

US-NATO bombing escalates in Yugoslavia

23 April 1999

To the editor,

Re: Real Reason Why US Wants to Seize Kosovo

Strategic minerals. Kosovo is an extremely rich source of key industrial natural resources. The US, as you know, immediately dismisses any settlement that does not include a NATO army on the ground in Kosovo. At the same time, Yugoslavia absolutely rejects any army in Kosovo except its own. Why? Both know the geo-strategic importance of Kosovo. The humanitarian crisis is just a smokescreen used by the US-NATO to obscure these basic facts and to manufacture public consent for a ground war.

ER

To the editor,

Good job!!

Because I live in America I do not get the real story behind most news events, and certainly behind news events of the magnitude of the Balkan War. I depend on, and greatly appreciate WSWs. Your analysis on the Balkan War after one month was excellent.

Keep up the good work!!

CFM

Dear WSWs,

In the article "US-NATO jets bomb Kosovan civilians" [15 April] you write the following "The devastation, human and material, that is being visited on Kosovo as a result of the US-NATO war recalls the mordant phrase that summed up US military tactics in Vietnam: "We had to burn the village to save it." Though there seem to be a few versions the actual quote as I have read is as follows:

"It became necessary to destroy the town to save it" ["A Bright Shining Lie", Neil Sheehan, p.719 & "The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations"].

More importantly is that the US Army Major was referring to the bombing of Ben Tre in the Mekong Delta in February 1968 as the US used massive air power on a city of 140,000 residents. The bombing was in response to the Tet Offensive and Ben Tre was just

one of thirteen provincial capitals that felt the full force of "overwhelming American and South Vietnamese military power, its destructive capacity brought to bear with uncommon fury - and often indiscriminately" ["Vietnam A History: The First Complete Account of Vietnam at War", Stanley Karnow, p.525]. This description is by a historian who is completely sympathetic with US war aims.

The NATO bombing of civilians in Kosovo and Yugoslavia has barely touched on the level of brutality that we might expect if the war continues.

Yours,

TJ



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