

1999 - NATO BOMBING OF YUGOSLAVIA

78 DAYS & NIGHTS OF WAR

The following presentation is a philatelic presentation of the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, using "to save Kosovo's Albanian lives" as pretext.

History of the Conflict

The 1999 NATO bombing campaign against Yugoslavia, also known as "Operation Allied Force", was a major military intervention aimed at halting the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo, without the UN Security Council support. US Secretary, R. Holbrook, shuttle diplomacy to convince Slobodan Milosevic's signing of the "Rambouillet Agreement" failed at their last meeting on March 23, 1999. The following evening, as the Greek Embassy hosted a reception for the "25th March Greek National Day", Yugoslav ministers and high ranking officers leave the building, as the first NATO missiles hit military buildings around Belgrade. Operation Allied Force (OAF) began...

The conflict in Kosovo had deep historical roots, with tensions between the ethnic Albanian majority and the Serbian minority escalating over the years, but for first time the military action taken by Albanian majority drives to the further dissolution of Yugoslavia.

Prior to the bombing campaign, there were significant diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict. The Rambouillet talks, which began on February 6, 1999, were aimed at negotiating a peaceful resolution. However, these talks failed to produce an agreement as Slobodan Milosevic refused to sign the articles of the proposed accords, allowing NATO forces to be stationed in Kosovo.

NATO's decision to Intervene was led by the United States and aimed at "halting the ethnic cleansing and forcing the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Kosovo". A large number of NATO country-members and some NATO friendly states have participated.

The NATO bombing campaign lasted from March 24 to June 10, 1999, 78 days, when an agreement was reached. The Yugoslav Army agreed to withdraw from Kosovo and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established to oversee the region with the aid of K-FOR (Kosovo-Force) a mixture of NATO and Russian military forces.



Map of operations & Military Forces

From a Philatelic point of view, the war changed very little in Yugoslavia's Post Services. For example, they did not use special stamps as a means of propaganda, as is often the case in other conflicts (i.e. Ukraine). In fact, the Post Office continued to operate as usual and released only three series during 1999 directly related to the war and bombing of the country and in two other cases (table-tennis & philatelist) we can see the "Target" signal.

The first reaction came immediately with the start of the bombing, showing the readiness of the Post Office. On March 27, 1999, just two days after the first missiles, the "TARGET" series was issued in two denominations of 2 and 10 dinars (Mi: 2006/2007) which I present below.



The Carte Postale with pictures of K. Kamenov & M. Despotovic shows damaged civilian infrastructure and has been edited and produced by the Tourist Organization of Nis. In the center bear the mark "TARGET".

This was followed by the issue of April 9, 1999 when two values for the World Table Tennis Championships bearing the "Target" mark were issued. They were both 6 ND value, multicolored (Mi: JU 2828, 2829).



"Philatelista" 50th anniversary commemorative stamp bearing the "Target" mark issued 18 October 1999. Value 10 ND, multicolored, (Mi: JU2931).



The fourth and final series, as a direct result of the war, was released on November 27, 1999, dealing with NATO's destruction of Yugoslavia's public infrastructure. And here the series consists of 6 stamps: 3x 2 ND, Mi: 2945, 2946, 2947 & 3x 6 ND, Mi: 2948, 2949, 2950.



On October 29, 1999, a series of 6 stamps showing the bridges of Yugoslavia destroyed by NATO bombing is shown. Values range from 2 ND, Mi:2932, 2933, 2934 and 6 ND, Mi: 2035, 2036, 2037. Here on FDC envelopes showing the damaged bridges.



The Yugoslav Post continued its job during the war as normally as possible, with a "first" in its procedures: it was the first major European conflict without the need for censored mail, as a result of the existence of the Internet. This is shown in a number of letters posted during the war and presented below.

Return cover of Registered & Express letter from Belgrade to Sabac (Yugoslavia). The cancel black round handstamps from Belgrade Post office are from **21 06 99** and the arrival cds Cabac P.O. 25 06 99. Registered number is 10465 over the "express" slicker. The envelope bears a May 1999, Red Cross, 100 Dinars (1ND) Social Welfare postal order stamp and twelve Monasteries series stamps (1994-98) as following: 10x 1 ND, 1997, grey & ultramarine (K 12 ½)

1x 0,10 ND, 1998, dark lila & Turkish grey. (K 12 ½)

1x 0,20 ND, 1998, rose lila & black. (K 12 ½)

A large black handstamp in multiple languages indicates "Insufficient Address".

In the upper left corner there is the seal of the company "G. P. "RAD INTERNATIONAL"D.O.O".

The prefix G.P. stands for "Gradjevinko Preduzece" ("Construction Enterprise").

The stamp on the letter is a protocol stamp of the specific company and means that it was filed under number 63151 on 15.06.1999. Further down is another handstamp with the date "29 OCT 1999" and is believed to be the date the envelope was returned to the company (sender).



Insured V-letter (Value letter) sealed with YU PTT (P-42) security seal labels; canc. date: 10.6.1999 (during the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia). Face value: 4 x 10 + 0.50 + 0.10 + 0.05 + 0.01 Di (Dinars), of the monastery series. From STAPAR to PROKUPLJE. It has a sticker indicating the type V(alue) of the cover-letter and 5 yellow Yugoslav PTT security stickers.



70%
minim.



Prior of the war at the opening of 1999, the Yugoslav Post has issued two stamps with the two most well-known and sacred monasteries in Kosovo, seat of the Serb Patriarchate. "Decani" & "Grasanica".



Grazzanise Base, in northern Kosovo, was used both for the enforcement of the Peace Agreement as well as for the protection of the Serb minority of Kosovo (majority in the north) where some of the most of the sacred Serb monasteries lies. The base provided to the Allied forces with fowl services, including a Military Post Office used by officers from 19 NATO countries participating in the military operation.

Official cover letter with NATO "Operation Allied Force" insignia (16 NATO-country flags), posted from Grazzanise Post Office and bearing two Italian stamps of 800 LI

1x 50 IL, 1980, Castles, Mi: IT 17051, WM: IV, 1x
750 IL, 1995, 50years for the end of WWII, Mi: IT 172374.

The recipient is John Daynes in Essex, England. It bears two black single round cds from GRAZZANISE C (CE) with a post-horn downside.



OPERATION ALLIED FORCE

JOHN DAYNES
25A MILL ROAD
BURNHAM ON CROUCH
ESSEX CM0 8PZ ENGLAND

Cover letter printed with the UN symbol on the left side & Lietuva's flag on the right side, together with the insignia of the 3 Baltic States (Lietuva, Latvija, Igaunija). It is marked as AIR MAIL and has the NATO insignia in the center. Posted in Pristina, Kosovo, Yugoslavia and directed to Vieking- Lietuva. It bears a 1992 Lietuva stamp and a fake overprint of "KOSSOVO 50c." with the inscription BALTBAT*. It bears MILITARY FIELD POST cds of 10 09 1999.



- According the philatelic literature, Kosovo Counterfeit BALTBAT Overprints on Lithuania Admission to the UN Stamps made in 1992, first issued in 1996 by a British private individual as part of a major operation printing hundreds fake and Cinderella stamps.
- The BALBAT inscription represents a training organization for Baltic Peacekeeping battalion – Baltbat, which never existed, but has been much discussed as a Nordic contribution to UN operations. And so there never was a Postal Office.
- For some unclear reasons these are fakes listed in the Estonian Philatelist magazine, as well in a number of catalogues (i.e World Stamp). When they were made Kosovo used the German mark as currency and the values are not in cents.
- Only one dealer was selling them in the past at Delcampe. This seller is avp located in Ukraine. The seller himself states that they were made in 1996.

Cover letter from the German military detachment in Kosovo to Germany. It bears a German stamp for the "2000 Hannover Messe", 110 pf, and is cancelled by a black double -round handstamp 71 FIELD POST, 9 11 99.



Two Yugoslav Army stickers in circulation during the NATO bombing campaign and an actual Yugoslav Army (AVNOJ) 1943-1985 pin, with the Red Star.



NATO DIPLOMACY IS ALL ABOUT SOFT TOUCH.



march the 24th
NATO
peace
awards



**AND THE OSCAR GOES TO SERBIA
IN THE CATEGORY OF DISOBEDIENCE**

FUCK THE *Coca*
FUCK THE *pizza*



All We Need Is Shljivovitza

The people and every type of organization, private or public, reacted directly and in a nationalist way to the NATO attack, considering it unjust. For this reason, there were not few or small protest events, putting up posters condemning NATO or issuing postcards with political or cartoon content; but all condemned NATO in their own way. Here you can see three related cards, among dozens.

From the first moment of the war, the Press control services passed into the hands of the Yugoslav Army. Thus, a Press Center was established in the center of Belgrade, from where all official announcements regarding military and non-military developments were issued, and a few days later a printed information bulletin on daily developments was also circulated. At the same time, journalists who were accredited in the country, were asked to re-accredit at the Army Press Center and obtain new identification from the military services.



The Yugoslav Army Press Center, in accordance with its legal power to regulate the activities related to the information of foreign public and the organization of the work of foreign media representatives, and in compliance with the Order issued by the Chief of the Supreme Command HQ Information Department **passed the following**

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA IN CONDITIONS OF WAR

1. The work of the foreign media representatives (correspondents, reporters, cameramen, interpreters and other technical staff) is to 'comply with a specific war conditions' organization applicable to the entire territory of FR Yugoslavia. The sojourn and the work of foreign reporters shall be regulated in the respect of existing practice and the need to objectively and timely inform the international public on the effects of the aggression and the defense efforts of the Yugoslav Army and people. The basic criteria setting the framework for such activities shall follow the requirements of national defense and the security of foreign reports.

2. The journalist (reporter, cameraman, photo-reporter) producer, interpreter or member of technical staff employed by the foreign correspondent bureau, can commence his professional activity only after having been accredited by the Press Center of the YA Supreme Command Information Service. The accreditation implies the **PRESS CARD** (facsimile enclosed herewith) which serves to be handled by the hotel administration.



ГО

Прес центар
Војске Југославије
Yugoslav Army
Press Center

Ратна прес карта
War Press Card

Име и презиме / Full name

Бр. 0383

ATHENS RADIO

Редакција / Agency
GRCA

Земља / Country

За рад на терену је
потребно посебно
одобрење.



Two more Carte Postals produced by the Nis Tourism Organization, showing the damage caused by NATO bombing in Yugoslavia. The first shows the "Target" sticker and the names of towns and villages hit by the bombs. The second shows a destroyed train bridge and a missile along with the word NATO turned into a sign of death.



THE BOMBED TOWNS AND VILLAGES:



- Beograd • Niš • Novi Sad • Kuršumlija •
- Priština • Kraljevo • Aleksinac • Pančevo •
- Surdulica • Valjevo • Kragujevac • Sombor •
- Bijelo Polje • Subotica • Loznica • Čačak •
- Zaječar • Pirot • Bela Palanka • Užice • Pro-
- kuplje • Kruševac • Leskovac • Peć • Po-
- dgorica • Bar • Vranje • Gnjilane • He-
- rceg Novi • Gračanica • Paraćin •
- Čuprija • Prizren • Uroševac • Đako-
- vica • Smederevo • Kopaonik •
- Zlatibor • Grdelički most • Ja-
- strebač • Požarevac • Novi
- Pazar • Merdare • Ladevci •
- Medoševac • Zemu-
mun • Sremska
Kamenica • Ko-
sovska Mitrovi-
ca • Pepeljevac •
- Priluznica • Rako-
vica • Izvor • Zrenja-
nin • Kula • Vrbas •
- Sremčica • Krnja-
ča • Avala •
- Užička Pože-
ga • Sirogojno •
- Borča • Mirijevo •
- Arandelovac • Baji-
na Bašta • Arijlje •
- Rudo • Ivanjica • Ul-
cinj • Biljanovac • Podi-
na • Budanovac • Surčin • Šabac •
- Krupanj • Sopot • Obrenovac • Kablar •
- Železnik • Mladenovac • Gruža • Vladičin Han •
- Bujanovac • Orahovac • Lipljan • Obilić • Raška •
- Vučitrn • Danilovgrad • Leposavić • Lučane • No-
va Varoš • Podujevo • Jagodina • Rudnik • Vršac...

NAT ☠
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NAT ☠
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For security reasons (control by the Yugoslav Services) most of the foreign journalists live at the HYATT HOTEL in New Belgrade. The management under orders from the Military has issued a number of instructions, as how to move and what to do during their stay in the hotel.



Hyatt Regency Beograd

P.O. Box: 1057
Milentija Popovića 5
11070 Belgrade, Yugoslavia

Tel: (381) (11) 311 1234
Telex: 71031
FAX: (381) (11) 311 2234

Belgrade, March 24, 1999

Dear guests,

Due to the current situation in the country, we take this opportunity to inform you that the hotel management has taken all possible measures to ensure your safety in case of possible air strikes.

Should air raid sirens sound off in Belgrade, please proceed to the fire escape staircase immediately and descend to the -2 floor. Members of our management team will be there to escort you to the hotel shelter.

Thank you for your understanding.

* * *

Dear Guest,

Concerning the current situation in the country and the state of emergency, please note that it is strictly forbidden to make any kind of transmission from your room.

Thank you for understanding

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Svetlana Nikolic". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Svetlana Nikolic
Manager Front Desk Services

Example of the daily Newsletter published by the Yugoslav Army Press Center. Shows the date as well as the day-number of the War -47

May 20th 1999

47

DAILY REVIEW

NATO Raids on Manufacturing and Civilian Facilities on May 19th and in the Night Between May 19th and 20th 1999

In the past 24 hours NATO aircraft intensified the raids on manufacturing and civilian facilities, particularly in the region of the south Serbian province. Bridges, road network, fuel depots, TV relay towers and other facilities were targeted. Last night's raid on the capital of FR Yugoslavia was one of the longest since. Three patients were killed in the attack on the Neurology clinic. Maternity hospital, children's ward and an operating room were also targeted. This is the 58th day of the aggression on FR Yugoslavia.

DRAGAS: (08:25) The area around Gora was targeted with three missiles.

PRIZREN: (09:23 - 10:20) Civilian facilities in the area of this town were the only targets raided. Seven missiles were fired at the village of Zagradska Hoca populated exclusively by ethnic Albanians. Five missiles fell near the stock market in a Prizren suburb. The inflicted damage is immense, and several dozens of houses were demolished.

BUJANOVAC: (09:20 - 10:17) South-east part of the town was targeted with 14 missiles. In the second wave of the attack, that followed shortly, one person from the nearby village of Borovac was severely wounded. Numerous private houses were damaged. Several detonations were reported in Vranje, some 30 km away from Bujanovac.

PEC: (around 13:00) Outskirts of town were targeted. One missile was fired at the empty Park hotel in the very center of the town. Four persons were severely wounded.

RASKA: (13:11 - 14:58) In yesterday's raid three persons were wounded. Some 25 missiles fell on the south area of the town, between the Nikoljaca and Supanj residential areas. The zone of Mt. Kopaonik was also targeted.

KOSOVO POLJE: (13:00) Belasevac residential area was targeted with two missiles, and four were

launched at Pomazatin residential area, both populated with exclusively ethnic Albanians.

ISTOK: (around 13:15) Three missiles hit the Dubrava penitentiary near the town. Two prisoners were killed and the guard and two more prisoners were wounded. The penitentiary administration building and two wings were hit.

SREMSKA MITROVICA: (16:50) Three strong detonations were registered in this town.

OBRENOVAC: (00:04) Intense detonations in the vicinity of the town.

SABAC: (01:20) The zone of Mt. Cer was targeted with six missiles.

SUBOTICA: (01:30) The meteorological station at Lake Palic near Subotica was hit with three missiles.

NOVI SAD: (02:00) Four missiles were launched at the city and explosions were also reported in the village of Bezdán.

SOMBOR: (02:15) Naftagas oil depot was targeted.

KIKINDA: (02:40) The wider area of the town was raided with two missiles.

BELGRADE: (02:05) At least three patients were killed in "Dragisa Misovic" hospital in Dedinje quarter when the nearby gas station was hit. Batajnica residential area was raided at 00:27. Various facilities along the Obrenovac road, plants in Makis residential area, gas station in Topcider quarter were targeted, as well as the part of the installations of the "Prva Iskra" plant in Baric, which were hit with two missiles. YA Air Defense units offered a fierce resistance.

BACKA PALANKA: (03:20) The broader area of this town in the north of Backa was targeted.

ZITISTE: (03:30) The bridge on River Begej was raided. The traffic has been interrupted.



Prepaid envelope of the French Red Cross, to be returned to him for the transfer of a sum of money in order to finance his actions in Kosovo, during and after the war end.



ECOPLI **T**

**URGENCE
KOSOVO**

M 20 g

VALIDITÉ
PERMANENTE

A utiliser seulement
en France métropolitaine
et dans les départements
d'Outre-Mer

**CROIX-ROUGE FRANÇAISE
AUTORISATION 81728
94949 CRETEIL CEDEX 9**



40%
minim.

faire un don d'urgence, glissez un chèque du montant de votre soutien dans cette enveloppe, sans affranchir

Envoyez dès maintenant votre chèque à la Croix-Rouge Française

OUI je fais un don pour les réfugiés du Kosovo, d'un montant de

200 F pour la prise en charge d'une famille pendant une semaine.

400 F pour la prise en charge de deux familles pendant une semaine.

800 F pour la prise en charge de quatre familles pendant une semaine.

Autre montant **F** Pour les envois internationaux, merci de préciser le montant.

REDUCTION D'IMPÔTS : la Croix-Rouge Française vous fera parvenir en retour de bénévoles, pour les particuliers d'une réduction d'impôt de 66% au don et les entreprises de 100% du don du bénéfice brut dans la limite de 3,25 fois le montant de la contribution.



War with Yugoslavia



Before
1750
1750-
1799
1800-
1849
1850-
1899
1900-
1924
1925-
1949
1950-
1974
1975-
2000

America at War

War with Yugoslavia

What:

U.S. forces take part in a NATO campaign against Yugoslavia

When:

March 24 to June 3, 1999

Ethnic Albanians
Photo (GROLIER STORY OF AMERICA CARD). Propaganda issue as part of the US pop culture.
Published by Crolier Publishing Co.

