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Declassified intelligence files expose inconvenient truths of Bosnian war

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A trove of intelligence files sent by Canadian peacekeepers expose CIA black ops, illegal weapon shipments, imported jihadist fighters, potential false flags, and stage-managed atrocities.

The [established mythos](#) of the Bosnian War is that Serb separatists, encouraged and directed by Slobodan Milošević and his acolytes in Belgrade, sought to forcibly seize Croat and Bosniak territory in service of creating an irredentist “Greater Serbia.” Every step of the way, they purged indigenous Muslims in a concerted, deliberate genocide while refusing to engage in constructive peace talks.

This narrative was aggressively perpetuated by the mainstream media at the time, and further legitimized by the UN-created International Criminal Tribunal for the

former Yugoslavia (ICTY) once the conflict ended. It has become axiomatic and unquestionable in Western consciousness ever since, enforcing the sense that negotiation invariably amounts to appeasement, a mentality that has enabled NATO war hawks to justify multiple military interventions over subsequent years.

However, a vast trove of intelligence cables sent by [Canadian peacekeeping troops](#) in Bosnia to Ottawa's National Defence Headquarters, first [published](#) by Canada Declassified at the start of 2022, exposes this narrative as cynical farce.

The documents offer an unparalleled, first-hand, real-time view of the war as it developed, with the prospect of peace rapidly degrading into grinding bloodshed that ultimately caused the painful death of the multi-faith, multi-ethnic Yugoslavia.

The Canadian soldiers were part of a wider UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) dispatched to former Yugoslavia in 1992 in the vain hope tensions wouldn't escalate to all-out war and an amicable settlement could be reached by all sides. They stayed until the bitter end, long past the point their mission was reduced to [miserable, life-threatening failure](#).

The peacekeepers' increasingly bleak analysis of the reality on the ground provides a candid perspective of the war's history that has been largely concealed from the public. It is a story of CIA black ops, literally explosive provocations, illegal weapon shipments, imported jihadist fighters, potential false flags, and stage-managed atrocities.

Read the complete Canadian UNPROFOR cables [here](#).

See key excerpts of the files referred to in this article [here](#).

“Outside interference in the peace process”

It is a little-known but openly acknowledged fact that the U.S. laid the foundations for war in Bosnia, [sabotaging](#) a peace deal negotiated by the European Community in early 1992. Under its auspices, the country would be a confederation divided into three semi-autonomous regions along ethnic lines. While far from perfect, each side generally got what it wanted – in particular, self-governance – and at the least, enjoyed an outcome preferable to all-out conflict.

However, on March 28th, 1992, U.S. Ambassador to Yugoslavia Warren Zimmerman met with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, a Bosniak Muslim, to [reportedly offer](#) Washington's recognition of the country as an independent state. He further promised unconditional support in the inevitable subsequent war if rejected the Community proposal. Hours later, Izetbegovic went on the warpath, and fighting erupted almost immediately.

[Received wisdom](#) dictates the Americans were concerned that Brussels' leading role in negotiations would weaken Washington's international prestige and assist in the soon-to-be European Union emerging as an independent power bloc following the collapse of Communism.

While such concerns were no doubt held by U.S. officials, the UNPROFOR cables expose a much darker agenda at work. Washington wanted Yugoslavia reduced to rubble and planned to bring the Serbs violently to heel by prolonging the war as long as possible. To the U.S., the Serbs were the ethnic group most determined to preserve the troublesome independent republic's existence.

These aims were very effectively served by Washington's absolutist assistance to the Bosniaks. It was an article of faith in the Western mainstream at the time and remains so today that [Serb intransigence](#) in negotiations blocked the path to peace in Bosnia. Yet, the UNPROFOR cables make repeatedly clear this was not the case.

In cables sent July – September 1993, the time of a [ceasefire and renewed attempt](#) to amicably partition the country, the Canadian peacekeepers repeatedly attribute an obstinate character to Bosniaks, not Serbs. As one representative excerpt states, the “insurmountable” goal of “satisfying Muslim demands will be the primary obstacle in any peace talks.”

Various passages also refer to how “outside interference in the peace process” did “not help the situation,” and “no peace” could be achieved “if outside parties continue to encourage the Muslims to be demanding and inflexible in negotiations.”

By “outside” assistance, UNPROFOR, of course, meant Washington. Its unconditional support for the Bosniaks motivated them to “[negotiate] as if they had won the war,” which they had to date “lost.”

“Encouraging Izetbegovic to hold out for further concessions” and “clear U.S. desires to lift the arms embargo on the Muslims and to bomb the Serbs are serious obstacles to ending the fighting in the former Yugoslavia,” the [peacekeepers recorded on September 7, 1993.](#)

The next day, they [reported](#) to headquarters that “Serbs have been the most compliant with the terms of the ceasefire.” Meanwhile, Izetbegovic was basing his negotiating position on “the popular image of the Bosnian Serbs as the bad guys.” Validating this illusion had a concomitant benefit – namely, precipitating NATO airstrikes on Serb areas. This was not lost on the peacekeepers:

“Serious talks in Geneva will not occur as long as Izetbegovic believes that airstrikes will be flown against the Serbs. These airstrikes will greatly strengthen his position and likely make him less cooperative in negotiations.”

Simultaneously, Muslim fighters were “not giving peace talks a chance, just going hell for leather,” and very much willing and able to assist in Izetbegovic’s objective.

Throughout the final months of 1993, they launched countless broadsides on Serb territory throughout Bosnia in breach of the ceasefire.

In December, when Serb forces launched a “major attack” of their own, a cable that month asserted that since early Summer, “most of the Serb activity has been defensive or in response to Muslim provocation.”

A September 13th UNPROFOR cable noted that in Sarajevo, “Muslim forces continue to infiltrate the Mount Igman area and shell BSA [Bosnian Serb Army] positions around the city daily,” the “assessed aim” being to “increase Western sympathy by provoking an incident and blaming the Serbs.”

Two days later, “provocation” of the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) was continuing, although “the BSA is reported to be exercising restraint.” This area remained a key Bosniak target for some time afterward. The July - September volume concludes with an ominous cable:

“BSA occupation of Mount Igman is not adversely affecting the situation in Sarajevo. It is simply an excuse for Izetbegovic to delay negotiations. *His own troops have been the worst violators* [emphasis added] of the [July 30th] ceasefire agreement.”

Enter the Mujahideen: “The Muslims are not above firing on their own people or UN areas”

Throughout the conflict, the Bosnian mujahideen worked ceaselessly to escalate the violence. Muslims from all over the world flooded into the country beginning in the latter half of 1992, waging jihad against the Croats and Serbs. Many had already gained experience on the Afghan battlefield through the 1980s and early 90s after arriving from CIA and MI6-infiltrated fundamentalist groups in Britain and the U.S. For them, Yugoslavia was the next [recruitment ground](#).

The Mujahideen [frequently arrived](#) on “black flights,” along with an endless flow of weapons in breach of the UN embargo. This started off as a joint Iranian and Turkish operation, with the financial backing of Saudi Arabia, although as the volume of weapons increased, the U.S. took over, flying the deadly cargo to an airport in Tuzla using fleets of C-130 Hercules aircraft.

Estimates of the Bosnian mujahideen’s size vary vastly, but their pivotal contribution to the civil war seems clear. U.S. Balkans negotiator Richard Holbrooke [in 2001](#) declared that Bosniaks “wouldn’t have survived” without their help and branded their role in the conflict a “pact with the devil” from which Sarajevo was yet to recover.

Mujahideen fighters are never explicitly mentioned in the UNPROFOR cables, and neither are Bosniaks – the term “the Muslims” is used liberally. Still, oblique references to the former are plentiful.

A Winter 1993 intelligence report observed that “the weak and decentralized command and control systems” of the three opposing sides produced “widespread proliferation of weapons and the existence of various official and unofficial paramilitary groups, who often have individual and local agendas.” Among those “unofficial” groups was the Mujahideen, of course.

More clearly, in December that year, the peacekeepers recorded how David Owen, a former British politician who served as the European Community’s lead negotiator in the former Yugoslavia, “had been condemned to death for being responsible for the deaths of 130,000 Muslims in Bosnia,” his sentence “passed by the ‘Honour Court of Muslims’.” It was understood that “45 people were in place all over Europe to carry out the sentence.”

BRITSIH EMBASSY IN ZAGREB CLAIMED THAT EC MEDIATOR LORD OWEN HAD BEEN CONDEMNED TO DEATH FOR BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF 130,000 MUSLIMS IN BOSNIA. SENTENCE WAS PASSED BY THE QUOTE HONOUR COURT OF MUSLIMS UNQUOTE ON 07 DEC. IT WAS CLAIMED THAT 45 PEOPLE WERE IN PLACE ALL OVER EUROPE TO CARRY OUT THE SENTENCE

OUTLOOK

Owen certainly wasn't responsible for the deaths of 130,000 Muslims, as nowhere near that many Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs were killed over the course of the war in total. Nor were the Bosniaks religious extremists with a network of operatives across the continent, on standby to carry out fatwas passed down by an "Honour Court."

Subsequent to this incident, which has never previously been publicly revealed, there are reports of "the Muslims" preparing false flag provocations. In January 1994, one cable observed:

"The Muslims are not above firing on their own people or UN areas and then claiming the Serbs are the guilty party in order to gain further Western sympathy. The Muslims often site their artillery extremely close to UN buildings and sensitive areas such as hospitals in the hope that Serb counter-bombardment fire will hit these sites under the gaze of the international media."

6. (S/REL NATO) THREAT TO UN FORCES. THE MUSLIMS ARE NOT ABOVE FIRING ON THEIR OWN PEOPLE OR UN AREAS AND THEN CLAIMING THE SERBS ARE THE GUILTY PARTY IN ORDER TO GAIN FURTHER WESTERN SYMPATHY. THE MUSLIMS OFTEN SITE THEIR ARTILLERY EXTREMELY CLOSE TO UN BUILDINGS AND SENSITIVE AREAS SUCH AS HOSPITALS IN THE HOPE THAT SERB COUNTER-BOMBARDMENT FIRE WILL HIT THESE SITES UNDER THE GAZE

PAGE 6 RCCPJCR3001 S E C R E T CAN EYES ONLY
OF THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA. SERB FIRE ALSO HITS UN AREAS ON OCCASION, BUT THIS IS MUCH LESS LIKELY TO BE AN ORCHESTRATED EFFORT AS OPPOSED TO A LOW LEVEL DECISION ON THEIR PART. IN SOME CASES, ENGAGEMENTS OF THE UN WITH INDIRECT FIRE BY EITHER FACTION ARE

Another cable records how "Muslim troops masquerading as UN forces" had been spotted wearing UNPROFOR's blue helmets and "a combination of Norwegian and British combat clothing," driving vehicles painted white and marked UN. The peacekeepers' Director General feared that if such connivance was to become "widespread" or "be used for infiltration of Croat lines," it would "greatly increase the prospects for legitimate UN forces to be targeted by the Croats."

"This may be exactly what the Muslims intend, possibly to provoke further pressure for airstrikes on the Croats," the cable adds.

That same month, UNPROFOR cables speculated "the Muslims" would target Sarajevo airport, the destination for humanitarian aid to the Bosniaks, with a false flag attack. As "the Serbs would be the obvious culprits" in such a scenario, "the Muslims would gain a great deal of propaganda value from such Serb activity," and

it was "thus very tempting for the Muslims to conduct the shelling and blame the Serbs."

BEEN HIT WITH INDIRECT FIRE TWICE IN THE PAST MONTH, CAUSING A TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF THE FACILITY ON BOTH OCCASIONS . IT IS NOT CLEAR WHICH FACTION WAS RESPONSIBLE, ALTHOUGH THE ACTION WAS LIKELY INTENTIONAL HARASSMENT OF THE UN IN BOTH CASES. ALL FACTIONS SEE HUMANITARIAN RELIEF AS MILITARILY SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITY BECAUSE FOOD AND FUEL ARE DIVERTED TO THE VARIOUS MILITARY FORCES. THUS, IN A TIME OF INCREASED FIGHTING IN SARAJEVO, THE SERBS WOULD BE THE OBVIOUS CULPRITS IN AN ATTEMPT TO INTERRUPT THE FLOW OF COMBAT SUPPLIES TO THE MUSLIMS. FOR THIS VERY REASON, HOWEVER, WE MUST REMEMBER THAT THE MUSLIMS WOULD GAIN A GREAT DEAL OF PROPAGANDA VALUE FROM SUCH SERB ACTIVITY. IT IS THUS VERY TEMPTING FOR THE MUSLIMS TO CONDUCT THE SHELLING AND BLAME THE SERBS.

U.S. proxy wars, then and now

Against this backdrop, cables related to the Markale Massacre take on a particularly striking character. On February 5th 1994, an explosion tore through a civilian market, causing 68 deaths and 144 casualties.

Responsibility for the attack - and the means by which it was executed - has been hotly contested ever since, with separate official investigations yielding inconclusive results. The UN at the time was unable to make an attribution, although UNPROFOR troops have since testified they suspected the Bosniak side may have been responsible.

Accordingly, cables from this time refer to “disturbing aspects” of the event, including journalists being “directed to the scene so quickly,” and “a very visible Muslim Army presence in the area.”

“We know that the Muslims have fired on their own civilians and the airfield in the past in order to gain media attention,” one concluded. A later memo observes, “Muslim forces outside of Sarajevo have, in the past, planted high explosives in their own positions and then detonated them under the gaze of the media, claiming Serb bombardment. This has then been used as a pretext for Muslim ‘counter-fire’ and attacks on the Serbs.”

GOOD FORTUNE WITH PROBABLE ERROR FOR RANGE, TIME OF FLIGHT AND THE POSSIBILITY OF HITTING A BUILDING IN LINE WITH THE MARKET ON THE DESCENDING ARM OF THE TRAJECTORY. WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO PROOF THAT THIS BOMB SCENARIO OCCURRED, BUT IT IS PLAUSIBLE AND WOULD CLEARLY HAVE BEEN A MUSLIM ORCHESTRATED INCIDENT. WE DO KNOW THAT MUSLIM FORCES OUTSIDE OF SARAJEVO HAVE, IN THE PAST, PLANTED HIGH EXPLOSIVES IN THEIR OWN POSITIONS AND THEN DETONATED THEM UNDER THE GAZE OF THE MEDIA, CLAIMING SERB BOMBARDMENT. THIS HAS THEN BEEN USED AS A PRETEXT FOR MUSLIM QUOTE COUNTER-FIRE UNQUOTE AND ATTACKS ON THE SERBS.

11. (S/REL NATO) DISTURBING ASPECTS OF THE 05 FEB INCIDENT ARE THAT THE PRESS WAS DIRECTED TO THE SCENE SO QUICKLY AND THAT THERE WAS A VERY VISIBLE MUSLIM ARMY PRESENCE IN THE AREA. THIS INDICATES A VERY RAPID DETERMINATION OF WHAT HAD OCCURRED ON THE PART OF THE MUSLIM AUTHORITIES. IN SPITE OF THIS, MUSLIM RADIO ISSUED A CLEARLY FALSE REPORT OF WHAT HAD OCCURRED SOME 90 MINUTES

Nonetheless, [in its 2003](#) conviction of Serb general Stanislav Galic for his role in the siege of Sarajevo, the ICTY concluded the Massacre was deliberately perpetrated by Serb forces, a ruling [held up](#) on appeal.

The authors of this article make no judgment on what did or did not happen at Markale that fateful day. However, the murkiness surrounding the event foreshadowed pivotal events that justified escalations in every subsequent Western proxy war, from Iraq to Libya to Syria to Ukraine.

Since the onset of the Ukraine proxy war this February 24th, deliberate war crimes, real incidents misleadingly framed as war crimes, and potentially staged events are virtually daily occurrences, along with accompanying volleys of claims and counterclaims of culpability. [In some cases](#), officials on one side have even gone from celebrating and claiming credit for an attack to blaming the other within days, or simply hours. Substance and spin have become inseparable, if not symbiotic.

In years to come, who did what to whom and when could well, in the manner of the ICTY, become matters decided in international courts. There are already moves to set up a similar body once the war in Ukraine is over.

Parliamentarians in the Netherlands [have demanded](#) that Vladimir Putin be tried in The Hague. France's Foreign Ministry [has called](#) for a special tribunal to be created. Kiev-based NGO Truth Hounds [is collecting](#) evidence every day of purported Russian atrocities across the country in service of such a tribunal.

There can be little doubt that both Kiev and Moscow's forces have committed atrocities and killed civilians in this conflict, just as it's indisputable all three sides in the Bosnian War were guilty of heinous acts and massacres of innocent and/or defenseless people. It's reasonable to assume the savagery will become ever-more merciless as the war in Ukraine grinds on in the precise manner as Yugoslavia's breakup.

Just how long the fighting will continue isn't certain, although EU and NATO officials [have forecast](#) it could be several years, and Western powers clearly intend to keep the proxy war active for as long as possible. On October 11th, *The Washington Post* [reported that](#) the U.S. privately conceded Kiev was incapable of "winning the war outright," but had also "ruled out the idea of pushing or even nudging Ukraine to the negotiating table."

This highlights another myth that arose as a result of the Yugoslav wars and which endures to this day. It is the widely-held notion that negotiation and attempts to secure a peaceful settlement only emboldened Serb "aggressors."

This dangerous myth has served as justification for all manner of destructive Western interventions. Citizens of these countries live with the consequences of those actions to this day, often as migrants after fleeing cities and towns scorched by regime change wars.

Another toxic legacy of the Balkan wars also endures: Westerners' concern about human life is determined by which side their governments back in a given conflict. As the Canadian UNPROFOR cables demonstrate, the U.S. and its allies have cultivated support for their wars by concealing a reality even their own militaries documented in clinical detail.

Source: [The Grayzone](#)



<https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/2023/01/03/declassified-intelligence-files-expose-inconvenient-truths-of-bosnian-war/>