

Readers reply to "After the Slaughter: Political Lessons of the Balkan War"

16 June 1999

Dear Editors,

I discovered the WSWs at the very beginning of the Kosovo bombing, and have followed it regularly and gratefully since. Throughout the conflict your site provided the only ANALYSIS of the events that made sense to me (and for some events, the only REPORTING of them at all). Although I followed the war through a variety of sources on the Internet, without the WSWs I would have remained ignorant of crucial facts and, more essentially, the global context in which the war was taking place. All your articles were well-written and informative, but I especially appreciated these:

* How US policy has laid the basis for a wider war in the Balkans—3/17/98

* US-NATO bombs fall on Serbia: the "New World Order" takes shape—3/25/99

* IMF "shock therapy" and the recolonisation of the Balkans—4/17/99

* Why is NATO at war with Yugoslavia? World power, oil and gold - 5/24/99

* After the Slaughter: Political Lessons of the Balkan War - 6/14/99

I've told a number of people about the WSWs, and I'll continue to spread the good word. Of course, it goes without saying that I'll continue to read what you post. Congratulations on a terrific job, and thanks for the effort!

MW, Salem, Massachusetts, USA

P.S. I'm not a socialist ... the only reason I mention it is to show that appreciation for your reporting crosses partisan lines.

To the editor:

I am impressed by the fact that your analysis is based, uniquely on the left, on materialist dialectics, on the working out of historical forces through its various contemporary forms. I wish you had also covered the

consequences of the NATO invasion on the economic development of surrounding countries which have bought into NATO and the American Dream. Also, a friend working with gypsies (Roma) tells me that several pogroms took place in Kosovar camps against the Romany people who had fled. I come from that part of the world and know it well. You are right on the money.

AL

To the editor:

Very good!!

You have presented a brief of 20th century American history within the parameters of the evolution of 20th century capitalism.

As one displaced by American drive to lower commodity prices, (in my case, oil, as I was educated in geology) you are preaching to the choir. The American Dream is nothing more than a nightmare for me, I am now a 45 yr. old municipal employee in a dead-end job. I played by the rules, my country cheated me out of a career.

You guys are an island in a sea of evil that works only for the ruling class snakes, and their useless lackey politicians. I read you every morning before going to my dead-end job.

Keep up the good work!!

CFM

Dear WSWs:

Thank you for your excellent coverage of the Kosovo crisis. Nowhere else have I found better reporting and analysis.

May I make a suggestion for another article? Now that NATO is taking over Kosovo, I would like to know how the economic resources of the Yugoslav province will be utilized in the future. Kosovo is an important mining region. I would like to know who benefited from these resources in the past and how these

economic arrangements change now that a NATO army occupies the province.

The suggestion has been raised that NATO had a hidden agenda and that the humanitarian reasons for the attack on Yugoslavia were for the purpose of building public support for the war. If the mineral wealth of Kosovo is now diverted to Western corporations, this could be objective evidence of a hidden NATO agenda.

ER

[*Note: This subject is discussed in the WSWs statements, "After the Slaughter: Political Lessons of the Balkan War" and "Why is NATO at war with Yugoslavia: World power, oil and gold" Ed]*

To the editor:

I read the article "After the Slaughter: Political lessons of the Balkan War." It tells the side of the story that our media should be telling. As for how do I feel about the course the United States has taken? Well I'm just plain sick. I feel helpless to do anything about it and ashamed that the country in which I am a citizen has used its power to enforce its political interests on other sovereign governments.

If we are to be an example to the world, and we certainly had that opportunity, we need to build trust and not fear. Refusal to trade with a country if you don't agree with their policies is not morally wrong. Attacking them is! ...

Only if enough people would realize that that aggression is wrong and tell their government that they will no longer tolerate it can it be stopped. The problem is people tend to ignore it if it isn't affecting them personally. One day it will affect them.

I am not a socialist or a capitalist. Not a part of any organization and not likely to become part of one. I do say what I think and would like the government to know what I think. It's pretty hard to make much of an impression on the government, however. I don't condone racial or religious discrimination but I don't think we have any right to interfere with another country over what they do in their own borders ...

We sure did something about the "ethnic cleansing" didn't we? We killed even more people, just like I said would happen.

RM

To the editor:

Regarding Kosovo,

1. Historical comparison; by some strange

coincidence I have been rereading Herodotus and his account of the 300 Spartans holding the pass at Thermopylae against the Persian hordes. What a truly magnificent sight 200 Russian soldiers blocking the path of the NATO soldiers.

2. Lesson to aspirant ethnic cleansers: before you start make sure you buy American or British arms (Israel and Indonesia among the many examples) or alternatively join NATO and feel free to do what you want (Turkey being the obvious example, and now NATO's none too subtle cleansing of Kosovo Serbs).

3. Hitler laughing in his grave; the sight of German soldiers back in the Balkans more than half a century after their last visit must have given A. Hitler some comfort.

PM



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