

“Good” Bombing: NATO Op Against Yugoslavia Was a War Crime: Christopher Black

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Jens Stoltenberg's claim that NATO "protected" Yugoslavia from the government of Slobodan Milosevic is nothing but propaganda, Christopher C. Black, a Toronto-based international criminal lawyer told Sputnik, stressing that NATO had no legal reason to attack Yugoslavia and de facto committed a war crime against the sovereign nation.

"The NATO attack on Yugoslavia has nothing whatsoever to do with protecting anyone since the claims made by NATO against the government of Yugoslavia were false and were just a pretext for their aggression," says Christopher C. Black, a Toronto-based international criminal lawyer with 20 years of experience in war crimes and international relations.

Black's comment comes in response to a statement made by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg who told Serbia's RTS:

"We are aware in NATO that many people in Serbia still have bad memories about the bombing, the airstrikes in 1999. I stress that [we did this to protect civilians](#) and stop the Milosevic regime," the NATO chief said.

"NATO countries had no legal right to bomb anyone for any reason as that is a violation of international law, the UN Charter, Nuremberg Principles etc.," the scholar underscored. "Their attack was aggression and therefore a war crime and they committed war crimes during the attack."

The NATO military campaign against sovereign Yugoslavia codenamed Operation Allied Force kicked off amid the Kosovo war (February, 1998 — June, 1999) between the country's government forces and Albanian separatists. The alliance's 78-day air raids resulted in 5,700 civilian deaths, infrastructural damages and [contamination of the part of the region with depleted uranium](#).

Image on the right is from InfoWars.



Rambouillet Diktat: The Trigger for War

"The real reason NATO attacked is set out in the Rambouillet diktat presented by [then Secretary of State] Madeleine Albright to [then President of the

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Slobodan] Milosevic in early 1999 that Yugoslavia must surrender its sovereignty and allow its total occupation by NATO forces and give up its socialist system for a free enterprise one,” Black said. “If Yugoslavia refused NATO promised to attack. The Yugoslav government had to refuse such a diktat and so NATO attacked.”

[Rambouillet Accords](#) envisaged the creation of a de facto independent entity in Kosovo which violated Yugoslavia’s independence and sovereignty.

While the refusal to accept the unacceptable accord was used by the alliance as a trigger for the attack, there were several reasons behind NATO’s invasion, the lawyer explained.

“NATO wanted to establish a base in the Balkans against Russia, to take over mineral resources at the Trepca Mine complex in Kosovo and to destroy the last socialist state in Europe,” the legal practitioner said. “To justify their aggression they concocted the same types of lies against the government as they are now doing against Russia.”

Almost two decades after the NATO bombing, the Trepca mining and metallurgical complex in Kosovo still remains a bone of contention between Pristina and Belgrade. The complex is split between ethnic lines, however, in October 2016 the parliament of the self-proclaimed state of Kosovo voted to take control over the complex despite Serbia’s protests.

When commemorating the enterprise’s 90th anniversary in December 2017 — Europe’s largest lead-zinc and silver ore mine — Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic [stressed](#) that Belgrade would continue to fight for it, dubbing the complex “a part of family and national heritage, a part of tradition,” as quoted by Serbian news outlet RTV B92.

NATO’s Expansion in the Balkans

Besides claiming that NATO bombed Yugoslavia to “protect it,” Stoltenberg drew attention to the “close partnership” between NATO and Serbia. Although he noted that the alliance respected Belgrade’s neutrality, the question arises whether that the North Atlantic military bloc is seeking to absorb Serbia in the long run, after admitting Montenegro and [signaling readiness to let Macedonia join](#).

Commenting on the issue, the lawyer recalled that

“the Yugoslav and Serbian government was overthrown in 2000 in a putsch organized by NATO forces and their fascist agents in the group called OTPOR and the DOS organizations which were NATO assets.”

He said that

“the president [was] arrested on false charges and the government [was] taken over by the Quislings of the DOS group.”

According to Black, these groups are still powerful in Serbia. They do not represent aspirations of the Serbian people, he stressed.

Manipulating the Judgments

Black, who has long criticized the imprisonment of Slobodan Milosevic at the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, stressed that the tribunal “manipulated the judgments to put out different stories as it suits them.”

“As I said above the NATO claims were pure propaganda. It was NATO that used force and massive force to destroy a nation that resisted its diktats,” the lawyer highlighted, calling the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) “a NATO tribunal under UN guise.”

“The point is that the charges against Milosevic were bogus, he proved it in his trial,” Black said.

The former Yugoslav president died in his prison cell on March 11, 2006 while on trial for war crimes at the ICTY. Although it was officially stated that Milosevic died from a heart attack the lawyer does not rule out that the ex-Yugoslav leader could have been killed, since “they did not want to release him and could not convict him.”

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