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By: William Norman Grigg  
 August 16, 1999

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*My patriotism is of the kind which is outraged by the notion that the United States was never a great nation until it knocked to pieces a poor, decrepit, bankrupt old state like Spain.*

-- William Graham Sumner

Sumner, a noted free market economist, offered the foregoing response to accusations that his public opposition to the Spanish-American War betokened a lack of patriotism on his part.

NATO's "victory" over what remains of Yugoslavia offers even less cause for patriotic celebration than the Spanish-American War. The U.S.-led terror campaign against Yugoslavia pitted the massed assets of the world's largest and wealthiest nations against a country the size of Vermont, whose gross domestic product is smaller than that of Idaho. Compounding this indecency is the fact that the NATO leadership collective chose not to engage the military assets of our "enemy," but instead focused on Yugoslavia's civilian population in what has to be considered an act of international terrorism.

According to Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK), who was a bomber pilot in World War II, it is perverse even to refer to the campaign against Yugoslavia as a war. "They never came to war with us," Senator Stevens told reporters at a Washington, DC breakfast meeting in early July. "We just bombed the hell out of them until they signed an agreement. We had 780 million people [in the NATO alliance] attacking 20 million people, and they finally came to their knees.... [After] defeating 20 million people the way we defeated them, I don't think that's something we should go around holding our head high in the air [about] and saying we're superior...."

**"They Needed Some Bombing"**

The chief author of the Yugoslav terror campaign was Bill Clinton, and the effort displayed his distinctive combination of arrogance, mendacity, cowardice, and bullying. In a videotaped speech broadcast into Serbia the day after the war began, the impeached President insisted: "I cannot emphasize too strongly that the United States and our European allies have no quarrel with the Serbian people.... The NATO nations have tried to avert this conflict through every means we knew to be available. Each of us has ties to Serbia. Each respects the dignity and courage of the Serb people.... I call on all Serbs and all people of good will to join with us in seeking an end to this needless and avoidable conflict."

Given that the source of these statements was Bill Clinton, it is not surprising that they are mostly penetrable lies — all except for the description of the war as "needless and avoidable." As has been previously noted in these pages ("Why the Bombing?" July 19th issue), "Appendix B" of the Rambouillet "peace" agreement amounted to an ultimatum, demanding that the Serbian government submit to the occupation of its country by an international "peacekeeping" force. During the Rambouillet conference, one Clinton Administration official explained to reporters: "We intentionally set the bar too high for the Serbs to comply. They needed some bombing, and that's what they're going to get."

After the 78-day bombing campaign, with much of Serbia's infrastructure — including bridges, hospitals, schools, and power plants — in ruins, Mr. Clinton announced that Serbia would be excluded from a proposed Balkan reconstruction program. "What the Serbian people decide to do, of course, is their own affair," stated the President in a June 25th press conference. "But they're going to have to come to grips with what Mr. Milosevic ordered in Kosovo. They're just going to have to come to grips with it. And they're going to have to get out of denial.... And then they're going to have to decide whether they support his leadership or not."

**False Images**

Invoking the image of "all those tens of thousands of people ... killed, and all those hundreds of thousands of people [who] were run out of their homes ... all those little girls [who] were raped, and all those little boys [who] were murdered" by Serb forces in Kosovo, Mr. Clinton concluded: "If [the Serb people] think it's okay, they can make that decision. But I wouldn't give them one red cent for reconstruction if they think it's okay, because I don't think it's okay, and I don't think that's the world we're trying to build for our children."

In other words, it appears that Mr. Clinton does have a "quarrel" with the Serb people, whom he insists on holding accountable for the actions of Slobodan Milosevic's regime. Mr. Clinton's statements presuppose that the calculated destruction of Serbia's civilian economy and infrastructure is justified by atrocities allegedly committed by that nation's government against Albanians in Kosovo. Nothing in U.S. law or in Western just war tradition supports the notion that it is right to "punish" an evil ruler by terrorizing and slaughtering his subjects. Furthermore, the parade of atrocities cited by Mr. Clinton has proven to be largely

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a work of embellishment, if not outright lies. The Serbian paramilitary and regular Army units say that the Serbian paramilitary and regular Army units in Kosovo are blameless. [RealWorks](#), Institute of the United States (a private intelligence

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analyzed Balkan affairs for more than a decade, told *The New American*: "It's pretty clear that there is a pattern of war crimes by Serb forces in Kosovo. It's by no means of the magnitude that NATO officials have suggested, and there have been plenty of outrages committed by all sides — including NATO. But it would be dishonest to say that the Serb forces in Kosovo are completely innocent."

Canadian photojournalist Paul Watson was one of the few Western reporters who covered the Kosovo tragedy on-site. In an interview with CBC radio's *As It Happens* program, Watson testified: "I have spoken personally to people who have been ordered to leave their homes by police in black. I've also spoken to people who are simply terrified.... I don't think that NATO member countries can, with a straight face, sit back and say they don't share some of the blame for the wholesale depopulation of this country." While Serb forces were doing some terrible things, Watson explained, there was no evidence of systematic, genocidal "cleansing." "It is very hard to hide an anarchic wholesale slaughter of people," he pointed out. "There is no evidence that such a thing happened" in Kosovo.

Watson's account was corroborated by a July 2nd *USA Today* front-page story documenting that the casualty and refugee figures — as well as the lurid atrocity accounts — peddled by NATO and Clinton Administration mouthpieces during the 78-day war "now appear greatly exaggerated as allied forces take control of the provinces.... Instead of 100,000 ethnic Albanian men feared murdered by rampaging Serbs, officials now estimate that about 10,000 were killed." How many of those victims perished as a result of the NATO bombing campaign, we may never know.

In a May speech before a veterans group, Mr. Clinton asserted that 600,000 ethnic Albanians were "trapped within Kosovo itself lacking shelter, short of food, afraid to go home, or buried in mass graves dug by their executioners." In fact, reported *USA Today*, "Though thousands [of Albanian men] hid in Kosovo, they are healthy." Additionally, "Kosovo's livestock, wheat, and other crops are growing, not slaughtered wholesale or torched as widely reported." "Yes, there were atrocities," commented House Intelligence Committee Chairman Porter Goss (R-FL). "But no, they don't measure up to the advance billing."

Bill Clinton's allusion to accounts of "little girls" being raped — a singularly audacious charge, coming as it did from a plausibly accused rapist — also embroiders the facts that are becoming available. In the Kosovo conflict, as in nearly every other military struggle, the tragedy of rape was a tangible reality. However, as Lori Montgomery of the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported in a July 3rd dispatch from Prizren, there is no evidence of "systematic" rape conducted by Serb forces. Such rape as did occur was "a vicious aberration among Serb forces, an opportunistic act perpetrated by the mean and the drunken who tried to hide it from their superiors."

Further complicating efforts for Bill Clinton and others who wish to depict the Serbs as genocidalists is the fact that no threat was made to evict or exterminate Belgrade's population of 100,000 ethnic Albanians; the only threat they faced came from NATO's bombing runs. Furthermore, the Yugoslav government actually provided weapons to loyalist ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

## KLA "Cleansing"

By way of contrast, NATO's leadership collective has shown little concern over the "ethnic cleansing" campaign being waged against Serbs in Kosovo under the leadership of the Marxist Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). While many Kosovo Albanians are exacting revenge against specific Serbs who burned and looted Albanian homes, the Serb victims include many people who tried to intervene on behalf of their Albanian neighbors.

When, shortly after the NATO bombing campaign began, troops from Serbia's Interior Ministry went on a rampage through the village of Sekiraca, 80-year-old Sribislav Dukic "implored the troops not to burn the ethnic Albanian houses and a flour mill owned by 28-year-old Mustafa Ejupi," reported the July 3rd *Sydney Morning Herald*. Standing with his arm around his elderly benefactor, Ejupi recalled how Dukic intervened with the soldiers and pointed out that the younger Albanian had no connections to the KLA. "Sribislav saved my mill," testified Ejupi. Now the elderly Good Samaritan and his family face "revenge" attacks mounted by the KLA.

"I don't know how Serbs and ethnic Albanians can live together in the future, but our leadership is guilty," declares Dukic. "The leadership has created this environment. And we poor people, workers who have been working all our lives, we've never had problems." Now that the KLA, largely unmolested by NATO "peacekeepers," is conducting depredations against Kosovo Serbs, the relative tranquility described by Dukic will probably never return.

The monks of Decani monastery also acted to protect their Albanian neighbors from Serb paramilitaries. According to a June 17th BBC report, ethnic Albanians in Decani "say they owe their lives to the humanity and courage of the local Orthodox monks." When paramilitary gangs stormed nearby villages demanding money — and killing Albanians who wouldn't or couldn't buy them off — the monks offered sanctuary to as many refugees as they could take in. "We helped

them in the best way we could," rec...  
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the Decani monks by vandalizing the monastery and destroying its icons.

Mother Maharija, the abbess of Zvecan's Holy Mother Orthodox Convent in Kosovo, also provided shelter for ethnic Albanians during the war. "Our dearest neighbors are Albanians," Maharija told the *Chicago Tribune*. "During the war, we protected them, brought them medicine and took them to the hospital in Kosovska Mitrovica." Since the end of the war, notes the *Tribune*, "Nuns have been raped, churches vandalized, and members of religious orders robbed by the Kosovo Liberation Army"; the Holy Mother Orthodox Convent has been spared thus far, and Maharija intends to continue ministering to the needs of her neighbors.

Elsewhere in "liberated" Kosovo, KLA terrorists have vented their hatred on Orthodox Christian monks and nuns. The *Times* of London reported on June 21st that KLA marauders "attacked and possibly raped nuns" and began "a vicious series of revenge killings of Gypsies in the southern Prizren area." One British officer assigned to the area described as "sickening" the three-day ordeal of nine nuns who were trapped in a nearby convent. "I know [KLA guerillas] fired guns right next to the sisters' heads and I believe very possibly the youngest sister was raped," he told the *Times*.

Bill Clinton's legendary empathy flags when the subject is the plight of Kosovo's Serbs, who are being "cleansed" from their homes under the largely indifferent gaze of UN/NATO "peacekeepers." During his June 25th press conference, Mr. Clinton was asked by a reporter about "Serb homes that are being burned, Serb stores that are being looted, and Serb civilians that are being terrorized" by KLA-led mobs. The impeached President actually *defended* the perpetrators: "I'm not particularly surprised after what they've been through."

The Clinton Administration and the UN's so-called International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia have actually made it plain that the KLA can ravage Kosovo Serbs with impunity. "The U.S. government and the United Nations said ... they have no plans to investigate the Kosovo Liberation Army for possible war crimes, arguing that a wave of revenge against Serbs in the province does not appear to be coordinated by the KLA leadership," reported the June 29th *Washington Times*. "Our mandate is to investigate crimes that occur during the war, during armed conflict that involve members of armed entities," declared Tribunal spokesman Paul Riley. Of the KLA's post-war rampage, Riley opined, "I don't think it's an organized KLA attempt. I think it's just guys doing what they think is right — burning houses."

While Serb civilians, as Bill Clinton has made clear, must pay the price for acts of terror committed by Milosevic's minions, the KLA will not be held accountable for supposedly unorganized acts of terror they are committing against Serb civilians.

## NATO "Success"

NATO's 78-day bombing campaign inflicted little damage on the Serbian military and interior ministry forces responsible for terrorizing Kosovo's Albanian population. "Within Kosovo, NATO's KFOR troops have found few examples of bombing damage," Britain's Sky News service reported in early July. "Strategic sites in the capital, Pristina, had been destroyed, as had some key bridges. But large columns of retreating Serb forces showed little sign of attack at the end of the conflict." "We all saw the Serbs leaving Kosovo with their tails and their flags flying," observed Lieutenant General Sir Roderick Cordy-Simpson, a British official who has commanded UN "peacekeepers" in Bosnia. "Certainly we did not do anything like [the damage] we pretended we had done...."

During the air campaign, reported military analyst Colonel David Hackworth, NATO's "smart bombs and missiles costing from 50 grand to 2 million bucks repeatedly blew up decoy 'tanks,' 'artillery pieces,' and other 'targets' made of sticks and plastic...." Yugoslav Army units would rig dummy mobile-air-defense units, many of which were placed next to dummy bridges and "mock roads — strips of black plastic sheeting laid across open fields with 'tanks' and other 'military vehicles' painted on them," Hackworth continued. "U.S. aircraft flying at 15,000 feet had a field day blowing up these 'Serb air defense units' and other dummy targets, while their spinners back at NATO headquarters daily chanted to the world, 'We are significantly degrading their air defense and combat ability.'"

NATO's air campaign against civilian targets was significantly more "successful." At least 74 Kosovo Albanian refugees were slaughtered during a NATO air strike on the road between Prizren and Djakovica; the refugees were killed while attempting to return to their homes in Kosovo. Robert Fisk of London's *Independent* newspaper described the "torn and mangled bodies" of NATO's victims — "a young and beautiful girl, her eyes gently staring at me between half-closed lids, the bottom half of her head bathed in blood.... [T]he old man ripped in half and blasted into a tree ... the smoldering skeleton with one bloody still flesh-adhering foot over the back of a trailer ... the dead, naked man slouched over the steering wheel of a burnt tractor...."

Reporting from Surdulica, Fisk described the casualties of a NATO bomb that destroyed a sanitarium for lung and tuberculosis patients. At least 18 patients died in the attack on the hospital, which is clearly identified, according to Fisk, "on

every map," and nowhere near a mi...  
... whose body was found near ...  
... beside her legs, and Milena ...  
... arm bent over his face as if still covering from

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attack, "About 40 patients at the Special Hospital for Lung and Tuberculosis were seriously wounded when the NATO bombs fell on them just after midnight. Part of the two-story, 75-year-old hospital simply caved in on the men and women in their beds, which is where most of them died, although one old man whose body I saw was still dressed in a pair of old blue trousers and a torn striped shirt."

"Geneva Conventions — assiduously produced by NATO in response to war crimes against Albanians in Kosovo — state that civilians must be protected even if in the vicinity of military personnel," Fisk pointed out. "But the patients at Surdulica were not given that protection." Branislav Ristic, commander of the local civil defense unit, pointed out to Fisk that during World War II, resistance fighters were stationed near the sanitarium "and the Germans knew they were here but never touched them."

"The Germans never did anything like this," agreed Jokvana Ilic, a Belgrade schoolteacher reacting to a late April bombing of the Vracar residential district. "I cannot believe it. I simply cannot believe it." According to the Associated Press, "The heat from the explosions was so great, residents said, it burned the hair of those who ran out into the streets to see what had happened." "They are destroying us, one by one, piece by piece," wept 30-year-old Jasminka Radovanovic. "What do they want from us?"

**Price of "Peace"**

NATO's attack on Yugoslavia, observed Professor Robert Hayden of the University of Pittsburgh, was "the first unprovoked, opposed military aggression in Europe since Soviet troops invaded Hungary in 1956." In this war of aggression, continued Hayden, "NATO's attacks [were] aimed against civilian targets since literally the first night of the bombing, when a tractor factory in the Belgrade suburb of Rakovica was destroyed by cruise missiles. Since then, NATO targets have included roads, railroad tracks and bridges hundreds of miles from Kosovo, power plants, factories of many kinds, food processing and sugar processing plants, water pumping stations, cigarette factories, central heating plants for civilian apartment blocks, television studios, post offices, non-military government administrative buildings, ski resorts, government official residences, oil refineries, civilian airports, gas stations, and chemical plants."

Said Hayden: "That NATO planned from the start to hit civilian targets was made clear to me a few days before the attacks began by an employee of a U.S. intelligence organization who said that the CIA had been charged with preparing lists of Yugoslav economic assets and that, 'basically, everything in the country is a target unless it's taken off the list.' NATO's strategy is not to attack Yugoslavia's army directly, but rather to destroy Yugoslavia itself.... With this strategy it is military losses that are 'collateral damage,' because most of the attacks are aimed at civilian targets."

During a March 31st interview, Dan Rather asked Bill Clinton if he had given the order to (in military parlance) "go downtown" — that is, to bomb non-military targets in Belgrade. Seeking refuge in circumlocution, the impeached President drawled out an answer worthy of a Soviet commissar: "We are attacking targets that we believe will ... raise the price of aggression to an unacceptably high level so that we can get back to talking peace and security."

The world neither needs nor can afford the Soviet-style "peace and security" represented in NATO's "victory" over Serbia.

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