

2004

## Prime Time Crime: Balkan Media in War and Peace,

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### Recommended Citation

Turregano, Clemson G. (2004) "Prime Time Crime: Balkan Media in War and Peace,," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 57 : No. 1 , Article 26.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol57/iss1/26>

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coupled with the truism that we judge the unknown to be unlikely, points out how it was that we only gradually gave shape and definition to the terrorist threat. When one considers that the United States was riding the laurels of the 1990–91 Persian Gulf War and that its economy was steaming comfortably, it seems almost understandable that no one put all the pieces together earlier. Nevertheless, Benjamin and Simon take turns putting agencies and leaders in the pillory. Interagency collaboration is mostly a game of “I’ve got a secret.” Alley politics overshadow intelligent analysis and policy making as the White House and Capitol Hill threw punches at each other; a president lacked personal credibility; and the news media, aware of the public’s low interest for international news, failed to pursue stories aggressively.

Before 9/11, “America was the prisoner of an old paradigm for thinking about terrorism, and it could be released only through a revolutionary act of violence.” Herein lies a tragic blessing. As its long-range response, the administration created a new cabinet-level department for homeland security. Other measures were also taken, and others need to be taken once the technology measures up. Additionally, citizens and governments alike must become much more attuned to the various currents that have been shaped by the past and that will shape the future. Developing a sustainable strategy depends on it, lest the tragedy become pathos.

The book concludes with a riveting chapter on terrorism under the cloak of other religions. Jewish messianism, the quasi-Buddhist cult Aum Shinrikyo, and Christian apocalyptic literature and movements all point to more terrorism.

*The Age of Sacred Terror* will enlighten leaders and citizens alike, and it should be a must-read for midlevel officers, especially those aspiring to senior leadership. It challenges the way we plan and train, and it certainly provides grist for the mill of doctrine development—while pointing out, yet again, that this is not the foe our parents and grandparents faced. If we learn no other lesson, this book will have served us well.

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Kurspahic, Kemal. *Prime Time Crime: Balkan Media in War and Peace*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2003. 261pp. \$19.95

Solving the puzzle of the destruction of Yugoslavia is one of the dominant historical and political questions of our time. Prominent scholars, high-ranking military officers, and noted politicians all seem to be asking how an advanced confederation could fail so quickly and with such disastrous consequences. Kemal Kurspahic, the award-winning editor of the Sarajevo wartime daily newspaper *Oslobodjenje*, provides some important answers to this question with his firsthand account of media in the former Yugoslavia.

This book provides chilling, first-person insight into the decline of the Yugoslavian media into nationalism and into its contribution to the destruction of the Yugoslav federation. Kurspahic, a Bosnian Muslim, paints a picture of the disintegration of the former republic that, like many horror stories, is at once riveting, revolting, and compelling. This is a work that is riveting in its

honesty, revolting in its facts, and ultimately compelling in its insight. The author's journalistic style easily dissolves the complexity of politics and personality, offering the reader a valuable glimpse into a political arena rarely seen, much less understood, by Westerners unfamiliar with the Balkans.

The first chapter's treatise on the author's thoughts and beliefs concerning journalism during Josip Broz Tito's socialist revolution evokes an optimism shared by many Yugoslavs during the days of the "Balkan miracle." This optimism offers a starting point for the reader's compassion for the people of the former Yugoslavia and their lost dream. Many readers will find here an illuminating perspective on the lost opportunities during Tito's regime—a time of great hope for unity but ultimate belief in nationalism, ethnicity, and culture.

The importance of ethnicity became excruciatingly clear during the early 1990s, when, as the author describes, the nationalist parties and leaders in Croatia, Bosnia, and Serbia managed to capture the press. Playing on themes and seams between cultures that had been glossed over by Tito's press, journalists began an easy decline into uncontested nationalist rhetoric. According to Kurspahic, "the Yugoslav public . . . still had only one ruling party and its ideology. What was once a Communist controlled media became a nationalist-controlled media. Milosevic simply renamed his party—from Communist to Socialist—and switched . . . from 'brotherhood and unity' to 'hatred toward neighbors.'" These divisions provided stronger focal points for the parties and easier writing for the media,

and they reinforced the nationalist bias of the people.

Not limiting his comments to Serbia, Kurspahic thoroughly examines the slide of Croatian and Bosnian media into nationalist propaganda as well. He paints a consistent theme of one-party rule and its ability to control and focus the press. The press, responding to the call of nationalism, simply followed the path it always had—support of the party in power.

This point leads to an exceptionally compelling aspect of the narrative, the rise and suppression of the opposition media. Kurspahic exhaustively categorizes attempts in each republic to combat the rampant nationalism. Most of the attempts by a critical press to establish itself, regardless of location, met disastrous ends. The work's firsthand accounts of resistance to nationalism and its effects offer remarkable insights into journalistic ethics and the strength they offer editors and reporters, even at the threat of their own lives. The decisions made to crush the opposition press provide more chilling evidence of the strength of nationalism as a political tool of control.

However, the work's concern is not the pathos of the opposition and its attempt at critique but its inability to alter the ethnic momentum of the warring republics. Kurspahic's contribution to an understanding of the war is his argument regarding the willingness of the people to accept the crimes of its leaders as a natural part of the progression to statehood. This was the true media disaster in the former Yugoslavia. In the eyes of the author, the media's crime was its unchallenged, biased, and willing complicity with nationalist rhetoric.

The author's attempt to weave a straight course through the warfare of three ethnicities suffers from a few shortcomings. As the author seeks to produce history, there is a great deal of personal recollection. If the author is attempting an autobiography, there is a great deal of history. Some might say his own ethnic identity prevents a balanced account of Serb or Croatian media. Kurspahic understands this; his damning indictment of his own country's media and how Bosnian nationalism translated into violence speaks for itself. Nevertheless, the author also accepts the necessity to play the ethnic card and laments that *Oslobodjenje's* "selected editing" in Sarajevo was necessary for its survival.

Concluding with the current changes in the Balkan media and a list of future policy options to prevent media nationalism, Kurspahic returns to the optimistic tone of the beginning of the work. Reviewing the policy recommendations of the last chapter, Kurspahic yearns for a free and independent press, one worthy of, and desiring, outside critique. The author would also welcome a press that challenges the government. This optimism, though warranted, may be premature. It remains to be seen if international media-watchdog groups can bring about any of these changes.

*Prime Time Crime* commands an important place on the bookshelf of anyone studying the former Yugoslavia. Kemal Kurspahic trains an unblinking eye on the nationalist Balkan press and its contribution to the war. In particular, the first chapter and the appendices should be required reading for any officer posted to duty in this troubled region. Although addressing just one small piece of the puzzle that was the

fall of Yugoslavia, Kurspahic's narrative of the rise of a nationalist press answers many questions about the society of former Yugoslavia, its destruction, and its ability to prosecute such a horrendous conflict. In a much broader sense, *Prime Time Crime* reveals what may happen when any government, political leader, or nationalist ideal captures or co-opts the media.

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Kennedy, Gregory C., and Keith Neilson, eds.  
*Military Education: Past, Present, and Future*.  
Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002. 256pp. \$64.99

This collection of ten essays is largely historical. Only three deal with current military education, and none focuses substantially on the future. Six examine European institutions, while three address military education in the United States and one recent change in Canada. The editors and authors are seasoned historians; some teach at civilian institutions, some at military schools.

The essays report the continuing tension between academic officer-preparation and hands-on experience, and the contrast of both approaches with the military's more usual method of preparation—training. All agree that technology and its continued development mean education is required. History is agreed to be crucial to military education, but there are critiques here of how it is used and of its tendency to direct attention to the past rather than to consider the past's meaning for the future.

T. G. Otte discusses the influence of the French Revolution and German