

# Fresh evidence that NATO's bombing of Chinese embassy in Belgrade was deliberate

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The November 28 edition of Britain's *Observer* newspaper presented fresh evidence to back up its claim that the May 7 NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was deliberate.

In an article entitled "Truth Behind America's Raid on Belgrade", the newspaper stated that far from being a blunder, "the pinpoint accuracy of the attack was in fact a deadly signal to Milosevic: seek outside help in Kosovo at your peril".

The *Observer's* earlier report, as noted by the *World Socialist Web Site* on October 19 ("British newspaper says NATO deliberately bombed Chinese embassy in Belgrade"), was denounced by the Clinton administration and the Blair government in Britain. US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright described it as "balderdash", while Britain's Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said there was not a "shred of evidence to support this rather wild story".

The November 28 *Observer* reports that the bombing of the Chinese embassy was carried out by a US B2 bomber that flew from Whiteman air force base in Missouri. It released what the *Observer* describes as "the most accurate air-drop munitions in the world—the JDAM flying bomb". The JDAM is accurate to a range of less than two metres, the newspaper notes. It uses four adjustable fins to control its position, which is in turn continually checked and rechecked by fixes from seven satellites.

The bombing was so precise that it demolished the office of the military attaché, killing three people, while leaving the embassy's northern end untouched, which included the front entrance. A senior NATO air force officer is quoted as saying, "far from not knowing the target was an embassy, they must have been given architect's drawings."

The US and Britain contend that the embassy

bombing was the result of intelligence sources having used an old and unreliable map. The *Observer* systematically demolishes this claim. It cites the response the following day of an American colonel to criticisms by British, French and Canadian personnel of the supposed mistake. "Bullshit," said the colonel. "That was great targeting ... we put two JDAMs down into the attaché's office and took out the exact room we wanted ... they [the Chinese] won't be using that place for rebro [re-broadcasting Yugoslav radio transmissions] any more, and it will have given that bastard Arkan a headache."

The *Observer* maintains that the Chinese embassy was being used to rebroadcast intelligence information by either Zeljko Raznatovic, alias Arkan, who heads the Serbian paramilitaries known as the White Tigers, or by the Serbian army itself.

The embassy's co-ordinates were registered in the NATO computer because it had long been a prime target for Western intelligence following Chinese collaboration in building up Serbia's military capability. A NATO air controller states, "The Chinese embassy had an electronic profile, which NATO had located and pinpointed." This data was forwarded to the joint intelligence operational centre at Mons, NATO's European headquarters. The approval of the US Commander-in-Chief, President Clinton, would have been needed to have it removed from that list and designated as a target.

It appears that the US anticipated opposition to its plan to bomb the Chinese embassy from some of its European allies, most notably France. It got round this by the simple expedient of not informing them.

One of the *Observer's* sources states that the Combined Air Operations Centre at Vincenza was not informed of the targeting plan for the embassy because

“all operations with stealth aircraft and other special systems were kept strictly close to the chest by the Americans ... they only told us after the event.”

A senior French Defence Ministry official said that France had been informed of the targeting of a site used to rebroadcast Yugoslav signals, but was not told that the site was the Chinese embassy. “Not one of us had ever imagined this target could have been the embassy,” he said. “We had been told simply that it was a military target that had been monitored transmitting signals to the Yugoslav army from its basement. It had been described to us as a communications target that would be taken out.... What the Americans really knew, I wouldn't like to say.”

The *Observer's* ongoing investigation confirms the analysis presented at the time by the *World Socialist Web Site*, which questioned the official explanation that the embassy bombing was an accident, and raised the possibility that the US deliberately targeted the embassy, in part to block moves toward a negotiated end to the war. Each new revelation concerning the incident throws more light on the reckless and aggressive role of the US, as well as its contemptuous attitude towards its nominal allies in Europe.

France's recent criticisms of the US for ordering missions outside of NATO's joint command structure are mild compared with the vitriolic denunciations of France by leading US military personnel. On October 21, Air Commander Lt. Gen. Michael C. Short told the Senate Armed Services Committee that French opposition to America's war aims had endangered the lives of US pilots, including his son.

He said that the 78-day campaign could have ended earlier had political leaders allowed warplanes to attack Belgrade on the first night. "I believe the way to stop ethnic cleansing was to go at the heart of the leadership, and put a dagger in that heart as rapidly and as decisively as possible.... I'd have gone for the head of the snake on the first night. I'd have turned the lights out the first night. I'd have dropped the bridges across the Danube. I'd have hit five or six political and military headquarters in downtown Belgrade. Milosevic and his cronies would have waked up the first morning asking what the hell was going on."

Short added that NATO's US military commander, Gen. Wesley Clark, had pushed for approval to bomb Belgrade from the start, but had been opposed by

France and others in Europe.



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