

I like your Web Site very much!

PW

Dear Editors:

Your article *Key facts in press accounts refute official rationale for Balkan war* (April 22, 1999) asked the question "Who is William Walker?" and provides some interesting clues. Is he a secret operative of the U.S. government whose mission is to

destabilize Yugoslavia so that the US and NATO can grab whole chunks of the country? Did he help the KLA fake a massacre in order to initiate a propaganda campaign to win the hearts and minds of the US Congress and public? (Similar to the fake "Babies pulled from incubators" story that galvanized Congressional support for the war on Iraq.)

Mr. Walker's career seems to have parallels to another American named William Walker (born 1824, died 1860). This is what the 1965 edition of Encyclopedia Americana has to say about this William Walker: "His various careers and his capacity for audacity involved him in the practice of three professions and motivated a life of derring-do, culminating in death before a firing squad.

[I]n an atmosphere of national expansion..., [i]n 1853, Walker commanded an expedition which landed at La Paz, Lower California [in Mexico], which Walker proclaimed an independent state and with himself as president. But with the Mexicans hostile and the American authorities refusing to allow his supplies to follow him, Walker could only retreat to the border, surrender to the American force stationed there, and stand trial in San Francisco for violating the neutrality laws. He was acquitted by a sympathetic jury.

With appetite whetted, soaring personal ambition, and the fever of manifest destiny in his blood, Walker turned his attention to Nicaragua. At the head of a small band and aided by the Accessory Transit Company, an American company operating as a transportation factor across the isthmus, Walker had little trouble in seizing Nicaragua and proclaiming himself president in 1856.

Walker's activities in Nicaragua had the support of an important segment of Southern opinion in favor of both slavery and expansion. ... While the federal authorities frowned upon his filibustering activities, Walker received considerable regional support. He repealed an earlier Nicaraguan decree for the abolition of slavery, an action "calculated to bind the Southern States to Nicaragua, as if she were one of themselves."

Walker dreamed magnificent dreams of a military empire constituted of Central American states; an interoceanic canal that would attract the shipping of the world; and the use of slave labor in the development of the economy of Central America. But the fantasies exploded before the reality of British and French interests in the area and Walker's error in supporting, in the councils of the Accessory Transit Company, a faction opposed to the redoubtable Cornelius Vanderbilt. There was soon another revolution in Nicaragua and Walker was deposed.

Back in the United States, Walker tried to return to Central America and reestablish his authority. In August 1860 he landed in Honduras, whence he tried to reach Nicaragua by land. The British apprehended him, however, and turned him over to the Honduran authorities, who executed him by firing squad."

ER

To the Editor,

Congratulations on providing such an interesting web site which contains many excellent perspectives, certain to make readers think--a process unfortunately a bit short amongst our politicians at the moment. I started accessing the site because I wanted to learn about the 'hidden' background to Nato's current bombing campaign, which I have strongly protested against since it began.

Many of the articles lead me to surf other sites and learn more, which makes me question things I had never really considered before. I am deeply concerned about the violence and lies perpetrated in the name of my country by Nato and New Labour, but perversely one good thing to come out of this is that my thirst for knowledge has accelerated even further.

Many thanks to you and all of your writers.

Regards

KT London

To the editor,

I fully agree with your point on this war. I am sure that it is profitable for US and they use all means to achieve their goals. It was in Vietnam and now they are destroying economy of the Yugoslavia and killing their people. They should be stopped.

Regards,

YB

To the editor,

Everything must be done to stop the US aggression against Yugoslavia--nationally and internationally. Through this aggression, the US government and NATO have become criminal organizations. Of course, they do not care about Albanians, Serbs, or any other humans. All they care about is a better strategic position for NATO's future attacks, more military might against all those who disobey, and more riches robbed from the conquered NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE. The replacement of the rule of law with the US government's mindless decision to impose at all costs its savage and primitive will, Weltanschauung, and brutal military might on everybody else on the planet will have catastrophic effects for the entire world for a long time to come. No country and no person is safe as long as these barbarians are allowed to bomb who they please and when they please. Aggression must be strongly and unequivocally condemned regardless of which country resorts to it. It is, of course, sad that the former hypocritical defenders of "democracy" have now defiled all democratic principles, but it is not really unexpected. Unexpected is only the brutality with which the US and its European stooges have engaged on the road to replace civilization and dialogue with the rule of the fist. However, whatever their evil motives--the coinage "humanitarian bombing" would certainly make Orwell jealous (!)--, these New World Order barbarians must be stopped before they kill everybody and destroy everything in Kosovo, Yugoslavia, the Balkans, Europe, ... , Euro-Asia, and eventually the entire planet Earth!...

Sincerely, GN

USA



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