

INTERVIEW: NEBOJŠA MALIĆ

The Illegal Balkan Wars and the Ukraine Parallel

Mike Billington: This is Mike Billington with the *Executive Intelligence Review*. Today, I'm interviewing Nebojša Malić for *EIR* and the Schiller Institute, as well as for The LaRouche Organization website. Mr. Malić is a Serbian American journalist and commentator who wrote for Antiwar.com for 15 years, from 2000 to 2015, and since that time has written for RT. RT America was one of the victims of the censorship in this country. But he still writes sometimes for the home-based RT.

Welcome, Nebojša Malić! Before we get going, do you first want to say anything else about your career?

Nebojša Malić: I've insisted for years not to be called a journalist. Because of my experience, back during the Balkans wars of the '90s and since, I have associated that word in my mind with misbehavior, so I'd rather not be called a journalist, but, technically, it is what I do. Since RT America was forced to close down in early March, I've sort of been a freelancer, again, after many years of working in the corporate world.

The 1999 Bosnian War

Billington: Yes, indeed. Serbian President, Aleksandar Vučić, recently issued a scathing attack on NATO after NATO scheduled its summit on March



Nebojša Malić

Courtesy photo

24th. Unfortunately—most people don't know this because it's not generally discussed in the Western world—that is the anniversary of the day NATO launched a war without authorization from the UN against Serbia, Yugoslavia, in 1999, which in fact was a sovereign nation in the middle of Europe. Vučić himself said that that 1999 war was “despicable, ill judged, unlawful and immoral,” and noted “how ridiculous, even stupid for NATO to blame Russia for aggression against Ukraine

given its own history.”

You were in Serbia when NATO launched that illegal war. What is the real story behind that atrocity?



cc/Darko Dozet

“For 78 days, NATO kept bombing and bombing, and expanding its targets to include civilian infrastructure, bridges, hospitals, etc.” Here, smoke blackens the sky in Novi Sad, Serbia, during NATO's illegal bombing in 1999.

Malić: I wasn't actually in Serbia. I was already here in the U.S. I had come over a few years earlier, after the end of the Bosnian War, but the 1999 war was definitely a turning point in my life, because I got to witness firsthand the full triple Gatling Gun barrel of American propaganda that was unleashed overnight when the first bombs dropped on Belgrade. I rarely agree with Vučić on things. I will admit that up front. But this is one of those quotes of his that I fully endorse. Because that war was a turning point for not just Serbia, and the Serbs in general, and NATO (unknown to them), but also for Western relations with Russia. I'm not the only one to say this, and there's been many other people from both sides of the planet to notice this over the years, with different agendas.

Just to illustrate: a few years later, there was a fellow from the International Crisis Group named John Norris, who wrote a book called *Collision Course: NATO, Russia, and Kosovo*, about how the war was not really about Yugoslavia at all, but about sending a message to everybody in Eastern Europe that only obedience to the American model of transition from communism will be tolerated and no deviations, such as Serbia's attempt to remain sovereign and neutral. There was a message to Russia, which was then under the Yeltsin government. Well, it spectacularly backfired, because this is what brought about a change of feelings in Russia—the Yugoslav war, I mean—and pushed Yeltsin out, compelled him to resign and hand over power to Putin, who had spent the last 20-some years fighting an internal war against people who wanted the 1990s model of Russian society to prevail.

And so, NATO's war against Yugoslavia lost Russia, in one sense of the word. What happened at the time, specifically, is a pattern many people will recognize today, which was the U.S. bypassing the UN completely, just ignoring it, pushing it aside, saying, "Okay, we have this peace proposal, there's a humanitarian disaster going on, we're going to use NATO to enforce the peace proposal, to impose it, in absolute violation of all conventions and international law, and stop us if you can." And of course, nobody could at the time. They

hoped it would only be a week or two; there were private statements by Madeleine Albright and other politicians and military officials saying, "Oh, it's really going to be all over in a couple of weeks"—they were hoping to get it done very quickly and they just kept failing at it.

But for 78 days, they kept bombing and bombing and expanding the target list to civilian infrastructure and bridges and hospitals, and so on and so forth. Even that failed. They tried to get the Albanian military to breach the border. That failed. They tried sending in Apache attack helicopters that mysteriously kept hitting power lines in northern Albania where there aren't really any power lines. That whole episode is still unclear. They lost—within the first weeks of the war there was an F-117 Stealth Fighter that got shot down by a



USAF/Aaron Allmon

A \$42.6 million U.S. Air Force F-117A Nighthawk Stealth Fighter, like this one, was shot down in the first weeks of the Bosnian War.

1970s rocket system that a very clever Serbian anti-aircraft operator figured out how to use. The pilot survived, but the wreck of the plane was completely irreparable. There are still pieces of it at the Belgrade War Museum. That was a huge embarrassment.

They just kept ramping up things. It wasn't until 78 days later when they basically lied, and had this Finnish President, posing as neutral, but in fact executing NATO's orders, go to the Russians and say, "You need to talk the Serbs into surrendering, and in return we'll get you your own occupation district." When Belgrade decided, "Okay, fine, we'll accept an armistice with all these UN guarantees and Russian presence so that it's not a NATO occupation mission—because we never objected to a peace mission, we only objected to a

NATO one, because that's blatantly illegal"—NATO said, "Oh, yeah, we changed our mind. Russians, get out."

The point is, that NATO at the time used a false pretext, of a humanitarian disaster. They claimed that there had been this massacre in a village; that the Serbian police and Yugoslav army massacred innocent ethnic Albanian civilians for no reason. It was later revealed by their own forensic pathologists who were kept silent for years—but eventually spoke up when there was no longer a fear of repercussions—that all of these people who were killed were in fact ethnic Albanian separatist militants who were backed by NATO and who had been considered terrorists until not long before, and then all of a sudden were declared not terrorists, because the objective was to fight a war against Yugoslavia on their behalf.

They used that Račak massacre as a pretext to present a peace treaty that was effectively an ultimatum, demanding of Yugoslavia—then Serbia and Montenegro—to give up the province of Kosovo because it was supposedly an ethnic Albanian land. When Belgrade said "No," as any sovereign country would, the bombing commenced. And again, the point of the bombing, by the admission of its architects, was to send a message to the rest of the world. Except that the message that they ended up sending was not the message that they planned. They wanted it to be: "Resistance is futile. We are the world hegemon. You will submit." The message they actually sent was: "The most powerful military alliance in the world was just held in check for 78 days by a small country left completely alone, without any allies, without any sort of military capacities."

The Yugoslav military actually ended up withdrawing nearly unscathed. The reporters lining up on the roads out of Kosovo at the end of the war were like, "Where are all these tanks coming from?" It turned out that they had practiced the art of camouflage and got NATO to spend millions and millions of dollars on "smart" bombs and all this other ordnance, into targeting World War II-era tanks that had been sent to Yugoslavia back in the '50s during the Cold War as a gambit against the Soviet Union. They were just simply taken out of mothballs, put up in the fields, painted a little cre-

atively, and NATO was like, "Oh, T-72s, T-55s! We're blowing everything up!" They were blowing up old U.S. ordnance from the 1940s!

That said, yes, several thousand people died, including many members of the Yugoslav military and many civilians, including some of the staff of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, which was reportedly on a target list added by the CIA. The official U.S. explanation for the bombing was, "Oops, we made a mistake." But nobody explained how the mistake was made. The Embassy is a very distinct building. The maps were very clear. Nobody bought the official explanation. China in particular, has remembered the Embassy bombing to this day. They just recently commemorated it, and they keep pointing it out as an example of NATO perfidy.



The Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, after being deliberately bombed by NATO, May 7, 1999.

Since 1999, to the present day—not just whenever it was geopolitically convenient as the cynics would say, but more consistently than people in Serbia itself—very often the Russians have also pointed to the 1999 war as an example of NATO's perfidy; that the West speaks with the forked tongue; they say one thing and do the other. They don't really mean what they say, so watch what they do.

The Ethnic Albanian Rebellion

Billington: You mentioned Madeleine Albright. As you know, she died recently. Hillary Clinton came to her defense, saying that Albright, who at the time was the Secretary of State, had proved her brilliance. By her

perseverance in conducting the war in the Balkans, where, despite opposition, Hillary pointed out, within the administration and elsewhere, nonetheless, Madeleine Albright, “Recognized that the crisis was a threat to the trans-Atlantic region and drove the military assault, which restored order.”

Do you think that the situation was a threat to the trans-Atlantic region? What do you think about Madeleine Albright in retrospect?

Malić: A lot of people—I wasn’t among them because I have some sense of decency, unlike most of the Western establishment—celebrated when Madeleine Albright went to meet her maker recently. She was blamed, not just by the Serbs, but credited by the Western establishment, for spearheading this war. I have previously written about her case, as well as that of [President Jimmy Carter’s National Security Advisor] Zbigniew Brzezinski and some other more modern politicians, as a case study in why the United States should never let any first-generation immigrants—and maybe not even third generation immigrants—anywhere near the halls of power, because they will inevitably use their ethnic grievances and personal agendas to hijack the economic, political and military might of the United States for personal gain.

Albright was born in Czechoslovakia and actually grew up partly in Yugoslavia right before and right after World War II. Her father had sent her over to a Swiss board-



Madeleine Albright, U.S. Secretary of State. She is “credited by the Western Establishment for spearheading the Bosnian War.”

cause he was an ethnic Pole who wanted a liberated Poland. But what any of that has to do with the United States is anybody’s guess.



Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Jimmy Carter’s National Security Advisor.

ing school. But the Korbels, her family, were diplomats. Her father served in Belgrade on the eve of the Nazi invasion and then returned to Belgrade after the war in that short period while Edvard Beneš was in charge in Prague.

You had this whole, “Dear God, we helped her family. We helped her. And this is how she repays us.” But she came to the U.S. as a very young girl. She was educated in Western ways. She renounced her heritage and became a family woman. And then apparently, she got bored of it in the 1970s and discovered politics, studied under Zbigniew Brzezinski, and all of a sudden became this cold warrior crusader. She has no memory of Belgrade. All of her opinions of Yugoslavia were basically filtered through Brzezinski and his obsessive hatred of the Soviet Union, be-

So again, fast forward. The situation in Yugoslavia in 1998 had nothing to do with the Western Alliance. The Bosnian War had just ended. This was late ’95, early ’96. [The then Assistant Secretary of State] Richard Holbrooke was doing his little victory lap of “we ended the war,” NATO had supplanted the UN as the arbiter of international relations, thanks to efforts during the Bosnian War by the Clinton administration. Basically, the U.S. hegemony was unchallenged. It was at this point, after Bill Clinton was re-elected President on the prom-

ise that U.S. troops would only stay in Bosnia for about a year, that you had Albright and all of these other people going, “Well, what good is this magnificent military if we don’t use it?”

They were trying to find a war in which they could be heroes. They tried bombing a drug factory in Sudan. That was the early age of Al-Qaeda—the attack on the *USS Cole* and the embassies in East Africa. But instead of launching a war against terrorism, as George W. Bush would do a couple of years later, they decided, “Oh, no, no, no, no. Let’s just go back to the Balkans. We already have assets in place. We have this Milošević guy whom we really wanted to overthrow in the first place, but we didn’t succeed because he actually was a good negotiator when it came to Bosnia. So, what we’re going to do is fund and incite an ethnic Albanian insurgency,” which blended anything from Islamism to Nazism, and wrapped it up in ethnic chauvinism that was rabidly not just anti-Serbian, but anti anything that wasn’t Albanian. And the U.S. and NATO are going to back them, instead.

So, in ’98, when the ethnic Albanian rebellion flared up and Yugoslavia successfully suppressed it, then came: “Oh, these are not terrorists. And if you attack them, we will bomb you.” There was a threat made in late ’98 by Albright and the administration. Holbrooke went again to Serbia and sat down with the KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army]. There’s a famous scene of him sitting on the floor with these bearded jihadists. Then Belgrade was like, “Fine. Send the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] observer mission, international law. We’re fine.” Well, the OSCE observer mission ended up being riddled with intelligence operatives who were literally liaising with ethnic Albanians and helping them set up for the bombing, merely postponing it by three or four months.

You have the analogue situation in Ukraine. You had the OSCE mission deployed in Donetsk and Lugansk back in 2014, 2015 which would routinely log all of these violations of the cease fire, and say, “Okay, the Ukrainian side fired 150 shells, the separatist side fired five—the vast majority of violations were the pro-Russian separatists.” Then that talking point would make it to the White House. That continued for about seven years before things came to a head this February.

The Kosovo Liberation Army

Billington: You mentioned the KLA, the Kosovo Liberation Army. I’m sure many of our listeners and

readers don’t know what the KLA is—the so-called Albanian terrorists. What is the story behind the KLA and their link with terrorism?

Malić: After the Bosnian War in 1998, when it’s time to ratchet up the American empire further, this is the crisis that they latch on to. Not Al-Qaeda, not Osama bin Laden, not any of that stuff, the gathering storm on the horizon. No. They decide to fight a war in Europe, embrace the KLA, which was a weird ideological combination. You had people who fetishized the Waffen SS from World War II, the Albanian Nazi collaborators. You had people fetishizing Enver Hoxha and the Maoist Albanian Communist Party from the Cold War. And then you had people essentially embracing neo-Ottoman stuff and actual jihadists. All of these people were sort of melded together in a ramshackle coalition of: “We don’t care what your politics are. The more important thing is that we’re Albanians and we hate Serbs and want them dead.” That’s really what their politics were.

The U.S. initially recognized them as a terrorist organization, but in ’98 revoked that designation and said, “Oh, these are legitimate resisters and fighters for freedom.” The KLA was used to call in targeting information for NATO airstrikes during the actual war, which resulted in incidents such as the bombing of ethnic Albanian civilians, who were refusing to go toward Albania and Macedonia, as the KLA directed them to, but instead were moving inland toward central Serbia. Then NATO was called in to bomb them as military columns. This happened on at least two occasions that I remember. After that, everybody got the message: If you don’t do what the KLA says, you’ll get bombed.

So, the KLA is a bit of nasty business. They’ve murdered more Albanians than the Serbian police did prior to the war, and especially after the NATO occupation began—yes, they targeted non-Albanians for expulsion and murder and destruction and pogroms, but they’ve also committed horrible repression against their own people who were deemed insufficiently loyal. They fell out over loot and power. You had KLA commanders who later became politicians going on trial before the War Crimes Tribunal—which was itself a joke, but never mind. Then all of a sudden: “We can’t really put you on trial, because all of the witnesses ended up dead.”

How that happened, nobody knows! I don’t want to say mobster fashion, because it’s an insult to the Italians. But there’s a whole tribal clan culture of ethnic

Albanians, especially in the north of Albania and in Kosovo, that does the blood vendetta thing. Again, a lot of these people ended up dead at the hands of other ethnic Albanians to protect the KLA commanders who are still in power.

The Balkan Wars and the Donbas

Billington: You referenced the Donetsk and Lugansk situation. How do you relate all of these largely forgotten wars in the Balkans to what's happening now in the Donbas?

Malić: I want to say upfront that I might be slightly biased, because we're all programmed to see patterns, even where they don't exist. I've actually looked over

force anyway.

This coup is what literally broke Ukraine, because it had survived the 2004 Orange Revolution, because the people who were put into power then through another effort by the U.S. to win other people's elections, as the *Guardian* described it at the time, could be voted out. [President Viktor] Yushchenko and [Prime Minister Yulia] Tymoshenko and that group were voted out. That's how [Viktor] Yanukovich got back into power.

Well, in February [2014], when the coup happened, it became obvious to people in Ukraine that this would not be allowed to happen again. This is when people in Crimea and people in Donetsk and people in Lugansk and several other regions said, "OK, no, we don't recognize this government. We want to declare autonomy.



Public domain

Kosovo Liberation Army soldiers, June 30, 1999.

this several times over the past seven, eight years, since 2014, since this whole thing started. The fact that I recognized the patterns—a lot of the things that were happening in Ukraine matched what I saw during the 1990s in Croatia, in Bosnia, and later in Kosovo have led me to successfully predict and analyze what would happen next.

So back in 2013, when the Maidan protests first arose, I compared them to the October 2000 protests in Serbia, one of the first Color Revolutions successfully carried out by the U.S. establishment. And sure enough, in February 2014, when it looked like the Franco-German negotiated power sharing agreement would result in the President quitting, and the U.S. backed opposition taking over, oh, it's a Color Revolution! Overnight, it became a violent coup, because they couldn't wait for the agreement. They just went ahead and took power by

We want to keep things the way they were."

This reminded me of the initial stages of Yugoslavia's breakup, when Croatian authorities "embraced their World War II heritage," to put a euphemism to it. The independent state of Croatia was a Nazi ally that committed unspeakable atrocities that made even the SS blush, not to put too fine a point on it.

So, the modern Croatian government basically said, "Well, we're abolishing autonomy for the Serbs. These are alien elements in our midst. They need to move. They need to reconcile themselves to becoming a national minority or an independent state where people have a completely distinct history. We don't want to have anything to do with them. We're a thousand-year civilization that has only been besmirched by these filthy Orthodox dogs." Wait, no, that was the father of Croatian nationhood, Ante Starčević, in the 1890s. But

he was channeled by these modern-day 1990s politicians. The Serbs responded by setting up barricades and declaring autonomy.

Lo and behold, that's exactly what's happening in Crimea and Donetsk and Lugansk all over again. And then to make things even more on the nose, you had Yuriy Lutsenko, who was at the time an adviser to the Ukrainian government and later became Prosecutor General—which, as we all know, is a position that must be vetted by the United States, as Joe Biden so helpfully explained—who [i.e., Lutsenko] basically said, “We need to do what Croatia did. We need to arm and pretend to be peaceful and then arm ourselves and train our troops and then wipe them off the face of the earth, just like Croatia did in 1995.” He posted this on Facebook in 2014! This has been repeated ever since by other officials in Kyiv.

So obviously there are parallels, except the big difference here is that Russia of the 2010s is not Serbia of the 1990s. Not in terms of military power or size or ideological confusion or in any other respect. So what ended up happening was that the war in Donetsk and Lugansk ended up mirroring the war in present day Croatia, in which the separatists were able to beat back the Ukrainian military and set up a border that wasn't entirely the regions that they claimed, but close enough. There was a standoff, and the Minsk agreements—the two armistices that were signed by both Ukrainian sides—were supposed to oversee their diplomatic reintegration into Ukraine.

The irony here is that the people in Donetsk and Lugansk were willing to make that sacrifice at the time, even after their own country literally tried to exterminate them as “Russian separatists.” They were willing to go back, if their rights could be guaranteed and respected. Kyiv, on the other hand, absolutely refused. Just like Zagreb had absolutely refused to give any sort of autonomy to the Serbs. It wanted the territory. It didn't want the people who were living in it. All the remaining Serbs in Croatia had been purged. The Croatian events happened within four years because that was timing that was convenient due to the Bosnian War. But their troops had been trained and equipped by the Americans, they had NATO air cover, and they used this big push in Bosnia to launch an all-out offensive against the local militia that had trusted the UN peacekeepers to protect them. The UN peacekeepers just gave up and let themselves be overtaken by the Croatian military and did nothing.

This wiped out the UN's credibility—you have no idea. The UN wasn't even involved in the Donetsk and Lugansk fiasco because it's been rendered obsolete. The OSCE mission that played basically the same role, as I mentioned earlier, as the one it did in Kosovo, was worse than useless. It was basically a fig leaf for constant Ukrainian shelling of these areas. You have these repeated requests by Russia, but as well by the Donetsk and Lugansk people: “Look, all we're asking is to implement what you signed. Here's what you signed, here's what needs to happen. We're ready. We're waiting. After everything you've said and done about us, we're still willing to return, but you've got to protect our rights to speak Russian and to have these basic human rights that were guaranteed in the Constitution.” Kyiv responded by changing the Constitution, absolutely banning Russian in any way, shape, or form: “You can maybe speak it in kindergarten, but that's it. You will be brought to heel by one way or another.”

When [Volodymyr] Zelenskyy himself, who was elected [President] on an overwhelmingly pro-peace platform, stood up in the Ukrainian legislature and said, “I will do anything for peace,” well, when he tried to follow the “Steinmeier formula” that was developed by then German Foreign Minister, now President, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, and he went to Donbas, in 2019, he was confronted by the angry Azov Nazis. I'm sorry, they're Nazis. I'm not using this word lightly. The word Nazi has been thrown left and right by people who have no idea what it means. But these are the people who literally idolize Adolf Hitler, the Waffen SS, who have tattooed swastikas on themselves—they're Nazis. They confronted Zelenskyy and said, “No, we won't let you do this. We're the real power in this country.” He returned to Kyiv, with water metaphorically poured on him, basically saying, “I'll do as you tell me.” And he's been running their policy ever since.

So, what happened? Honestly, I expected what happened in February to go somewhat differently. I expected that after Moscow recognized these two regions, to await the Ukrainian offensive as a pretext, then say, “Okay, fine, you see what happened? We have an obligation under treaties to defend these people from genocide, and we're going to send in our troops.” But according to Moscow, the Ukrainian operation was already being planned, including some biological attacks and possibly a dirty bomb. I don't know how much of that is true. I've seen evidence pointing to it. The people who dismiss it have never shown evidence debunking

it, so maybe there's something there. But the point is that Moscow basically said, "No, seven years, eight years, enough. We're done. We're going in."

Now, however you feel about that, that is how the Donetsk and Lugansk situation unfolded. That's what's fundamentally different. The Operation Storm of 1995 that ended centuries of Serb presence in territories claimed by Croatia, never happened in Ukraine. It was not allowed to happen. There are multiple people in Kyiv on record saying that they wanted it to happen. There are documents shown by the Russian military suggesting that the Ukrainian military was planning to launch just such an operation. So that's the parallels that I keep seeing.

Billington: Just a few weeks ago, the Russians were making very public that Zelenskyy's government had given them a written proposal for peace, which included the main demand of the Russians before the war started, which was Ukrainian neutrality and no joining of NATO. Then you had Zelenskyy being wined and dined at Western Parliaments all over the world, actually. And now, apparently, those agreements have been withdrawn.

Malić: Mm hmm.

Alija Izetbegović and Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Billington: Who is running Zelenskyy?

Malić: Zelenskyy is definitely run from the West. I don't know—until recently I would have suggested from Germany. But no, he's been run by the U.S. The peace proposal thing was nonsense. I knew it when I saw it because if they had been serious about it, they would have done so prior to the outbreak of this kinetic war. The negotiations, I thought, were always a sham.

And here's why. Again, this is me bringing my Bosnia experience into this. During the Bosnian War the government of Alija Izetbegović in Sarajevo, the Bosnian Muslim faction that passed itself off as the Bosnian government, said, "We're willing to talk, we're



President of Ukraine

Volodymyr Zelenskyy "is not a serious man. The whole [negotiating process with Russia] has been one incredible act put on for Western audiences." Here, Zelenskyy (on the right), is shown meeting with Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain, and Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister of Denmark. April 21, 2022.

willing to discuss everything." But they had rejected a power-sharing proposal that would have guaranteed peace, in March 1992, just prior to the war's outbreak, at the urging of the U.S. Ambassador. This is what happened. Izetbegović rejected it because he thought it wasn't good enough. He wanted more. The next peace proposal by the UN and the EU, he also rejected because it wasn't good enough. The next peace proposal he also rejected because it wasn't good enough. There was even a joke told by the Bosnian Muslims themselves, about nothing being good enough for Izetbegović, not even the most obvious things.

In Dayton, at the end of 1995, when after the U.S. intervention, the NATO intervention, and this entire thing, when the Bosnian Serb leadership was accused of war crimes to sideline them so they could talk directly with [then President of Serbia, Slobodan] Milošević, whom they thought was more pliable, Holbrooke himself had everything all negotiated, and Izetbegović came into the room and said, "No! I don't like this. I won't sign it." What happened next is—he doesn't go into too many details. But basically, everybody from Holbrooke to Clinton himself, when they called Izetbegović and told him, "If you don't sign this, you will lose all of our support," Izetbegović said, "But we're the victims here. You wouldn't dare." He thought that highly of himself. And to Bill Clinton's credit—and I never thought I'd say the sentence—he talked to Izetbegović and told him, "Oh, yes, I would, watch me," or something to that effect.

Holbrooke wasn't entirely clear, but he had communicated to Izetbegović that he's actually in charge of his whole martyr complex, and it's thanks to American propaganda that Izetbegović was even allowed to consider himself a victim, and that he would do what he was told or else. And sure enough, Izetbegović signed the agreement and the Dayton Peace Accords happened. But they were a worse deal for the Bosnian Muslims than they would have had without the war. And that's not even taking into account all the people that died.

I see the same dynamic playing out in Kyiv with Zelenskyy having a really good deal offered before the war, rejecting it, because that's what his masters told him to do, or he thought he could get a better deal without it. He started getting high on his own supply, and then, playing full Izetbegović throughout, claiming victimhood, sending his Foreign Minister to Western capitals to round up weapons, himself not getting off the TV screen, talking to parliaments, telling everybody exactly what they wanted to hear, painting himself as this heroic martyr—which is easier for him because he's a 40-something actor, whereas Izetbegović was an elderly Islamic scholar who didn't speak any English and was generally very off-putting personally.

Izetbegović still got a lot of puff pieces in Western press as a “moderate Democrat,” that was nowhere near the truth. The man had literally invented the doctrine of Islamic revolution years before Khomeini pulled it off in Iran, and has been revered across the Islamic world as a scholar of jihad. But, of course, that didn't bother the Western press from making him out as something he wasn't.

The same thing is being applied to Zelenskyy: “Well, Ukraine can't be Nazi, because Zelenskyy is Jewish.” I'm sorry, but he [played](#) the Israeli National Anthem with presumably his privates as part of a comedy routine some years ago. How can you square this in your mind? This is not a serious man. And again, this whole thing has been one incredible act put on for the Western audiences. That was his target audience.

This entire Ukrainian info war that Kyiv is supposedly winning, is being waged on the Western public. It's

not being waged on Russia. It's not even being waged on reluctant Ukrainians. No, it's targeting the United States and NATO and Australia. So, parallels from Bosnia are simply unavoidable. You literally have Zelenskyy playing the Izetbegović script to the last note. The only thing I'm waiting for is if there's somebody in Washington who can—and again, I never thought I'd say this—who will have the willpower of Bill Clinton to tell a client “No.”

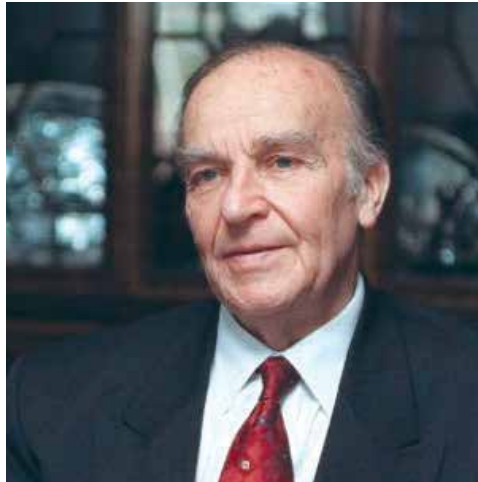
The Potential for Thermonuclear War

Billington: The airwaves are now full of reflections of what happened in Syria not long ago—that Russia, in its evil ways, is about to use chemical weapons against the “innocent Ukrainian civilians.” As everybody now knows, this was exactly the MO of the fake White Helmet [Syria Civil Defense] false flag, claiming chemical use by [Syrian President Bashar al-]Assad in Douma, which was then used to justify military air attacks against Syria. So not only is this so-called chemical weapons of mass destruction being talked about—always saying “we cannot confirm, but it's serious because this is the way the Russians are”—but you also have the fact that President Biden who, before he was elected, said

that he would impose a no-first-strike policy for nuclear weapons were he to be president, now has backed off that. We now have U.S. military leaders openly talking about the possibility of a nuclear war.

In the context of this Ukrainian fight, which of course has already been used to justify actual acts of war by the U.S. against Russia in the form of economic warfare, how do you read the potential that this could break out into a military conflict between Russia and NATO and the U.S., and potentially with the use of nuclear weapons?

Malić: This is where the comparisons with the 1990s break down, because Russia, as I said, is no Serbia. This is not 1999 or '96 or '94, and Russia does have a nuclear arsenal that's been recently upgraded, tested. Russia has some new missiles, even, that the



DoD/Helene C. Stikkel

Alija Izetbegović, first President of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. “Zelenskyy is playing Izetbegović's script.”

West doesn't have or has no defenses against. The Russians have been very clear about their doctrine: In the case in which their sovereignty is endangered, they will use nuclear weapons to defend themselves. This is not something that seems to be understood in Washington, where they're still clinging on to this idiotic "escalate to de-escalate doctrine" that nobody ever actually formulated. There seems to be this pattern in Washington of constantly fighting imaginary enemies and phantom doctrines, because they'd rather fight a straw man than face reality on the ground, and prefer narratives of their own creation to reality, however inconvenient.

But, not to put too fine a point on it, there already is a war of sorts going on between the U.S. and its allies, vassals—however you want to put it—and Russia. Sanctions are war. Economic embargoes, blockades, have been long recognized as an act of war. People living in the U.S. should make no mistake—this is war. It just hasn't gone fully kinetic yet because that's what feeding weapons to Ukraine is. But it's a very, very slippery slope. There's not very much maneuvering space in which the U.S. can pull back from this brink and say, "Okay, fine. Let's just back off and not use nuclear weapons and end all life on the planet as we know it."

You've got these bloodthirsty—I don't want to call them journalists, they're technically journalists, but they're just bloodthirsty advocates and propaganda-spreaders—who keep going around on social networks calling for nuclear war, saying, "It won't be so bad. Why are we so afraid of nukes?" These are the people who authored the kinds of articles saying, "I fired an AR-15 and it was horrible." These are the people who would soil themselves if airdropped into a war zone for 5 minutes, let alone five years. And here they are, pontificating that nuclear annihilation is not so bad. Because they think it can be won? How stupid are they? In the end, it's a rhetorical question because the answer is obvious.

I honestly have very little faith in the capability of the current leaders in the West to avoid a slide into full open warfare, because they've repeatedly demonstrated that they don't care for compromise or dialogue or negotiations. They're trapped in this la-la land of their own making, believing their own propaganda about



DoD/Phil Schmitt

"I have very little faith in the capability of the current leaders in the West to avoid a slide into full open warfare...." Four B-61 nuclear free-fall bombs on a bomb cart, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. Dec. 1, 1986.

how, "Russia's going to collapse after Ukraine defeats them completely." And Ukrainian tanks—which at this point almost don't exist—I guess will triumphantly roll into Kursk or whatever. These people are just unforgivably ignorant about what's going on.

You have the British Government leading the way, insisting on all of these sanctions, blockades, boycotts. Who are you people? You're one little island off the coast of Europe that used to have a world-spanning empire 100 years ago. Nobody cares anymore. You're not in charge of the world! Unless they are and they're not telling us.

You've got Joe Biden who, let's face it, isn't the sharpest tool in the shed, and has never been particularly bright, but at least had possession of his faculties over the course of his lengthy career as a representative for credit card companies. But he clearly doesn't know what's going on, and he's being fed lines to say—one week he'll say war crimes and the next week he'll say genocide. It's all this stuff that's coming out of Kyiv, and nobody's checking him on this. We have to rely on people like [National Security Advisor] Jake Sullivan, who used to be Hillary Clinton's errand boy for all sorts of political network, to keep him in check and walk back his public announcements to the pliant White House press. It doesn't exactly instill confidence.

I would hope that there are people at the Pentagon who are willing to pull the brakes and say, "Look, look, look, look, look. No, we're not getting involved in a

nuclear war with Russia because that's insane." But do I really think that Raytheon, [U.S. Secretary of Defense] Gen. (USA-ret.) Lloyd Austin, and [Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff] Mark Milley, have it in them? I don't know.

Sanctions Are Malthusian Acts of War

Billington: You mentioned that these incredibly severe economic sanctions are, in fact, an act of war. Many people are admitting and pointing out—even Joe Biden for that matter—that these sanctions are having as much or even more devastating effect on Europe and the United States than they are on Russia. The Russians are working with China, and recently India has quite openly joined with them, to put together alternative financial measures to counter the belief in the West that because they control the dollar, they therefore can control the world and impose sanctions on anybody who does trade in dollars. That now is being challenged by the discussions to set up alternative financial systems.

Why they would impose these sanctions, knowing they would have such a devastating effect on the West as well, brings into question whether or not that was, in fact, their intention; that we're dealing here with a Malthusian policy—the old British imperial Malthusian policy, which says “let's keep the world in a state of backwardness in order for us, the aristocrats and oligarchs, to have our way.” The difference being, as you pointed out, that Russia is no longer the weak country it was 20, 30, 40 years ago. And, of course, China has totally transformed into one of the leading nations in history.

In your view, what will it take for those in the West to come to terms with the reality that this is no longer a unipolar world with the City of London and Wall Street being the gods of Olympus who can dictate policy to the entire world? What will it take to change that?

Malić: It's already obvious to me when I look at the world today that you have these U.S. “diplomats”—and I use the word in quotes because they're not—going around the world telling everybody, “You must do this, you must do that.” And everybody else, politely but firmly, saying “No. We won't.” The Indians are saying, “Yeah, no, no, yeah. You give us grief over oil imports from Russia, but we import less oil in a month, in a year, than the Europeans import in a day and we don't see you having a problem with that.” The Chinese are very

fond of diplomatic formulas, and they're becoming much more blunt by that day, in this crisis. The Russians, who are also very fond of diplomatic forms, are becoming about as blunt as Serbs these days. You are constantly bombarded with the narrative, “The international community and the world have isolated Russia.” No, you and your 40 vassals are the “International Community,” and everybody else is either saying, “We don't want any part of this”—most of Africa is like this—or, “This is not our fight.” And then you have India and China.

There was recently a regime-change operation in Pakistan after Prime Minister Imran Khan said, “Oh no, we want to continue trading with Russia and China.” U.S. diplomats went and talked to the opposition, telling them, “Vote this man out, give him a ‘no confidence vote’ in the parliament.” In the back and forth, Khan was ousted, because this is what the U.S. does. All this rhetoric about, “Sovereign nations get the right to choose their alliances,” is nonsense, a lie. The thing that they used in the run-up to the conflict in Ukraine was, “Ukraine is a free and sovereign country that can freely choose its future.” But only if it makes the “correct” choice. And the only correct choice is to submit to the globalist American empire. This is not controversial. This is a fact. This is what they think. This is what they want. This is how they act. And the rest of the world, with all of its attendant troubles, is aware of this and is trying to act accordingly.

Now, some people are being very subtle about it because they don't necessarily want to get attacked. But I believe, especially after last year's fiasco in Afghanistan, there's a growing awareness in the rest of the world that maybe, just maybe, the Pentagon isn't all that all-powerful as it paints itself to be, and perhaps one can stand up for one's sovereignty without being trampled. That was what Serbia was supposed to serve as an example of, because of the 78-day war in '99. But when NATO failed to make an example of Serbia militarily because the war itself was inconvenient, because Serbia resisted successfully, they ended up making Serbia into another type of example with the Color Revolution in 2000. And that's the example they've been using around the world. “If you don't behave, we'll go in, we'll use your elections, we'll subvert your democracy, and will elect people who will serve us and obey.”

Now, to address what you just mentioned about the sanctions undermining the West itself, wrecking the dollar's position as a reserve currency, and undermin-

ing faith in the entire Western project. The Western claim to global hegemony is supposed to be based on these universal values, right? Private property, democracy, freedom, free speech, etc. All of this is being trampled. All of it, with wild disregard for any sort of laws, norms, traditions, in response to events in Ukraine. Well, what gives?

Two explanations: One is that the people in charge are so stupid that they don't see what they're doing, they can't see second-order consequences, and they think that cutting off Russian access to iPhones is going to collapse their society. It might collapse American society, if that happened. Is it that they misunderstand Russia and are basically projecting American society onto them?

Or, second explanation, which you also offered, is that this is a deliberate ploy to wreck the world, deliberately sinking it into poverty and despair, sort of a Great Reset, if you will, championed by some luminaries of the World Economic Forum, which we know have been in contact with all sorts of politicians in the West, not just those in power, but also those in opposition, which would explain why there is no political opposition to any of this madness, or hardly any.

Of course, these World Economic Forum people have been promoting the Great Reset for the past two years of the pandemic. "Oh, great, pandemic! Now we need to do what we've always intended to do, only faster. Oh, great, Ukraine. Now we need to do what we intended to do only faster." Literally everything can be harnessed to serve their agenda. It's tempting to write off [WEF founder and Executive Chairman] Klaus Schwab as a James Bond villain or a cartoon baddie.

But if the shoe fits, I mean, if observable reality matches their public statements, then, surely, we must think that there's something there. It's now coming to a head. All the masks are off, and you can literally see that this entire establishment that purported to govern the world, in a benevolent hegemony for the benefit of all, and prosperity and human rights and democracy, doesn't really value any of these things. They only value power. And only their own. They don't really care. They talk about a "rules-based international order." There's no international order. It's only what-

ever they decide it is. There are no rules. They made the rules. They're above the rules. And they expect this to be okay with eight billion humans on earth, or however many there are now. I've lost count.

It's very clearly not okay. It's very clearly not okay in most of the rest of the countries outside of this U.S. bloc, but also internally. You've got hundreds of millions of Americans not agreeing with the government tyranny at home. They just get propagandized to worship the latest hero on TV. Zelenskyy is the Andrew Cuomo [former Governor of New York State], or Anthony Fauci [Chief Medical Advisor to President Joe Biden] at this point. But tomorrow it may be something else. You've had Canadians standing up against mandates. You had Australia-



CC/BoE

"The greatest trick that London has pulled off, is convincing the world that Britain is no longer an empire pulling the strings around the world." Shown, the Bank of England in London.

lians demonstrating, you had people in Europe. These people do not have the Mandate of Heaven, the mandate of God, the mandate at their own ballot box to do this to the world. They just don't.

The British Empire

Billington: As you know, Lyndon LaRouche, always, throughout his life, argued that the idea that the British Empire disappeared and the American empire took its place is a fundamental misconception of history, that the British Empire never dissolved. It was always an empire of the private sector, of the banking interest in the City of London. The East India Company was a private company running the empire. The U.S. of Washington, Hamilton, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin

Roosevelt, was torn apart and replaced by the British model, using the U.S. as the dumb giant to maintain and continue the British imperial colonial policies—in Vietnam and then in the Middle East, and so forth. As you indicated earlier, it's the British who are what's really behind the World Economic Forum and the Great Reset: Prince Charles, [former UK Prime Minister] Tony Blair, Mark Carney, the former Governor of the Bank of England.

How do you see this British imperial role today? What do you believe is required to end once and for all, this era of imperial might?

Malić: It's been obvious to me. You have on the surface this whole, "Well, the British Empire ended with the Suez crisis, and the U.S. replaced it." But that's such a surface reading of history. [UK Prime Minister Winston] Churchill himself wanted the U.S. to get involved in World War II, just like the British got the U.S. to get involved in World War I to save its own empire. Now, Churchill wasn't stupid. He was many things, but he wasn't stupid. Would you really believe that he wanted the Americans to come in and take over and destroy the British Empire? No, of course not. A quote comes to mind from a great movie, *The Usual Suspects*: "The greatest trick the devil ever pulled off is convincing humanity he didn't exist."

The greatest trick that London has pulled off, is convincing the world that Britain is no longer an empire pulling the strings around the world. It may not be the same Victorian empire in which "the sun never sets," but it still pulls the strings all around the world, as we've seen from the disproportionate influence of Tony Blair or whoever is the current occupant of 10 Downing Street. I've lost track; there's been so many lately.

I remember a few months back, their Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss, going to Moscow to meet with [Foreign Minister] Sergey Lavrov, and him asking her a basic elementary geography question, and her running into that rake, in front of God and everybody, saying that she will never recognize Voronezh as a part of Russia. It's been part of Russia since forever. She doesn't even know which regions of Ukraine she's supposed to be

championing! This is the kind of caliber of people that are in official positions. They're not very bright, and yet they bark and the entire world barks with them.

Well, what gives? Something's got to be going on there. Because as I said before, here's this little island with a relatively modest economy of industry—all they've got is entertainment and banking services. And yet so much of the world bows to their influence like it's 1898 instead of 2023. It makes no sense. Why? Well, you tell me. But, one of the first things that I would change, and what people should have done a long time ago, because there's plenty of warning, and people fall for this every time—anybody who keeps their gold in



gov.uk/FCDO

Sergey Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister, with Liz Truss, UK Foreign Secretary, in Moscow, Feb. 9, 2022.

the Bank of England is a moron, and that's an offense to morons. I'm thinking cretins and dweebs at this point, because, seriously, how many countries' wealth has the UK confiscated over the years? Every time?

"Oh well, you know, they've taken it from the Iranians, but they won't do it to us. Oh, they've done it to Venezuelans, but they won't do it to us." Come on, seriously, how many people does London have to rob blind for you to realize that it's not safe to keep gold there? It's just not.

Again, if Britain is this shadow world empire of bankers and propaganda—and don't get me wrong, it seems propaganda is a huge factor in this, because they may not have much of a real economy, but they defi-

nately have the biggest psy-op army in the world, which, by the way, exists to accuse Russians of doing that. This is being financed by people stupid enough to put their money in the city of London. Basically, I'm not saying this is our fault, but it's our fault for enabling them.

An Emerging Solution

Billington: I think you have signed the petition which the Schiller Institute has circulated, or if you haven't, I hope you will, which is called, "Convoke an International Conference to Establish a New Security and Development Architecture for All Nations." That [petition](#) asserts that the world is at a conjunctural crisis, which you've made very clear here today, which will lead either to war or to a new paradigm based on the notion of peace through mutual development, as in the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, which ended the 150 years of religious warfare in Europe by establishing sovereign republics in which each republic's interests were also those of the other nations, and that all past crimes were forgiven. This, of course, would be the only sane approach to ending this rush to war, which could become a nuclear war, and the rush to global economic disintegration and mass starvation, which is already facing mankind.

The question is, how can we get through to this Western world now dominated by this outrageously imperialistic and Malthusian mentality with the approach we've proposed?

By the way, we also held a very powerful [conference](#) on April 9, demonstrating that such a breakthrough is possible. [Anatoly Antonov,] Russia's Ambassador to the United States, stood up with Helga Zepp-LaRouche and the Schiller Institute to declare that we must bring about this kind of a new paradigm based on peace through development. Others from India and from China and from South Africa and from South America participated, in our effort to bring the world together rather than destroy ourselves in geopolitical conflict—literally the only way to escape descent into a new dark age. What are your views on that?

Malić: It certainly sounds like the kind of great reset that I could get on board with, because it's not enough to just condemn the current situation as untenable. We do need to propose solutions to it. Several months ago, the Russians and the Chinese [committed](#) themselves to an actual world order based on international law. For all of this talk in Western press about them being revisionist powers, they're not. They're actually standing for a

world order as written, the laws as on the books. It's the Western powers that seek to operate outside the law and hold themselves exempt from obligations that they insist on imposing on others.

The blind alley in which we find ourselves today—the conflict in Ukraine—was from the very beginning engineered to target Russia as a sovereign nation. This is not about Ukraine. It never was. The United States doesn't care about Ukraine or its people. They care about using Ukraine as a weapon against Russia. And the reason they want to use a weapon against Russia, again, goes back to the '90s and the doctrine that there can only be one sovereign country in the world: the American empire. Everybody else is either a servant or a victim, or yet to be victim, but pretending to be a partner for now. And that's how they run the world.

This is not tenable. It cannot go on forever. It's not about to go on for very much longer, one way or the other. So we need to start thinking about a new vision of the world that would replace it, that would be more in line with objective reality, that would guarantee principles that are valid for everyone, and that wouldn't require an enforcer able to commit monstrous acts in order to keep people in line, but would rely on the goodwill of the people, of the people being governed by themselves, of a true international community, much as that word has been defiled by propaganda over the past 30 years.

There will always be conflicts and disputes as long as there are human beings and humanity. But being civilized means having a way to adjudicate these disputes in a manner that doesn't destroy lives, that doesn't destroy families or communities, or even entire civilizations. We call ourselves "the civilized world." Let's be about it.

Billington: Thank you very much. Do you have any final words for the followers of *EIR* and the Schiller Institute?

Malić: Just what I said. We call ourselves a "civilized" world. Let's be about it. I encourage people to read your daily updates. They're very informative, and learn more about your mission. It's very intriguing and offers a lot of interesting solutions that I think people would do well to study and implement.

Billington: Well, thank you very much. This interview will have a very wide impact, I'm certain.

Malić: Thank you for having me.