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Herman and Peterson: In Response To The Genocide Lobby

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| David Edwards site administrator Joined: 26 Jan 2004 Posts: 122 | <p>Post subject: Herman and Peterson: In Response To The Genocide Lobby ▶ Quote</p> <p>Excellent response, below, to Raoul Djukanovic/Daniel Simpson. We're happy to post a reply from Simpson.</p> <p>Eds</p> <p>http://www.monthlyreview.org/mrzine/hp081209.html</p> <p>In Response to the Bosnia Genocide Lobby</p> <p>by Edward S. Herman and David Peterson</p> <p>The original title for the article that follows was "Response to 'Raoul Djukanovic'." "RD" is the Internet pseudonym of Daniel Simpson, who we mention in our second paragraph (below), and who, as a member of what we refer to as the Bosnia Genocide Lobby, assails us wherever we publish something related to the former Yugoslavia. This proved to be notably true at the U.K.-based Media Lens website. There, after we published our "Open Letter to Amnesty International's London and Belfast Offices, on the Occasion of Noam Chomsky's Belfast Festival Lecture, October 30, 2009" (MRZine, November 22, 2009), "RD" took after us with his usual venom. In this one case, we decided to respond (though we usually ignore him). Hence, our lengthy "Response to 'RD'."</p> <p>But between the November 21 date Media Lens published our "Open Letter to AI," and today, December 7, other members of the Bosnia Genocide Lobby have also moved into action. More important, Media Lens began to feel the pressure of potential legal action brought under Britain's onerous libel laws, based at least in part on their having published our "Open Letter to AI." On the basis of this fear, and the counsel of more than one legal advisor, Media Lens has removed our "Open Letter to AI" from its website. (See "Deleted Thread: 'Open Letter to Amnesty International,'" Media Lens, December 6, 2007.)</p> <p>As our "Open Letter to AI" has been removed from the Media Lens website, so have "RD's" several efforts at refuting us. Therefore, drafting a "Response to 'RD'" becomes less important, and drafting a response to the Bosnia Genocide Lobby takes precedence. Hence, our new title: "In Response to the Bosnia Genocide Lobby."</p> <p>From the pragmatics of language use in the case at hand, it is clear that whenever we (or Noam Chomsky or Diana Johnstone) are charged with "revisionism" and "genocide denial" (and the like) in relation to the former Yugoslavia, the authors of these charges do not intend to say merely that we are guilty of getting the facts of history wrong. Instead, they seek to tag us with the graver charge that we are guilty of knowingly lying about history -- of deliberately falsifying the historical record. This is the standard tactic of political enforcers.</p> <p>Edward S. Herman and David Peterson December 7, 2009</p> <p>* * *</p> <p>In Response to the Bosnia Genocide Lobby by Edward S. Herman and David Peterson</p> <p>Reading Raoul Djukanovic's comments dated November 23 and posted below our "Open Letter to Amnesty International,"¹ we were struck by the audacity of the falsehoods. Djukanovic takes us to task over the importance of "factual accuracy" where the breakup of Yugoslavia is at issue, but his contributions show repeatedly that he places no faith at all in fact or accuracy, and is quite</p> |

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comfortable with even the most gross distortions when they suit his purpose. He clearly places his faith in a set of accepted truths that need to be reiterated endlessly, in any venue where The Truth is challenged. Chief among these accepted truths is something called the "Bosnia Genocide." One either affirms the truth of this "Bosnia Genocide" or one is labeled a "genocide denier" and the like ("revisionist" being another favorite charge), the resonance with the Holocaust (with a capital 'H') and with "Holocaust denial" deliberately invoked. Moreover, our interlocutor's use of this alleged genocide in different public forums shows him to be a de facto member of what we call the Bosnia Genocide Lobby. This loose-knit lobby, parts of which have been financed by George Soros and various Western governments over the years, has produced its own journals and websites, and its function -- like that of our interlocutor -- is to reinforce a party line related to the breakup of Yugoslavia, its causes, its victims and villains, and its aftermath, and to attack serious dissenters from the party-line.

Let us begin with our interlocutor's name. We do not believe that "Raoul Djukanovic" is this person's real name -- a suspicion deepened by the fact that the photo that "Raoul Djukanovic" uses when posting at the U.K.-based Media Lens website is easily recognizable as that of the late U.S. writer Hunter S. Thompson.² We also suspect that our interlocutor's real name is Daniel Simpson, a man who once reported on the former Yugoslavia for Reuters (May 2001 through March 2002), and then the New York Times (May 2002 through March 2003). After March 2003, this Daniel Simpson's byline disappeared from the archives of establishment news sources, at least in relation to events in the former Yugoslavia and its successor states. Nonetheless, we will respect the wishes of our interlocutor, and address the pseudonym "Raoul Djukanovic."

The ostensible purpose of Djukanovic's response is to "disentangle" the "convoluted themes" in our "Open Letter to Al." But our purpose there was to critique the complaint submitted to Amnesty International by The Guardian - Observer's Ed Vulliamy over Al's selection of Noam Chomsky to deliver its October 30, 2009 Stand Up For Justice lecture in Belfast. The main focus of this critique involved our showing that Vulliamy's account (as well as the account of his colleagues with the British media) of the Fikret Alic episode at the Trnopolje camp on August 5, 1992 was false and misleading and has been ever since. Indeed, addressing and correcting this one matter took up at least 40% of our Open Letter. As ITN reporter Penny Marshall explained in the Sunday Times, after ITN's images of Fikret Alic went viral (our phrase, not Marshall's), "British newspapers were calling for military intervention; within 20 minutes of the [ITN] report being re-broadcast on American television, George Bush promised to press for a United Nations resolution authorising use of force."³ As far as journalism is concerned -- indeed, the "journalism of attachment" -- this was the British reporters' real achievement at Trnopolje.

So how does Djukanovic deal with this issue? He refers to it in a single sentence near the end of his reply: "As for Fikret Alic and all the rest, from the verbiage above an ignorant reader could be excused for wondering whether anyone was killed or raped in a Serb camp." Djukanovic thus dodges the issues involved in our debunking of the Fikret Alic photo, but implies that somehow we were denying the existence of Bosnian Serb-run displaced persons- and detention- and POW-camps. We have never done that. However, we did mention that the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats (as well as the Croats within the Republic of Croatia) also ran displaced persons- and detention- and POW-camps, and one of the tactics of the Bosnia Genocide Truthers is to ignore these camps while focusing hysterically on and inflating the Bosnian Serb-run camps. Djukanovic's real task here is to perpetuate ignorance about the wars that accompanied the breakup of Yugoslavia, under the guise of protecting and preserving The Truth about them. No deviationism from that Truth of exclusive and unchallengeable Serb villainy is permissible. Gauging by the multiple venues where we have observed his work over the years, Djukanovic (a.k.a. Daniel Simpson) never once departs from this task.

Although Djukanovic mentions our Open Letter, he does not take more than a passing interest in it: his real target is our 2007 analysis, "The Dismantling of Yugoslavia,"⁴ specifically its section 5, where we dealt with the fate of the Srebrenica "safe area" population, and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. (See the Appendix below, where we reproduce section 5 in its entirety.) Djukanovic quotes the following passage from this 2007 analysis, but he omits 28 words from the original text, which we have reinserted in what follows (denoted by the use of CAPS):

The claim that 8,000 Bosnian Muslim males had been executed there was based on a Red Cross news alert that its office in Tuzla had fielded 8,000 missing person requests: 5,000 for "individuals who apparently fled the enclave before it fell," plus 3,000 for "persons reportedly arrested by the Bosnian Serb forces." ALTHOUGH AT THAT POINT IN MID-SEPTEMBER 1995 THERE WERE ONLY A FEW REPORTS OF THE KIND OF OPPORTUNISTIC KILLINGS THAT ACCOMPANY WAR, ALONG WITH ALLEGATIONS OF MASS EXECUTIONS, in a remarkable propaganda coup the thousands of deaths from fighting and escapees were forgotten and the 8,000 quickly became victims of execution and genocide.

Notice the phrase that Djukanovic omitted: "AT THAT POINT IN MID-SEPTEMBER

1995. . . ." Unambiguously, our point here was about the origin of the 8,000-figure, which came from the International Committee of the Red Cross's effort during wartime to identify and track missing persons in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On September 13, 1995, the Red Cross reported that, after it had eliminated 2,000 duplicate tracking requests for missing persons, the "remaining 8,000 requests [fell] into two categories: about 5,000 concern individuals who apparently fled the [Srebrenica] enclave before it fell, while the remaining 3,000 relate to persons reportedly arrested by the Bosnian Serb forces."⁵ Hence, we also wrote (with another passage omitted by Djukanovic again denoted by CAPS):

FURTHERMORE, UNLIKE OTHER CASES WHERE EARLY INFLATED AND SPECULATIVE ESTIMATES OF DEATHS WERE GRADUALLY REVISED DOWNWARD IN LIGHT OF EMERGING HARD EVIDENCE -- AS WITH ESTIMATES OF KOSOVO ALBANIANS KILLED DURING NATO'S BOMBING WAR, OR THE DEATHS AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER ON 9/11 -- this initial 8,000 figure for the missing, now executed, males of Srebrenica has never been revised from its initial very problematic level. It has remained firm and unchallengeable, despite the fact that nothing close to confirming evidence has been forthcoming.

Djukanovic objects that we have written this without showing the "whereabouts of however many of the 8,000 [we] think weren't killed, or . . . how they died if they weren't executed." But this is both false and, more important, misses our point: namely, that the list of 8,000 missing persons originally came from the Red Cross, that this 8,000-figure referred to the non-duplicate tracking requests for missing persons then in the Red Cross's database but did not refer to deaths at all, and that the 8,000-figure most assuredly was not based on any evidence of executions. In fact, as late as November 2003, the "total number of individuals located in the Srebrenica mass grave sites" was reported by ICTY Prosecution expert Dean Manning to have been 2,570 -- and this number did not distinguish between civilians and armed combatants, or between those killed in battle and those executed.⁶ But, for the establishment media, the 8,000-figure was already in wide usage as referring to executions at the time Manning testified to 2,570 bodies found, and this 8,000-figure has become even more firmly entrenched in the years that followed.

As regards Djukanovic's claim that we fail to explain what happened to the 8,000 "if they weren't executed," this assumes the 8,000-figure is authentic and meaningful, and attempts to displace the burden of proof for executions (in contrast to combat-related deaths) from himself and his allies onto others. But he is also wrong inasmuch as we have repeatedly explained that as columns of some 12,000 to 15,000 Bosnian Muslim males undertook to break through from Srebrenica towards Tuzla, fierce fighting with Bosnian Serbs occurred often, with estimates of Bosnian Muslim deaths running from 1,000 to 3,000, with the Bosnian Muslim Chief of the Supreme Command Staff General Enver Hadzihasanovic testifying at the ICTY that he could "claim for certainty that 2,628 members, both soldiers and commanding officers, members of the 28th Division, were killed" during this retreat,⁷ and the Bosnian Serbs admitting between 300 and 500 deaths on their side.⁸ Hundreds of Bosnian Muslims also fled from Srebrenica eastward, across the Drina River into Serbia itself, and several thousand soldiers successfully reached Muslim-controlled territory (3,175 on Hadzihasanovic's estimate), where they were reintegrated into the Bosnian Muslim army. (The Bosnian Muslim authorities even refused Red Cross requests for the names and numbers of those who safely reached Bosnian Muslim territory, cruel to their relatives left behind, but useful for keeping the list of missing as high as possible.⁹)

Djukanovic of course trusts any list referring to the 8,000-figure as authentic, and assumes that virtually everyone on such a list was a Bosnian Muslim male civilian from the Srebrenica "safe area" population, killed execution-style at the hands of Bosnian Serbs. On the other hand, Bosnian Serb lists of their dead and missing in the Srebrenica area don't interest him, and he would certainly not trust Bosnian Serbs estimates put forth in like manner. Thus Djukanovic is not a "denier" as regards massacres of Bosnian Serbs, nor an apologist for "ethnic cleansing" even as he ignores the huge cleansing of Serbs during Operation Flash and Operation Storm in 1995, and the cleansing of Serbs from Kosovo beginning in June 1999 under NATO's occupation -- and for one simple reason: the Serbs and their apologists are not truth-tellers (besides which, the Serbs had it coming). But might not the Bosnian Muslims have had a wartime political interest in inflating alleged atrocity stories and the number of Bosnian Muslims killed? Didn't the Bosnian Muslim leadership ever lie to the foreign media about the scale of their wartime dead, and weren't there incidents in which they likely killed their own for political advantage? Incidents such as the February 1994 attack on the Markale marketplace in Sarajevo, and the August 1995 attack on a narrow street adjacent to the same marketplace, both killing many dozens of civilians, both "help[ing] to shape a manifestly pro-Muslim point of view" in Western political and media capitals, in Cees Wiebes' words, and both "serv[ing] as the catalyst for NATO retribution from the air," as U.S. Lieutenant Colonel John Sray observed, the August 1995 incident leading to NATO's largest out-of-area bombing campaign up till that point "just thirty-nine hours" after it occurred, as David Binder reported?¹⁰ There has always been substantial evidence that points to Bosnian Muslim responsibility for both of these incidents; and Wiebes reports that in confidential interviews he has conducted,

"American intelligence officers admitted that the ABiH [Bosnian Muslim Army] had taken responsibility for [the latter] incident."¹¹ But none of these points will ever arise for Djukanovic.

Djukanovic objects that we "insinuat[e] that however many were killed at Srebrenica, most of them weren't civilians," and he objects to our claim that "It is likely that more civilians were killed [during Croatia's Operation Storm] than following the fall of Srebrenica." But we don't insinuate anything -- we are perfectly forthright that we believe more civilians were killed during Operation Storm than in the aftermath of the fall of Srebrenica. We note that Bosnian Muslim women and children were bussed out of Srebrenica by the Bosnian Serbs, and that only one female body was found in the near-Srebrenica graves; this means that Serb killings, whether in combat or execution-style, were of military-age men. The Croats didn't bus Croatian Serb women and children out the Krajina prior to Operation Storm, and several hundred Croatian Serb women and children were killed. As we wrote in 2007, "The asymmetry in how the Srebrenica massacre and Operation Storm have entered the Western canon is enlightening. . . . Srebrenica is almost never mentioned without defining it as Europe's worst massacre since WW II, whereas Operation Storm is virtually never described as Europe's largest ethnic cleansing since the war. Once again, political bias on the worthiness and unworthiness of the victims dictates attention and indignation" -- a dichotomy based on who the perpetrators were: The Enemy (Bosnian Serbs) or allies and clients (Croats and Bosnian Muslims).¹² Djukanovic never once tries to cope with these comparative numbers and the kind of implications that we draw from them. For him, it is much easier to imply deviousness and to rely on everybody recognizing The Truth.

The history of the wars that accompanied the breakup of the former Yugoslavia is like a "Holy Issue in England," as Noam Chomsky recently wrote, and we agree.¹³ But this religion has also given birth to a cult that exists to preserve and protect the ruling orthodox version of these wars, and to attack anyone with the temerity to challenge its basic tenets. Thus, wherever there arises a serious challenge to the orthodoxy, figures such as Djukanovic (et al.) can be found lambasting the challengers. His (and their) repeated concern with the sanctity of the 8,000-figure in relation to the Srebrenica massacre, and his charge that we misrepresent the "known facts about who initiated a war of pre-emptive aggression" in the former Yugoslavia, rank among the most fundamental tenets of the orthodoxy. In its condensed form, the orthodox version of the breakup of Yugoslavia affirms that:

The former Yugoslavia broke-up violently, the way that it did, because by no later than August 1, 1991, Slobodan Milosevic and a number of other ethnic Serb individuals entered into a joint criminal enterprise the purpose of which was the creation of a Greater Serbia (or a single unitary territory belonging to ethnic Serbs alone), and the means these co-perpetrators adopted to achieve their purpose entailed the forcible and permanent removal of the majority of non-Serbs (predominantly Muslims, Croats, and Albanians) from this territory, and included murder and rape, the destruction of property, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and even genocide.¹⁴

Djukanovic assumes that this version of history is valid, and in his November 22 comment he attacks us for misrepresenting it. But he doesn't support this with any actual facts, and while he focuses on our 2007 Monthly Review article, where we provide extensive facts to the contrary and even show that the ICTY's Prosecution eventually conceded that Milosevic never sought to create a "Greater Serbia,"¹⁵ Djukanovic doesn't attempt to refute any of our points. His modus operandi depends on the mere repetition of establishment talking points, mere evasion whenever and wherever repetition won't work -- and, of course, smears across the board.

Djukanovic's MO against Diana Johnstone -- one of the arch-villains of the Bosnia Genocide Lobby -- is the same. Djukanovic writes that in the disputed profile of Chomsky that was written by Emma Brockes and published by The Guardian back in October 2005,¹⁶ Chomsky perhaps didn't use the term "massacre" with quotation marks around the term, but the practice of using quotation marks is a "fetish of Diana Johnstone whose work [Chomsky] endorses," although her work is "inaccurate and misleading. . . ." Readers of Media Lens can be sure Djukanovic will not stop to give a single illustration of Johnstone's alleged inaccuracies, and his implication that Johnstone's "fetish" is deriding or denying a Srebrenica massacre is an outright lie. In her book *Fools' Crusade: Yugoslavia, NATO and Western Delusions*,¹⁷ Johnstone's discussion of Srebrenica never denies a massacre, but puts it in context, something that the Bosnia Genocide Lobby cannot tolerate. Johnstone's other defects are that her book is very scholarly, does not repeat the ruling orthodoxy's version of the relevant history (though her book does give this history its due), and is very hard for the Lobby's Truth-enforcers to deal with -- so Djukanovic resorts to simple assertions of its being "inaccurate and misleading," and his fabrication about her "fetish."

In a separate comment at the Media Lens website dated November 26, Djukanovic writes that "[I]t is untrue that journalists 'retreated from their 1999 claim that there had been a 'genocide' in Kosovo', since next to none ever claimed there had been one." With this he is re-opening a previous debate at

Media Lens, based on a March 2006 Media Alert by the Editors,¹⁸ and a reply to this Media Alert that took issue with its correct and very detailed findings.¹⁹ In contending that "next to [no one] ever claimed" that "genocide" was occurring in Kosovo during 1999, Djukanovic relies on a ludicrous hair-splitting technique that distinguishes between (a) claims that the Serbs were actually committing genocide against the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo in 1999, and (b) claims that the 1999 U.S.-led war against Serbia prevented the Serbs from committing genocide.²⁰ But what really mattered was the simple use of the invidious 'G'-word in relation to events inside Kosovo during the year leading up to NATO's military assault on Serbia in March 1999 -- and the greatly escalated use of the word during the bombing war itself. Thus in 1998-1999, propaganda about "genocide" in Kosovo played a similar role in selling NATO's war as did propaganda about Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction" and ties to Al Qaeda in selling the U.S.-U.K. war in 2002-2003; "genocide" (or the threat of "genocide") was the "intelligence and facts" that were then being "fixed around the policy" (in the words of the notorious Downing Street Memo dated July 23, 2002).

A study of five U.S. print publications showed that they used the word genocide 220 times in relation to Kosovo in 1998-1999 (but only 18 times for Iraq suffering under the sanctions of mass destruction from 1991 through 1999, where the death toll exceeded that of Kosovo by better than 20 to 1).²¹ Among the "next to none" we may cite U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, U.K. Defense Minister George Robertson, U.S. Secretary of Defense William Cohen, German Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping -- and a group of five British intellectuals who published an Open Letter in *The Observer* on April 4, 1999 that stated: "As the genocide unfolds in Kosovo, the need to intensify and speed up the military action to halt it becomes ever more imperative. . . . The first priority is to arm the KLA without delay, as the only way to halt Milosevic's genocide." In short, Djukanovic's assertion that "next to" no one ever claimed that "genocide" was occurring in Kosovo back in 1999 is yet another gross falsehood. As the astute critic of wartime propaganda, Phillip Knightly, once wrote:

The atrocity story is a tried and tested way of arousing hatred. It fortifies the mind of the nation with "proof" of the depravity of the enemy and his cruel and degenerate conduct of his war. . . . This is exactly what happened in Kosovo. President Milosevic, from being a pragmatic leader that the West could do business with, became a new Genghis Khan and, significantly, a new Hitler. This link with the Second World War, a war for Britain of national survival, has strong emotional appeal. So all those in government who supported the NATO war, from the Prime Minister down, began to pepper their speeches with words like "Holocaust" and "genocide" (on whose PR advice, one wonders?) until the idea was established that the new Hitler, Milosevic, was guilty not just of atrocities but of genocide against the Kosovar Albanians, and that a new Holocaust was in the making.²³

As repeated recipients of the charge of "genocide deniers" (and the like) whenever the fate of the Srebrenica "safe area" population is at issue, we also want to say a few words about the "genocide" decisions, first in the case of *ICTY v. Radislav Krstic* (2001) and all subsequent ICTY judgments that build on this precedent, and then in the reiteration of this precedent by the International Court of Justice in the case of *Bosnia and Herzegovina v. Serbia and Montenegro* (2007).²⁴ Incredibly, the Krstic Judgment ruled that in killing "only the [Bosnian Muslim] men of military age" after the fall of Srebrenica, the Bosnian Serb forces showed "an intent to destroy in part the Bosnian Muslim group within the meaning of Article 4 [of the ICTY's Statute],"²⁵ even though the lives of the remaining Bosnian Muslim population then present at Srebrenica (at least 25,000 people) were admittedly spared, and even though the Bosnian Muslim population at the time totaled approximately 1.85 million people in all.²⁶ Six years later, the ICJ incorporated the Krstic Judgment into its own Judgment, stating that the ICJ "has no reason to depart from the [ICTY's] determination that the necessary specific intent [to commit genocide] was established," and concluding that the Bosnian Serbs committed acts in and around Srebrenica "with the specific intent to destroy in part the group of the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina as such. . . ." ²⁷

But the ICJ itself never actually determined that the Bosnian Serbs committed genocide: Only that it "sees no reason to disagree with the concordant findings of the [ICTY's] Trial Chamber and . . . Appeals Chamber" that the Bosnian Serbs committed genocide.²⁸ This means that on a thread no thicker than the work of the ICTY hangs the fate of the ICJ's first and only-ever contentious case related to the Genocide Convention. As York University professor of international law Michael Mandel observed about the Krstic Judgment, but with equal relevance to the ICJ's Judgment: "You would expect genocide to mean the killing of a people. . . ." But these judgments are "light years away from the UN General Assembly Resolution of 1946 that first recognized genocide as an international crime, defining it as 'the denial of the right of existence of entire human groups'. [And they are] even farther from the Holocaust of the Jews [G]enocide was transformed in [these] judgment[s], not into mere ethnic cleansing, but into the killing of potential fighters during a war for military advantage."²⁹

Thus have the monumental killing efforts of the Nazi regime been subjected to grotesque trivialization at the hands of the ICTY and the ICJ, and the legacy of Raphael Lemkin³⁰ bastardized by the current generation of academics and selective atrocity-chasers.³¹ If phrases such as "Holocaust denial" and "genocide denial" possess any meaning beyond their vulgarized use for propaganda, intimidation, and smear, we find it here, in the ICTY's judgments related to Srebrenica, in the ICJ's failure to reject this highly politicized body's work, and in the rhetoric of countless academics, journalists, and political figures who keep repeating these claims whenever Srebrenica is the issue.

Concluding Note

Properly understood, "Raoul Djukanovic" is an enforcer, and we take it as a backhanded compliment that he (along with Oliver Kamm, a leader-writer at the Rupert Murdoch-owned Times, a cheerleader for U.K. and U.S. aggressions, and a one-time hedge fund operator³²) takes strong exception to our positions on key issues related to the breakup of Yugoslavia. As we have stressed, Djukanovic and his allies don't debate issues and they don't resort to evidence, either: They repeat established Truth, and they assail the dissenters from that Truth with the whole panoply of insults and misrepresentations they command.

Notes

1 Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, Open Letter to Amnesty International's London and Belfast Offices, on the Occasion of Noam Chomsky's Belfast Festival Lecture, October 30, 2009, MRZine, November 22, 2009. For Raoul Djukanovic's comments, see MRZine, November 23, 2009. A more extensive set of comments by the same individual has been posted at the U.K.-based Media Lens. For these, see our "Open Letter to Amnesty" as posted to the Media Lens Forum, November 21, 2009, where Djukanovic's comments appear beneath our article.

2 For another copy of the exact same photo, see here.

3 Penny Marshall, "ITN's Penny Marshall tells how she made the world wake up," Sunday Times, August 16, 1992.

4 Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, "The Dismantling of Yugoslavia," Monthly Review, October 2007.

5 Among the sources that we used for our 2007 Monthly Review article were two reports by the ICRC: "Former Yugoslavia: Srebrenica: Help for Families Still Awaiting News" (ICRC News, September 13, 1995); and the entry for "Bosnia and Herzegovina" in the ICRC's Annual Report 1995 (May, 1996), para. 16.

6 See Dean Manning, Witness Statement, Prosecutor v. Slobodan Milosevic (IT-02-54-T), November 24, 2003, para. 59, and paras. 27-29.

7 See The Prosecutor of the Tribunal Against Radislav Krstic (IT-98-33-T), Transcript, April 6, 2001, 9532, lines 20-21. Hadzihasanovic also testified that the "accurate number of the members of the 28th Division who managed to get through [to Bosnian Muslim territory] was 3,175" (9532, lines 15-16).

8 See Report About Case Srebrenica (The First Part), Documentation Centre of Republic of Srpska, Bureau of Government of RS for Relation with ICTY, Banja Luka, September, 2002, 28. There we read: "Bosnian Serb forces lost the fight at several places, such as Baljkovica, Krizevac, etc., and suffered the loss of 300-500 soldiers because Bosnian Serb soldiers, being inferior in number, could not fight with hundreds or thousands of Muslim soldiers or Muslim soldiers that crossed roads at a time even by heavy artillery."

9 See Michael Evans and Michael Kallenbach, "'Missing' Enclave Troops Found," The Times, August 2, 1995. According to these reporters: "Thousands of the missing' Bosnian Muslim soldiers from Srebrenica who have been at the centre of reports of possible mass executions by the Serbs, are believed to be safe to the northeast of Tuzla. . . . Monitoring the safe escape of Muslim soldiers and civilians from the captured enclaves of Srebrenica and Zepa has proved a nightmare for the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross. For the first time yesterday, however, the Red Cross in Geneva said it had heard from sources in Bosnia that up to 2,000 Bosnian Government troops were in an area north of Tuzla. They had made their way there from Srebrenica 'without their families being informed', a spokesman said, adding that it had not been possible to verify the reports because the Bosnian Government refused to allow the Red Cross into the area. Although the Red Cross refused to speculate why the Bosnian Government was keeping secret the presence of the Srebrenica troops near Tuzla, it probably is doing so for military reasons."

20 Cees Wiebes, Intelligence and the War in Bosnia, 1992-1995 (London: Lit Verlag, 2003), specifically Ch. 2, Section 4, "The Perception and Information Position of the Western Intelligence Services," 68-69; John E. Sray, "Selling the

Bosnian Myth to America: Buyer Beware," Foreign Military Studies Office, October, 1995; and David Binder, "Bosnia's Bombers," The Nation, October 3, 1995. As Binder explained: "Why would the Bosnian government kill its own people? The fact is that in the week before the marketplace killing, government forces launched heavy artillery attacks on Serb positions around Gorazde and at Vogosca, north of Sarajevo, both times provoking Serb retaliatory fire. On each occasion the Muslim leadership loudly demanded NATO air attacks, but General Smith refused to call them in. Then came Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke's August 27 threats that 'in the next week or two, the consequences will be very adverse to the Serbian goals' and a few seconds later his warning of 'more active NATO air'. Clearly the airstrikes had already been planned before Holbrooke set off for the Balkans to push President Clinton's peace plan. Only a pretext was needed. Indeed, State Department spokesman Nick Burns was talking about Serb responsibility and airstrikes before the UN. report even reached New York. The first wave of US. planes started bombing targets just thirty-nine hours after the marketplace explosion."

11 Wiebes, *Intelligence and the War in Bosnia, 1992 - 1995*, 68.

12 Herman and Peterson, "The Dismantling of Yugoslavia," specifically Section 5, "The UN, ICTY, and the Srebrenica Massacre," 19-22. (See the Appendix, below.)

13 Noam Chomsky's November 12, 2009 response to the British academic David Campbell was reproduced in a post to Campbell's website, "Chomsky's Bosnia Shame," November 14, 2009. "I realize that the Balkans are a Holy Issue in England," were Chomsky's exact words, "far more sensitive than Israel in the US, so perhaps it is not surprising that a single phrase in an obscure interview, which said virtually nothing, would arouse utter hysteria, as it has."

14 See, e.g., *The Prosecutor of the Tribunal Against Slobodan Milosevic (IT-02-54-T)*, Amended Indictment for Bosnia - Herzegovina, ICTY, November 22, 2002, para. 5-9. This is the basic theory for the breakup of Yugoslavia put forth by the Prosecution at the ICTY, as repeated in each of the three indictments of Slobodan Milosevic related to Croatia, each of the three indictments related to Kosovo, and the two indictments related to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and scattered in whole or in part across the indictments of dozens of other ethnic Serbs.

15 Herman and Peterson, "The Dismantling of Yugoslavia," specifically Section 7, "The Milosevic Trial," 26-29.

16 See Emma Brockes, "The Greatest Intellectual?" *The Guardian*, October 31, 2005. Although this version of Brockes's article is prefaced by some remarks by the website's editor, the article-proper begins at "Despite his belief that most journalists are. . . ."

17 See Diana Johnstone, *Fools' Crusade: Yugoslavia, NATO and Western Delusions* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2002), 109-118.

18 See The Editors, "DISAPPEARING GENOCIDE: The Media And The Death Of Slobodan Milosevic," *Media Lens*, March 20, 2006.

19 See Roger Lippmann, "Re: MEDIA ALERT: DISAPPEARING GENOCIDE (death of Milosevic)," *Media Lens Forum*, April 3, 2006.

20 Ibid. Lippman undertook such an attempt. He contends that the Western media engaged in (b) without engaging in (a). Lippman concludes: "[I]t should be no surprise that by 2006, reporters were not saying that genocide happened in Kosovo. The genocide didn't 'disappear' in 2006; it was prevented in 1999. While Milosevic had a plan for mass killings and total expulsions of Albanians from Kosovo -- a plan already underway by the time of the intervention -- the plan could not be completed, due to NATO's action. NATO and Clinton saved the Albanians of Kosovo, whether or not we like the way it was done, or the way the media portrayed it." In our view, this makes Roger Lippman not only a "genocide"-monger, but a "genocide"-monger after the fact: seven years after NATO's 1999 seizure of Serbia's province of Kosovo, Lippman reiterates the old and false 1999 propaganda about "genocide," only to deny that anybody ever seriously claimed that "genocide" was occurring at the time.

21 See Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, 2nd. Ed. (New York: Pantheon Books, 2002), Introduction, xix-xxiv, especially the table "Mainstream Media Usage of 'Genocide' for Kosovo, East Timor, Turkey, and Iraq," xxi.

22 For those of you committed to a reality-based community, here are ten examples of powerful and/or influential figures appearing in highly-respected media to use the 'G'-word about Serb conduct in Kosovo: (1) "Genocide is starting", German Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping said in a television interview with station ZDF" (George Jahn, "Charges of Kosovo Genocide as NATO Bolsters Forces," *Associated Press*, March 28, 1999). (2) "[A]llied leaders accused the Serb forces of conducting 'genocide' against the Albanians" (Guy Dinmore, "Nato Switches Focus of Attacks to Kosovo," *Financial Times*, March 29, 1999). (3) "NATO Hunting for Serb Forces; U.S. Reports Signs of 'Genocide'" (Francis X.

Clines, New York Times headline, March 30, 1999, p. 1, col. 6). (4) "Leading humanitarian and human rights groups will call for a NATO protection force to be deployed in Kosovo to end the genocide being carried out by Serbian forces and to indict Slobodan Milosevic as a war criminal for acts of genocide at a press briefing on Thursday, April 1, at 10 a.m. at the National Press Club. . . ." ("Humanitarian, Human Rights Groups to Call for NATO Protection Force in Kosovo," U.S. Newswire, March 31, 1999). (5) "The Foreign Secretary Robin Cook this week described the situation in Kosovo as 'worse than Bosnia', 'ethnic cleansing' became 'ethnic extermination', and then 'genocide', a term used to draw parallels with Nazi atrocities in the second world war" (Richard Norton-Taylor, "Words of War," The Guardian, April 3, 1999). (6) "As the genocide unfolds in Kosovo, the need to intensify and speed up the military action to halt it becomes ever more imperative. . . . The first priority is to arm the KLA without delay, as the only way to halt Milosevic's genocide" (Jill Craigie, Michael Foot, Adrian Hastings, Quintin Hoare, and Branka Magas, "Open Letter To the leaders of NATO," The Observer, April 4, 1999). (7) "'Of all gross violations, genocide knows no parallel in human history,' Mr. Annan said. Although the United Nations has no monitors in the province, 'the signs are that it may be happening, once more, in Kosovo', he said" ("A Bolder Annan Fears 'Genocide'," New York Times, April 8, 1999). (8) "'This is no time to pause', Mr. Cohen said at NATO today. 'We will reject any settlement that freezes the results of Milosevic's genocide'" (Steven Lee Meyers and Michael R. Gordon, "Lacking Ground Troops, General Seeks More in Air," New York Times, April 8, 1999) (9) "Faced with the sort of genocide and violence we have witnessed over the past few weeks, we had no option but to pursue military action" (George Robertson, "I Say to the Left -- Our Bombs Are Not Making It Worse. We Must Win This," The Guardian, April 16, 1999). (10) "Stop the genocide" (Susan Sontag, "Why Are We In Kosovo?" New York Times Magazine, May 2, 1999; later reprinted as "An Evil That Makes the Balkan War Just," The Observer, May 16, 1999).

23 Phillip Knightley, "Propaganda Wars," Independent on Sunday, June 27, 1999.

24 See Judge Almiro Rodrigues et al., The Prosecutor of the Tribunal Against Radislav Krstic (IT-98-33-T), Judgment, August 2, 2001, paras. 539-599; and Case Concerning the Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Judgment, International Court of Justice, February 26, 2007, paras. 278-297.

25 Krstic, August 2, 2001, para. 595, para. 598. -- The relevant Article 4 of the ICTY's Statute gives the ICTY the "power to prosecute persons committing genocide" as defined by paragraph 2. Paragraph 2 states: "Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group" (Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, May 25, 1993, and amended thereafter).

26 According to John R. Lampe, the 1991 population of Bosnia-Herzegovina consisted of 4,363,000 people overall, and this included 1,906,000 Muslims, 1,369,000 Serbs, and 755,000 Croats (Yugoslavia as History: Twice There was a Country, 2nd. Ed., New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000, Table 12.1, "Population of Yugoslavia's successor states, 1991 and 1997," 368).

27 Case Concerning the Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, para. 295, para. 297.

28 Ibid, para. 296.

29 Michael Mandel, How America Gets Away With Murder: Illegal Wars, Collateral Damage, and Crimes Against Humanity (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2004), 156-159.

30 "By 'genocide' we mean the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group. This new word . . . is intended . . . to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves" (Raphael Lemkin, Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government Proposals for Redress. New York: H. Fertig, 1973, 79; quoted in Mandel, 157).

31 See, e.g., Samantha Power, "A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide (New York: Basic Books, 2002), especially Ch. 11, "Srebrenica: 'Getting Creamed'," 391-441, and Ch. 13, "Lemkin's Courtroom Legacy," 475-502; and Adam LeBor, "Complicity with Evil": The United Nations in the Age of Modern Genocide (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).

32 See, e.g., Oliver Kamm, "Srebrenica, Trnopolje and the Deniers," The Times Online, November 30, 2009; and Oliver Kamm, "Balkan Deniers," The Times Online, December 7, 2009.

Appendix

Excerpted from Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, "The Dismantling of Yugoslavia," *Monthly Review*, October, 2007, specifically Section 5 (in Part Two at the *Monthly Review* website).

5. The UN, ICTY, and the Srebrenica Massacre

The UN and ICTY played central roles in the institutionalization of the Srebrenica massacre as the mark and proof of Serb criminality and "genocide" in Bosnia -- a "terrible crime," in Kofi Annan's words, and "the worst on European soil since the Second World War."¹ It was clear by mid-July 1995 that several thousand of Srebrenica's male population had escaped to Bosnian Muslim-held territory, and some even to Serbia; it was also clear that unknown numbers had died in fierce fighting. The claim that 8,000 Bosnian Muslim males had been executed there was based on a Red Cross news alert that its office in Tuzla had fielded 8,000 missing person requests: 5,000 for "individuals who apparently fled the enclave before it fell," plus 3,000 for "persons reportedly arrested by the Bosnian Serb forces."² Although at that point in mid-September 1995 there were only a few reports of the kind of opportunistic killings that accompany war, along with allegations of mass executions, in a remarkable propaganda coup the thousands of deaths from fighting and escapees were forgotten and the 8,000 quickly became victims of execution and genocide. Furthermore, unlike other cases where early inflated and speculative estimates of deaths were gradually revised downward in the light of emerging hard evidence -- as with estimates of Kosovo Albanians killed during NATO's bombing war, or the deaths at the World Trade Center on 9/11 -- this initial 8,000 figure for the missing, now executed, males of Srebrenica has never been revised from its initial very problematic level. It has remained firm and unchallengeable, despite the fact that nothing close to confirming evidence has been forthcoming.

By the time of the 2001 Judgment in the trial of the Bosnian Serb General Radislav Krstic on charges that included "genocide," six years of forensic searches of Srebrenica-related gravesites had produced 2,028 sets of individual remains ("conservatively estimate[d]," the Court noted).⁴ Nonetheless the Court managed to conclude that the "total number" of Bosnian Muslim males executed was "likely within the range of 7,000 - 8,000," and that the deaths of even 7,000 - 8,000 military-aged males in this particular region of far eastern Bosnia constituted "an intent to destroy in part the Bosnian Muslim group."⁵ Krstic was guilty of "genocide."

With this tortured decision, political to its core, the Court ruled that "genocide" could and did occur in one small town, although the perpetrators bussed the women and children to safety, and the Court confessed its uncertainty about how many of the missing really were executed, and how many killed in battle. In effect, the Court simply guessed that a majority of the missing were executed. "[T]he evidence given by witnesses, as corroborated by the forensic and demographics evidence presented by the OTP, strongly suggests that well in excess of 7,000 people went missing following the take-over of Srebrenica," one sentence reads. "The correlation between the age and sex of the bodies exhumed from the Srebrenica graves and that of the missing persons support the proposition that the majority of missing people were, in fact, executed and buried in the mass graves."⁶ As Michael Mandel writes, a "majority of a maximum of 7,000 - 8,000 would put the maximum executed closer to 4,000" -- or roughly one-half that of the standard view. "[S]o why the exaggerated numbers?" Mandel asks. He answers:

Because the tribunal wasn't really interested in the murder charges. They were after the big prize of genocide, a much more difficult case to make in these circumstances, so the higher the number of dead the better. My computer tells me that the tribunal used 33 times more space in their judgment trying to establish the genocide charge than the murder charge, even though the result for Mr. Krstic would have been the same.⁷

The Srebrenica massacre took place in the month before Operation Storm, Croatia's devastating attack and ethnic cleansing of some 250,000 Serbs from the Krajina, with over a thousand civilians killed, including over 500 women and children -- no women and children were bussed to safety by the perpetrators, as they were at Srebrenica -- and more than 2,000 missing.⁸ It is likely that more civilians were killed in this campaign than following the fall of Srebrenica, but this was given cursory treatment by the Western media, and has never been regarded as a case of "genocide." On the contrary, the immediate and unrelenting focus on the fate of Srebrenica's male population facilitated this U.S.-approved and supported cleansing campaign. Cees Wiebes recounts an occasion in August 1995, when the "[UN Military Observers] in Zagreb organized a press conference on large-scale human rights violations by the Bosnian Croats during the recently completed Operation Storm (carried out with US assistance). The room was full of journalists and things were just about to start when an official from the US Embassy in Zagreb suddenly entered and announced that a press conference was about to begin at the embassy where information would be released on aerial photos of possible mass graves around Srebrenica. The room emptied immediately."⁹

Madeleine Albright's performance before the Security Council had the same diverting impact. On the afternoon when the Council met to adopt resolutions on Croatia as well as Bosnia, Albright reminded the Council not to "forget the tragedy and outrages perpetrated earlier in Bosnia against the eastern enclaves of Srebrenica and Zepa, . . . the magnitude of the suffering they caused, . . . [as] many as 13,000 men, women and children . . . driven from their homes. . . ."10 In fact, she used the phrase "we must not forget" five different times during her remarks -- each time directed at Srebrenica and Zepa and the Bosnian Serbs. The "dead were not killed in the heat of battle, they were not killed in self-defence and they were not killed by accident," Albright insisted; "they were systematically slaughtered on the instructions of the Bosnian Serb leadership." This is at best a half truth as it is clear that unknown but large numbers were killed in battle. Furthermore, those killed in Krajina were not killed in the heat of battle, in self-defence or by accident, and the proof of the Croat leadership's role in these killings and the driving of many more than "13,000 men, women and children from their homes," with U.S. support, is clear.

In August 2005, Croatia's government declared the tenth anniversary of Operation Storm a "Victory and Homeland Thanksgiving Day."¹¹ That is, Croatia was officially celebrating the single largest ethnic cleansing in Europe since the Second World War. Srebrenica was treated rather differently: In Bosnia on the tenth anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre, dignitaries from Western states and the UN gathered at the new Srebrenica Memorial at Potocari to solemnly commemorate and "pay tribute to the victims of a terrible crime -- the worst on European soil since the Second World War" (Kofi Annan).¹² Can you imagine the Western response if Serbia declared the tenth anniversary of Srebrenica a "Victory and Homeland Thanksgiving Day"? But nobody in the West noticed the Croatian declaration, just as annual celebrations of Operation Storm during previous years had been unremarked.

The asymmetry in how the Srebrenica massacre and Operation Storm have entered the Western canon is enlightening. Srebrenica is regularly described as the "worst atrocity in Europe since the Second World War" -- this formula is routine. As regards Operation Storm, at an August 2005 ceremony in Belgrade to mark its tenth anniversary, Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica referred to it as the "biggest ethnic cleansing since World War Two," and nobody has put forward a claim of a larger forced transfer during the Balkan wars. However, as the tenth anniversaries of both events came and went in 2005, the English-language print and wire services referred to Srebrenica as the worst atrocity (or greatest massacre) in Europe since World War II literally hundreds of times; whereas the same print and wire services carried a description of Operation Storm as the greatest expulsion or transfer or ethnic cleansing in Europe since World War II a grand total of 15 times, and but twice in print, none in the United States or Britain.¹³ Srebrenica is almost never mentioned without defining it as Europe's worst massacre since WW II, whereas Operation Storm is virtually never described as Europe's largest ethnic cleansing since the war. Once again, political bias on the worthiness and unworthiness of the victims dictates attention and indignation.

Another point worth noting is that Operation Storm was very much a return to World War II-style ethnic cleansing and mass murder, when the Axis-created Independent State of Croatia (1941-1945), headed by Croatian fascist Ustashe leader Ante Pavelic, slaughtered hundreds of thousands of Serbs (and many Jews, and Gypsies), while large numbers also died in fighting or fled. As Nebojsa Malic has noted, although it took half a century for Serb numbers to recover from this wartime decimation, the newly independent Republic of Croatia was able to carry out another series of decimation operations with critical U.S. aid in the years 1992-1995, with its culmination in Operation Storm. "Tudjman made Pavelic's dream to rid Croatia of Serbs a reality," Malic writes. "It seems everything is in the choice of allies."¹⁴ And dependent on the silence and de facto cooperation of the humanitarian interventionists and international community.

Notes

1 Kofi A. Annan, "May we all learn and act on the lessons of Srebrenica" (SG/SM/9993), July 11, 2005.

2 See "Former Yugoslavia: Srebrenica: Help for Families Still Awaiting News," ICRC News, September 13, 1995; "8,000 missing, presumed dead, from fallen enclave," Agence France Presse, September 14, 1995; Maud S. Beelman, "Red Cross Says 8,000 People from Fallen Safe Area Are Missing," Associated Press, September 14, 1995; "8,000 Muslims Missing," the New York Times, September 15, 1995, reprinting the AP report. Also see the entry for "Bosnia and Herzegovina," Annual Report 1995, ICRC, May 31, 1996, para. 16.

3 At their peak, estimates of deaths caused at the World Trade Center in New York City reached as high as 6,886; but this was eventually reduced to 2,749. See Ula Illytzyk, "Report Drops Trade Center Death Toll by Three, to 2,749,"

Associated Press, January 23, 2004.

4 Judge Almiro Rodrigues, Judgment in Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic (IT-98-33-T), ICTY, August 2, 2001, para. 73. We add here that the 2,028 estimate was based on exhumations in whole or in part of 23 Srebrenica-related gravesites through 2001. We believe that there are at least 20 more "known" sites that have yet to be exhumed, although presumably less "promising." See Dean Manning, Witness Statement, Prosecutor v. Slobodan Milosevic (IT-02-54-T), November 24, 2003, paras. 27-29.

5 Judgment in Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, para. 84; para. 598.

6 Judgment in Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstic, para. 82.

7 Michael Mandel, How America Gets Away With Murder: Illegal Wars, Collateral Damage and Crimes Against Humanity (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2004), 156.

8 See, e.g., "Notification regarding anniversary of Serbs suffering in the aggression of Croatian army on the Serb Krajina in the August 95," as posted to the website of the Veritas Documentation Information Center (last accessed June 23, 2007). Veritas reports 1,883 ethnic Serbs killed during Operation Storm through the end of August, 1995. At 10th anniversary ceremonies in Belgrade, various survivor groups that represent former Krajina Serbs estimated as many as 2,627 Serbs had gone missing in the Krajina between 1991 and 1995. See "Patriarch Pavle holds memorial service for Serb victims of operation Oluja," August 4, 2005.

9 Cees Wiebes, Intelligence and the War in Bosnia, 1992-1995 (London: Lit Verlag, 2003), specifically Ch. 7, Section 4, "How Were Albright's Satellite Photos Discovered?" 337.

10 "The situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina" (S/PV.3564), UN Security Council, August 10, 1995, 6.

11 "Serbia, Croatia Mark 10th Anniversary of Krajina Serb Expulsion," RIA Novosti, August 6, 2005; "Oluja' 10 Years On -- Serbs Mourn while Croats Celebrate," Deutsche Presse-Agentur, August 4, 2005; and Zoran Radosavljevic, "Croats Cheer 1995 Army Triumph, Reach Out to Serbs," Reuters, August 5, 2005.

12 Kofi A. Annan, "May we all learn and act on the lessons of Srebrenica" (SG/SM/9993), United Nations Secretary-General, July 11, 2005.

13 We based these findings on searches carried out with three databases: Factiva ("All Sources"), NewsBank ("North America"), and Nexis ("Major Papers," "Magazines and Journals," and "Wire Services"). Our search parameters were: 'Srebrenica' and 'world war' for the period July 1-31, 2005; and 'Operation Storm' and 'world war' for the period August 1-31, 2005. Note that our point is very conservative: The disparity in the media's treatment of Srebrenica and Operation storm is actually greater than "scores of times" and "15 times" suggests.

14 Nebojsa Malic, "Remembering the Storm," AntiWar.com, August 4, 2005.

Edward S. Herman is professor emeritus of finance at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania and has written extensively on economics, political economy, and the media. Among his books are Corporate Control, Corporate Power (Cambridge University Press, 1981), The Real Terror Network (South End Press, 1982), and, with Noam Chomsky, The Political Economy of Human Rights (South End Press, 1979), and Manufacturing Consent (Pantheon, 2002). David Peterson is an independent journalist and researcher based in Chicago.

Fri Dec 11, 2009 11:47 am

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Raoul Djukanovic



Joined: 20 Mar 2004
Posts: 386
Location: UK

Post subject: [Quote](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)

Thanks David.

This article asserts that:

Quote:

"Media Lens began to feel the pressure of potential legal action brought under Britain's onerous libel laws"

Has anyone threatened you directly with legal action? If so, who?

I certainly haven't, and the only reference I've seen to lawsuits was on your message board, where several subscribers proposed taking action against Oliver Kamm.

I quoted some of these postings in a thread you deleted. It can be read in full here: <http://www.glypx.com/balkanwitness/amnesty-medialens.htm>

Here's my response to the article you've posted. I'll leave you to ponder the absurdity of calling it "excellent" while protesting that you're not endorsing their distortion of the facts.

Quote:

Reply to Herman and Peterson

By concluding their diatribe [1] with the words "properly understood", Ed Herman and David Peterson reveal which of us is the "enforcer" trading in authoritarian demands to adhere to "Truth" (as opposed to facts supported by evidence).

I'll confine my response to matters of fact relating to my original comments [2]. Herman and Peterson are not "serious dissenters from the party-line", and they haven't "challenged" anything except their credibility, by misrepresenting the known facts, despite being demonstrably aware of them [3]. I presume they regard this as lying when others do it.

The 8,000-plus death toll figure does not originate in any meaningful sense from a 1995 press release, as they claim [4]. It's a tally of missing people, presumed murdered, more than three-quarters of whom have since been DNA-matched to the remains of corpses exhumed from mass graves [5]. If they had the remotest interest in the facts, Herman and Peterson would at least refer to this mounting substantiation of a death toll they call "incompatible with the basic arithmetic of Srebrenica numbers before and after July 1995" [6], and for which they say that "nothing close to confirming evidence has been forthcoming." [7]

If they're suggesting that these people killed themselves in large numbers, or weren't murdered by Serbs (I'll leave them to define what being killed "execution-style" means, since it's presumably meant to mislead the uninformed), they need to provide evidence. They have none. They just blithely assert they died in combat, ignoring the evidence amassed by the ICTY [8], except for a few quotes they like the sound of (none of which tell us anything about the named human beings on the list of the missing [9], most of whom are now proven dead, having been exhumed from mass graves and DNA-matched).

To be clear, the ICTY's summary sheet says [10]: "The Tribunal has established beyond a reasonable doubt that the vast majority of those killed were not killed in combat, but were victims of executions." It is true, of course, that we don't yet know exactly how many were killed, but the most recent announcement by the body in charge of the DNA-matching programme states [11]: "The overall high matching rate between DNA extracted from these bone and blood samples leads ICMP to support an estimate of close to 8,100 individuals missing from the fall of Srebrenica."

The main reason that the exact number has yet to be established directly undermines Herman and Peterson's claims. To quote the ICTY again [12]: "If those buried in the mass graves had indeed been soldiers killed in battle, there would have been no need for Bosnian Serb forces to execute a massive cover-up campaign. And there is much evidence that proves that is exactly what they did in September and October of 1995. In order to cover up their initial crimes of killing civilians and prisoners of war, the Bosnian Serb forces committed another crime - they attempted to relocate the bodies. They used bulldozers and other heavy machinery to exhume a number of the mass gravesites and move the bodies to other locations." Hence their dismembered state.

When asked to provide evidence that the list of the missing isn't "authentic", as they suggest [13], Herman and Peterson don't attempt to prove that named people listed on it are alive, or never were. Instead, they change the subject, alleging (again with no evidence) that "Bosnian Serb lists of their dead and missing in the Srebrenica area don't interest [me]". Presumably this means they accept they have nothing to support their earlier reference to "thousands of escapees" [14] among the 8,000.

They go on to say they "are perfectly forthright that [they] believe more civilians were killed during Operation Storm than in the aftermath of the fall of Srebrenica", having stated that Operation Storm resulted in "over 1,000 civilians killed". [15] Unless they're saying "over 1,000" means more than 8,000, and they're in sole possession of the evidence that demonstrates this, they need to prove that the vast majority of the 8,000 named Srebrenica missing (of whom more than 6,000 are now identified and dead) weren't civilians. They have never attempted to do so because they can't.

As for Diana Johnstone, she not only puts "Srebrenica massacre" in quotation marks [16] (and adds that a "myth" called "Srebrenica" was "perhaps being used even before it happened"), she puts "8,000" in quotation marks too, and refers to the "sacralization of the estimated number of victims" [17], despite by her own admission (in email correspondence) having paid no attention to any of the emerging evidence for years.

That her work is inaccurate and misleading is self-evident. Noam Chomsky agrees. Though he called it "very careful and outstanding" in his interview with Emma Brockes, he said "it may be wrong" [18]. In fact, he conceded it was, by telling the Guardian "there was no debate or disagreement about Srebrenica", [19] insisting repeatedly that he's never suggested there was, and stating unequivocally (in email correspondence) that he presumes standard accounts of what happened at Srebrenica to be accurate.

Herman and Peterson refer to the influence of "political bias on the worthiness and unworthiness of the victims". To them, the dead civilians of Srebrenica are beyond unworthy. They don't exist. This isn't mere self-delusion. It's a deliberate attempt to mislead people. As the Washington Post editor Ben Bradlee once said about the Gulf of Tonkin incident: "Misinformation? Disinformation? Deceit? Whatever! Lies." [20]

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REFERENCES

[1] <http://www.monthlyreview.org/mrzine/hp081209.html>

[2] The original Media Lens thread, since deleted, can be viewed here:

<http://raouldjukanovic.wordpress.com/files/2009/11/herman-and-peterson.pdf>

[3] Aside from the evidence laid out here, see, among other examples, the exchanges here: <http://www.glypx.com/BalkanWitness/Srebrenica-debate.htm> and here: <http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/5972>

[4] See page two of <http://www.monthlyreview.org/1007herman-peterson1.php> and <http://www.srebrenica-report.com/politics.htm> [and for counter-arguments to both, see <http://www.glypx.com/balkanwitness/Herman-FPIF.htm> and <http://www.glypx.com/BalkanWitness/Srebrenica-debate.htm> respectively]

[5] <http://www.ic-mp.org/press-releases/dna-results-of-the-international-commission-on-missing-persons-reveal-the-identity-of-6186-srebrenica-victims-dnk-izvjestaji-medunarodne-komisije-za-nestale-osobe-icmp-otkrili-identitete-6186-sreb/>

[6] <http://www.srebrenica-report.com/conclusions.htm>

[7] <http://www.monthlyreview.org/1007herman-peterson2.php>

[8] For a brief overview, see: http://www.icty.org/x/file/Outreach/view_from_hague/jit_srebrenica_en.pdf then read on: <http://www.icty.org/action/cases/4>

[9] A list, readily available to Herman before publication of "The Politics of the Srebrenica Massacre", referenced in [3] above, can be seen here: http://www.domovina.net/srebrenica/page_006/Preliminarni_spisak_Srebrenica_1995.pdf

[10] http://www.icty.org/x/file/Outreach/view_from_hague/jit_srebrenica_en.pdf

[11] For source, see [5] above

[12] See [10] above

[13] <http://www.monthlyreview.org/mrzine/hp081209.html>

[14] For sources, see [4] above

[15] <http://www.monthlyreview.org/1007herman-peterson2.php>

[16] <http://www.counterpunch.org/johnstone10122005.html>

[17] *ibid.*

[18] <http://www.chomsky.info/onchomsky/20051031.htm>

[19] <http://www.chomsky.info/letters/20051113.htm>

[20] From "Deceit and dishonesty - The first James Cameron Memorial Lecture," By Ben Bradlee (The Guardian, 29 April, 1987)

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