

The NATO bombing of Serbian auto plant

13 April 1999

To the editor:

After reading the article entitled "US-NATO jets bomb Serb auto plant" on the bombing of the Zastava car plant complex in Kragujevac, which produces the "Yugo," I felt compelled to point out to your readers a somewhat more symbolic aspect of this US-led criminal act.

Firstly, as you well know, despite the Stalinist bureaucracy and their nationalist program, huge economic and cultural advances were made in Yugoslavia in the post-war period. The car plant in Kragujevac was part of this development and it was a pride and joy to the Yugoslav people, and a further proof of what can be achieved under a planned economy (again, despite the corruption and constant sabotage of the bureaucracy). It is not an accident that the same policy makers in the United States, who are overseeing closures of car plants at home and making hundreds of thousands of American workers unemployed, are physically destroying car plants overseas.

Secondly, Kragujevac is a town in Serbia which saw one of the worst acts carried out by the Nazi forces during the Second World War in the Balkans. In response to the struggle waged by the partisans, in 1943 the Nazis rounded up and systematically executed seven thousand people of Kragujevac. Of those seven thousand, three hundred were students from a nearby high school and teachers who refused to be separated from their students. After the war, a monument was erected in the memory of those killed. This monument was visited by hundreds of thousands of people from all over Yugoslavia and the world. Who knows, perhaps that might be the next target of the US-NATO bombing.

Yours,
IR



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