

Appendix 7

Refuting the Srebrenica Myth: An Islamist Perspective

By: Konstantin Kilibarda

"The international press...made the battle for Srebrenica sound like Stalingrad. There is a kind of dialectical relation between the attention of a great power and the power of the media. It creates a distortion in our work. What I am trying to do, without great success, is to correct this distortion." - *Comments by UN Secretary General Boutros-Boutros Ghali at the time of Srebrenica's capture by Bosnian Serb troops.*

For all intents and purposes the "Srebrenica Massacre" has become for many advocates of the "New Interventionism" the *sine qua non* of the Western presence in the Balkans. The notion that the Bosnian Serb Army or Vojska Republike Srpske (VRS) organized and executed a premeditated slaughter of 7,000 unarmed Bosnian Muslim civilian males has become a crucial element in portraying Serbs, collectively, as genocidal aggressors.

However, one need not look too deep, or even to the Serbian side, for another, non-CNN, perspective on this chapter of the Balkan story. A completely different narrative emerges from within the ranks of the Armija Bosne i Hercegovine (ARBiH), in other words the army of the US-backed Islamist faction in Bosnia. There exists strong evidence that the United States and the pro-American leadership in Sarajevo conspired to manufacture the appearance of a massacre in Srebrenica with the ultimate objective of provoking Western intervention. A precedent for such a scenario is well documented in the BBC's 'Death of Yugoslavia' in which Germany is shown to have deliberately engineered the 'fall' of the town of Vukovar in order to gain support for the neo-fascist Croatian secessionists in late 1991.

About That Odd Tangent in Mr. Annan's Srebrenica Report...

In UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's recently released report on Srebrenica an astute reader might spot a curious tangent that is never explored by Annan. This tangent, and critical omissions within it, hold the key to understanding the complex nature of events that later transpired in the Drina Valley in the summer of 1995.

Describing the deliberations of the Izetbegovic regime over the Contact Group's peace initiative, introduced aboard the HMS Invincible in the summer of 1993, the UN Report conveys the following information:

"115. Representatives of the Bosniac community gathered in Sarajevo on 28 and 29 September to vote on the peace package. A delegation of Bosniacs from Srebrenica was transported to Sarajevo by UNPROFOR [UN forces in Bosnia] helicopter to participate in the debate. Prior to the meeting, the delegation met in private with [Bosnian] President Izetbegovic, who told them that there were Serb proposals to exchange Srebrenica and Zepa for territories around Sarajevo. The delegation opposed the idea, and the subject was not discussed further. **Some surviving members of the Srebrenica delegation have stated that President Izetbegovic also told them he had learned that a NATO intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina was possible, but could only occur if the Serbs were to break into Srebrenica, killing at least 5,000 of its people.**" (My emphasis)

This would normally be a rather strange assertion for a head of government but it is not so strange coming from Alija Izetbegovic. It is well established that Izetbegovic's own party, the SDA, specialized in staged mortar attacks on civilians which were then blamed on Bosnian Serb forces. This operational tactic of the Sarajevo regime's Special Forces (AID) was designed to gain sympathy and invite NATO intervention on behalf of the Izetbegovic regime. This strategy has been confirmed not only by members of the ARBiH but also by many diplomats in the region, including chief negotiator Lord Owen and several UNPROFOR force commanders in Bosnia, such as General Satish Nambiar of India, General Louis Mackenzie of Canada, and General Michael Rose of Great Britain.

A similar deceit on the scale of Srebrenica was not without precedent. As mentioned earlier, an analogous 'sacrifice' had already occurred in Croatia. The ruling Croatian neo-fascist HDZ had decided, at a critical juncture in the battle over Vukovar, not to send necessary reinforcements to the city. This was done on the instructions of Bonn in order to gain maximum propaganda value when, as was inevitable, superior Yugoslav forces retook the city. A similar scenario could therefore ostensibly be engineered between the Sarajevo regime and their handlers in Washington in order to produce a similar propaganda effect.

By mid-1995 the Clinton Administration had already succeeded in fulfilling major US-foreign policy objectives in the Balkans by ending the Muslim-Croat War in Central Bosnia, by forging an anti-Serbian,

Muslim-Croat military and political alliance, by increasing military support for these pro-Western belligerents, and by securing UN Security Council approval for limited air-strikes against Bosnian Serb positions.

However British, French, German and Russian foreign policy establishments wavered on the question of full-blown NATO intervention against the Serbs for complex domestic-political reasons. The already firmly anti-Serbian position of the Contact Group had to be further instilled in the general populace before a full-blown NATO intervention could be launched against the Serbs. Such an intervention would invariably include changing the 'facts on the ground' and would involve large-scale Western-backed ethnic-cleansing of Serbian populations throughout Croatia and large swaths of Bosnia. In order to sustain such a criminal enterprise the West needed to demonize the Serbs to such an extent that their large scale victimization would only be greeted with, at best, a "now they're getting a taste of their own medicine" response among the general public.

Clinton's Modest Proposal...

Although Izetbegovic has denied making the above statement about the possibility of NATO intervention in the wake of Srebrenica's capture by the Serbian army, the allegations have persisted in the Bosnian press. In fact there is an added twist to the story. This additional information appeared in a June 22nd, 1998 interview with Hakija Meholic in the Bosnian weekly DANI. Meholic had been Srebrenica's chief of police. Together with Naser Oric he spearheaded anti-Serbian pogroms in the Drina Valley. Meholic was present at the Sept. 28th and 29th, 1993 meetings in Sarajevo. He was present when Serbian forces took Srebrenica in 1995. According to Meholic, Izetbegovic had said:

"You know, I was offered by Clinton in April 1993 (after the fall of Cerska and Konjevic Polje) that the Chetnik forces enter Srebrenica, carry out a slaughter of 5,000 Muslims, and then there will be a military intervention." [Meholic then continues] Our delegation was composed of nine people, one among us was from Bratunac and unfortunately he is the only one not alive now, but **all the others from the delegation are alive and can confirm this.**" (My emphasis. 'DANI', June 22, 1998. The text can be read in English at <http://www.cdsp.neu.edu/info/students/marko/dani/dani2.html> and in the original Serbo-Croatian at <http://www.bhdani.com/arhiva/980678/tekst278.htm>)

Thus in contrast with the UN report, it is clearly stated that none other than US President Bill Clinton had personally suggested that a "Srebrenica Massacre" scenario would produce NATO intervention on behalf of the ARBiH. Hakija Meholic and the hardcore Srebrenica militants in the ARBiH to this day insist that "everybody betrayed us" and are determined to press for an inquiry.

Srebrenica's Troubled Demons

Although designated a UN protected 'safe-haven' (which was supposed to mean complete demilitarization) in 1993, it is abundantly clear that the Srebrenica enclave continued to be filled with heavily armed ARBiH units through 1995. Various intelligence reports estimate that between 1,500-5,000 ARBiH troops were stationed in the enclave when it was captured by the VRS on July 12, 1995.

The UN protected 'safe-haven' was used as a de facto launching pad for ARBiH attacks on surrounding Serbian villages and civilians. Thus the real tragedy was the UN's failure to protect the entire civilian population of the Drina Valley by failing to demilitarize the enclave.

The ARBiH units stationed in Srebrenica were quite militant and uncompromising in their attitude towards Serbs, whom they invariably viewed as "Chetnik aggressors". It is not surprising that an alternate scenario about Srebrenica's fall emerges from the ARBiH soldiers in the enclave itself. They were instrumental in spreading fear in the surrounding countryside by carrying out brutal attacks on undefended Serbian villages. For these Bosnian Islamist nationalists the whole Srebrenica scenario that played out in the Western media after the enclave's fall was profoundly injurious to the reputations of these 'defenders' of the 'Bosniac' people. In fact in the days before the enclaves fall, key figures in Srebrenica were called out of the enclave. Factional fighting, confirmed by Dutch peacekeepers on the ground, erupted between ARBiH factions over the ultimate fate of Srebrenica. The cause of their dispute was not only whether or not to abandon the town to the small advancing VRS forces, but also stemmed from complex political struggles within the ARBiH and the SDA. The struggle was a result of long-standing tensions between locally unpopular Izetbegovic loyalists, who took into consideration the situation in all of Bosnia, and those local leaders more narrowly committed

to 'defending' Srebrenica. What becomes clear from the picture, however, was that Izetbegovic was willing to bargain away Srebrenica in order to achieve full control of Sarajevo (most of which - barring the Serbian sections - being already in the hands of his inner-circle). Srebrenica was therefore politically expendable to Izetbegovic, and it is increasingly evident that he exploited it for maximum political advantage. With one deft political maneuver he could not only eliminate popular elements within his own party that weren't beholden to his directives but at the same time invite Western military intervention against the hated 'Chetnik aggressor'.

In a January 18th, 1999 interview with 'DANI', Nesib Buric, former member of an ARBiH battalion stationed in Srebrenica, and now Deputy Mayor for Social Security of War Veterans and Disabled Persons in Srebrenica, clearly summed-up the perspective of the local Srebrenica faction within the ARBiH:

"I know that they are now trying to humiliate people from Srebrenica and spread rumors that we supposedly did not fight and were slain while running away from Srebrenica. No one can deny that in the Srebrenica municipality there are 2,000 buried fighters. No one can deny that we set up a large free territory. However, without assistance from outside we could not hold out for long surrounded by the enemy. You can write that I absolutely support the statement by Hakija Meholic that we were betrayed. Why does not someone refute his assertions with arguments? Instead they are using slander and saying that Hakija was like this and like that. Hakija was among the first people in Srebrenica to pick up a rifle and work on the organization of the resistance. Therefore, he has the right to speak up. Ibran Mustafic and those women do not have the right to make lists for the Hague Tribunal. They do not have any evidence for that. In Srebrenica, Ibran refused to fight and lead a brigade, but turned to his prewar flirt with politics. As far as Hakija is concerned, you can write that every single child from Srebrenica agrees with his statement." (My emphasis. English translation of the text from 'DANI' can be read at

<http://www.cdsp.neu.edu/info/students/marko/dani/dani6.html> Original text in Serbo-Croatian can be read at <http://www.bhdani.com/arhiva/1999/93/tekst393.htm>)

In short the Islamist veterans from Srebrenica make a three-fold claim, that:

- 1) A high-level political decision was made between the leadership in Sarajevo and the Clinton Administration on the fate of the Srebrenica enclave,
- 2) That the ARBiH militants in the enclave were betrayed by the Izetbegovic regime during the critical days in mid-June 1995 when the enclave was recaptured by the Bosnian Serb army, and that
- 3) Those killed in Srebrenica were ARBiH soldiers who died during firefights while defending their positions, not fleeing civilians.

Any version of events that doesn't seriously consider this perspective on Srebrenica is designed to deliberately mislead public opinion on the dynamics of the conflict in the Balkans. By obscuring the real facts and presenting a simple scenario about Srebrenica, the Western foreign policy establishment and media have designed a narrative with the sole objective of demonizing the Serbs and justifying the continued existence of NATO and its presence within the Balkans.

The description of events described above, however, suggests a much more complex scenario. It becomes increasingly evident that there was a conscious decision made in Sarajevo to abandon the enclave's "defenders" and extract maximum propaganda value by presenting their defeat as a massacre of helpless people. Furthermore, the distinct possibility that the Clinton Administration was intimately involved in this decision - and the precedent set by Germany and Croatia in Vukovar - suggest the profound control by Western nations over the decision and war-making apparatus of the secessionist republics during key phases of Yugoslavia's dismemberment. The fact that the Western media has only played a marginal role (and even then with giant time-lags) in exposing the foreign policy machinations of our elites further underlines the current profound crisis of democracy in advanced industrialized countries.

Further reading on Srebrenica:

Below is an interesting group of articles on Srebrenica, involving a dispute with 'NY Times' Srebrenica specialist, David Rohde.

[David Rohde, Srebrenica and the New Justice](#)

by Jared Israel at <http://emperors-clothes.com/articles/jared/fulltext.htm>

The above is the latest in an ongoing battle with David Rohde from the 'NY Times.' Remember Rohde? He wrote the original Srebrenica massacre story when he was a lowly Christian Science Monitor reporter back in 1995; in return for making loud (if unsubstantiated) accusations against the Bosnian Serbs he landed a perch at the 'NY Times' from which he issues Srebrenica updates whenever NATO wishes to prepare public opinion for some new attack on Yugoslavia.

The dispute with Rohde began when we published the article [Why has the War Crimes Tribunal suppressed testimony about Srebrenica?](#) by Max Sinclair and Jared Israel at <http://emperors-clothes.com/articles/sinclair/why.htm>

[David Rohde sent an email](#) answered Sinclair and Israel in an email to Prof. Drasko Jovanovic, with whom he had been corresponding about Srebrenica. That can be read at <http://emperors-clothes.com/letters/inaccurate.htm>

Jovanovic forwarded Rohde's comments to Emperor's Clothes. It was answered by [Sinclair and Israel](#) (Go to <http://emperors-clothes.com/letters/reply.htm>)

Prof. Jovanovic also sent Emperor's Clothes a short memoir concerning [his experience as a boy in Nazi occupied Yugoslavia](#). (Go to <http://emperors-clothes.com/letters/letterj.htm>) This is a real experience with genocide, in contrast to the make-believe stuff David Rohde writes.

[Rohde then took his dispute with us to the pages of the 'NY Times.'](#) (see <http://emperors-clothes.com/articles/jared/fulltext.htm>) omitting nothing other than our actual views. Jared Israel replied to Rohde's 'Times' piece; so did Prof. Jovanovic. Jovanovic's answer is entitled ['Fare well Mr. Rohde. Continue making your living by telling the Srebrenica story.'](#) (Go to <http://emperors-clothes.com/letters/farewell.htm>)
[Click here for Emperor's Clothes Email list - Get One Article/Day](#)

<http://emperors-clothes.com/articles/kilibarda/islamist.htm>