

4-2-1999

Trends. War and Goal-Directed Behavior: How Milosevic is Winning

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Recommended Citation

Editor (1999) "Trends. War and Goal-Directed Behavior: How Milosevic is Winning," *International Bulletin of Political Psychology*: Vol. 6 : Iss. 13 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://commons.erau.edu/ibpp/vol6/iss13/4>

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International Bulletin of Political Psychology

Title: Trends. War and Goal-Directed Behavior: How Milosevic is Winning

Author: Editor

Volume: 6

Issue: 13

Date: 1999-04-02

Keywords: Bombings, Goal-Directed Behavior, Kosovo, NATO, Security, Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic, Yugoslavia

The implicit goal of the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia has been to force the Serbian (Yugoslavian) government back to the negotiation table so the government can sign a political agreement that has already been signed by representatives of the Kosovar Albanians. The agreement encompasses--among other items--autonomy for Kosovo (best translated as autonomy for Kosovar Albanians only), removal of most Yugoslav and Serbian security forces from Kosovo, and introduction of NATO peacekeeping forces. Not only has the NATO bombing been unsuccessful in effecting this goal, but the regime of Slobodan Milosevic has been successful in goal subversion. True to form--based on earlier conflicts with Western powers--Milosevic's regime has induced a greater evil than that evil whose sought-for termination became a Western goal. In the present case, by terminating the greater evil--the ethnic cleansing operations in Kosovo (preferably after they have already been largely effected)--Milosevic would allow the Western powers to declare victory, even though their initial definition of victory (the signing of the agreement) would not be met and even though Milosevic's regime would come out politically stronger than before the bombing.

Here are some supporting attributions. From President Clinton--peace would only come when Mr. Milosevic ended...a campaign of terror in Kosovo. From Hillary Rodham Clinton--NATO allies are determined to persevere until Milosevic has embraced peace. From the NATO commander General Wesley Clark--Serbian...forces would continue to be attacked, degraded, and disrupted...unless President Milosevic called off the Serbian attacks. From the United Nation Secretary General Javier Solana--We are going to continue the bombing until we can guarantee that the killings stop and will not restart. (See the two New York Times articles below.)

The delinking of a security intervention from one goal to another and the concurrent continuation of that intervention does not bode well for those who profess to be using force to make the world a better place. It bodes very well for the power of Slobodan Milosevic. (See Bagozzi, R.P., Baumgartner, H., & Pieters, R. (1998). Goal-directed emotions. *Cognition and Emotion*, 12, 1-26; Erlanger, S. (March 31, 1999). Even Milosevic foes criticize Western media. *The New York Times*, p. A10; Gollwitzer, P.M., & Brandstaetter, V. (1997). Implementation intentions and effective goal pursuit. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 186-199; Peressini, A. (1997). Psychological explanation and behavior broadly conceived. *Behavior and Philosophy*, 25, 137-159; Whitney, C.R. (March 31, 1999). On 7th day, doubts nag. *The New York Times*, p. A1; A8.) (Keywords: Bombings, Goal-Directed Behavior, Kosovo, NATO, Security, Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic, Yugoslavia.)