

## **The CNN Effect on Western Policy before the Kosovo Intervention**

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The thirteen-month period before the 1999 NATO air campaign over Kosovo recorded a dramatic reversal in Western policy. In February 1998, the United States, following Europe's lead, was normalizing relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) by making a number of key economic and political concessions, while branding the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) a terrorist organization. By March 1999, the West was at war with the FRY and in tacit alliance with the KLA. What happened? How could the policy of the world's greatest powers be turned on its head in such a short time span? A detailed review of this period reveals that Western policy changed most significantly in the immediate aftermath of three massacres. While these attacks accounted for 8% of the total Kosovo Albanian deaths and 3% of villages destroyed over this period, the televised nature of their aftermaths garnered disproportionate Western media and government attention quantitatively, and played a critical role in changing the content of Western policy in support of the Kosovo Albanians cause.

## **Introduction**

Can media images of death and destruction influence foreign policy? This has been the subject of much fascination and speculation since at least the Vietnam War, when television images of burning villages and US body bags were widely believed to have contributed to America's decision to withdraw.<sup>1</sup> In more recent years, the CNN effect has emerged as an ambiguous concept to describe a range of alleged media influences on public opinion and foreign policy.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the 1990s, the CNN effect was alleged to be a factor in a number of interventions including those in Iraqi Kurdistan in 1991, Somalia in 1992, Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1998/99. In 2003/4, the media and its images were often considered an important factor influencing American policy during the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

This paper specifically focuses on one type of CNN effect called the challenging CNN effect. Through the emergence of unexpected and emotive images that are framed sympathetically to a particular party, this effect makes a foreign policy appear ineffective and misguided by exposing gaps between media representation and policy. These gaps challenge the policy's credibility and pressure decision-makers to alter the policy in order to fill the void. There are two parts or sets of criteria to this CNN effect. When these criteria are met, it can be claimed that this CNN effect has occurred. The first is media-based and requires journalist access to a zone of conflict or human suffering, unexpected and emotive images from this zone, and sympathetic framing towards a particular party who are presented as victims.<sup>3</sup> The second part relates to government foreign policy and requires clearly discernable policy shifts after such media representations that attempt to fill the credibility gaps created by the images.

To assess the validity of the CNN effect, this study reviews American (and Western) Kosovo policy in relation to its television coverage from January 1998 to March 1999 in order to assess if the CNN effect played a role in shifting policy towards military intervention. This period, covering the time often referred to as the Kosovo civil war, involved significant clashes between forces from the Serbian Ministry of Interior (MUP) and Yugoslav Army (VJ) of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Kosovo-Albanian insurgency group called the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). This paper is divided into two sections. The first reviews American television news coverage over this period in order to identify incidents that meet the media criteria for a CNN effect. The second reviews American foreign policy regarding Kosovo over the same period to determine the degree by which these incidents influenced policy.

## **American Television Coverage during the Kosovo Civil War**

After the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords that ended the Bosnian war, Western media attention on the Former Yugoslavia declined notably. The tensions in Kosovo, which were largely peaceful until 1998, had never garnered much Western media interest. There were too many other hot wars in other parts of the world that were more sensational and interesting to the media. It was only after the Drenica massacres of

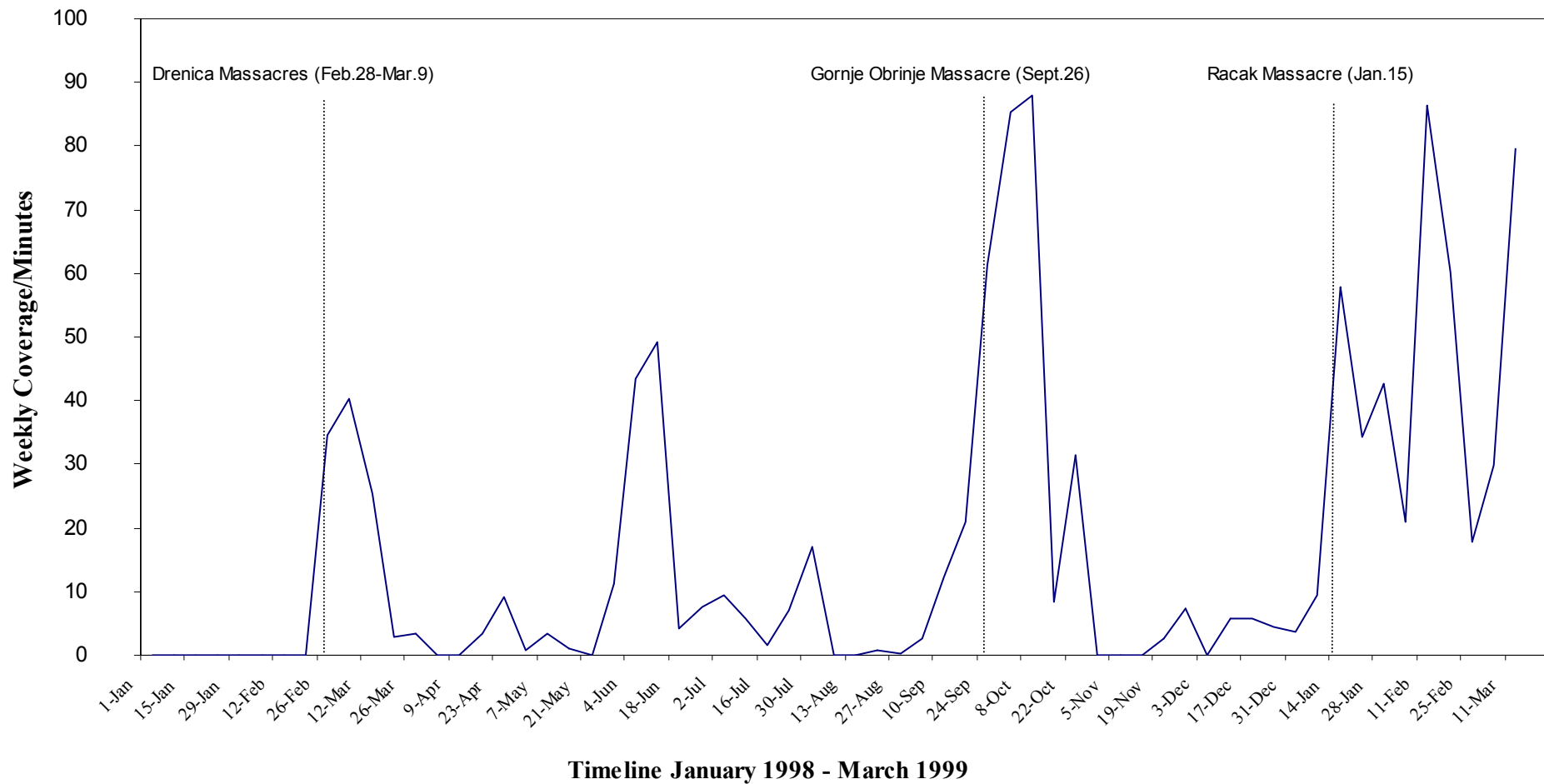
March 1998 – the bloodiest incident in Kosovo to that time since the break-up of Yugoslavia – that some significant Western media attention began to focus on Kosovo. To assess the CNN effect, it is important to first review media coverage to determine if any incidents met the media criteria for a CNN effect.

To conduct this assessment, the main evening news programs of four major American television news networks – ABC, CBS, NBC and CNN – were reviewed from January 1, 1998 to March 20, 1999, the final week before NATO bombing began on March 24.<sup>4</sup> ABC, CBS, and NBC's programs were each 30 minutes in length, while CNN's was 60 minutes. During this review, content relating specifically to the Kosovo conflict was identified and compiled in minutes on a weekly basis, as presented in Graph 1.

### **The CNN Effect Media Criteria and the Kosovo Civil War**

Access to unexpected and emotive media images and sympathetic framing are key media criteria for a potential CNN effect. During the Kosovo civil war, despite the efforts of FRY authorities, conditions and external pressures did allow journalists access to the conflict zone, which permitted the capture of unexpected and emotive images. The KLA, for its part, was eager to promote international media presence, believing it to be an important tool in garnering the sympathies and possible support of outside powers. Several of the most powerful unexpected images from the conflict, in fact, accounted for the largest media spikes.

**Graph 1 - American Television News Coverage of Kosovo on Leading Networks**



According to the findings of this review, six notable spikes in media coverage were recorded over the fifteen-month period preceding NATO intervention in Kosovo, as outlined below:<sup>5</sup>

- 1) The Drenica area massacre of late February and early March 1998 and its aftermath.
- 2) NATO operation “Determined Falcon” involving air exercises around borders of the FRY in mid June 1998.<sup>6</sup>
- 3) The Gornje Obrinje massacre of September 26, 1998 and its aftermath.
- 4) The Racak massacre of January 15, 1999 and its aftermath.
- 5) The Rambouillet Conference and its final days of negotiation.
- 6) Week preceding the beginning of the NATO military intervention involving final diplomatic efforts to avoid conflict.

Of these six spikes, three were generated by unexpected and emotive images from the conflict zone – the massacres at Drenica, Gornje Obrinje and Racak. These incidents shocked viewers and surprised policymakers, as manifested by comments made after massacre images surfaced. The other spikes relating to the NATO air exercises in mid June, Rambouillet diplomacy, and the prelude to the military intervention were largely government-induced actions and do not meet the first media criterion for a CNN effect. The following section reviews the background of these three incidents and their media representation and framing in more detail to assess if they were unexpected, emotive and framed in a sympathetic manner to one party.

#### *Incident 1: The Drenica Massacres*

On 28 February 1998, four Serb policemen were killed in KLA ambushes in the Drenica region of Kosovo.<sup>7</sup> Drenica was a key center of KLA activity and support and its inhabitants had challenged Serbian rule for decades, making Serbs feel unwelcome and unsafe in the area.<sup>8</sup> In response, an offensive involving several thousand MUP and VJ forces was launched using helicopter gunships, tanks, artillery, and dozens of armored personnel carriers. In these attacks, two large extended families bore the brunt of the violence. In the first raid on the village of Likoshani and nearby towns of Cirez and Glogovac on 28 February and 1 March, twenty-four people were killed including ten members of the Ahmeti family. These attacks involved house-to-house searches and what the Albanians called “executions” of suspected KLA members. From the Serb perspective, the deaths resulted from acts of self-defense by forces under fire. In these raids, an arsenal of weapons, including hand grenades, explosives and machine guns were captured.<sup>9</sup> In the second raid on the nearby village of Prekaz, which began on March 5, Adem Jashari, a founding member of the KLA, and fifty-one members of his family were killed. This raid involved a twenty-seven hour battle in which the Jashari clan fought back using machine guns, rocket launchers and bazookas, killing two Serb police. The Serbs claimed that civilians were given time to surrender and accused Adem Jashari of killing his own nephew to prevent him from leaving.<sup>10</sup>

### *Images of the Drenica Massacres*

Serbian authorities initially attempted to cut off access to the Drenica area by sealing the area off from journalists and setting up heavily guarded roadblocks on the main routes into the villages where hostilities occurred. The information that initially trickled out came through eyewitness accounts of those who fled the area during the attacks.<sup>11</sup> Despite these efforts, startling and emotive images did eventually seep out of the conflict zone from at least four sources. The first sets of images were those of desperate refugees whom journalists found huddled together in the nearby Cicevica Mountains.<sup>12</sup> The second, surprisingly, came from Serb television that perhaps naively showed dramatic footage of shelled houses and corpses littering the Jashari family compound.<sup>13</sup> It also showed a bulldozer destroying the house of Adem Jashari.<sup>14</sup> The third source came from Western journalists who were taken on a tour by the Serbian Interior Ministry to trumpet victory over the “Drenica terrorists”. Journalists, however, dismissed the Serb interpretation of events as propaganda and focused on the destruction and terrified villagers.<sup>15</sup> The fourth source, which provided the most gruesome pictures, came from journalists who accompanied Albanian villagers identifying and claiming the bodies of relatives killed in the attacks. These stark images of corpses were subsequently put on the Internet.<sup>16</sup>

### *Framing from The Drenica Massacres*

The third media criterion essential for a potential CNN effect is sympathetic framing of unexpected and emotive media images that portray a particular party as victims. The following section provides a summary of Albanian and Serb perspectives regarding the Kosovo conflict and the Drenica incident. It then reviews the framing of the incident on American television for the one-week period (seven days) after the images from the incident first reached viewers.

In the Kosovo civil war, there were two very different interpretations on history and recent events. To Serbs, Kosovo was the birthplace of their nation, their “Holy Land,”<sup>17</sup> and an internationally recognized part of the FRY. While Serbs acknowledge that Albanians represented the majority of Kosovo’s population, they believed this outcome was reached through illegitimate means.<sup>18</sup> Believing it their right and duty to defend Kosovo from illegal attempts to challenge state authority, Serbs saw their actions in Drenica as a justified response to a well-planned KLA ambush that was part of a pattern of terrorism that had increased significantly in previous months.<sup>19</sup>

To the Albanians, the frame of reference was wholly different. They traced their roots to the Illyrians who inhabited the Balkans centuries before the Serbs.<sup>20</sup> Although they constituted 90 percent of the population of Kosovo, they had lost virtually all of their political rights since Milosevic dissolved their autonomous status in 1989, and attempts to peacefully resist repression were countered by brutal tactics. Although Kosovo was officially recognized as part of the FRY, this was due to military conquest in 1912, not any inherent right to the land. Furthermore, the fact that other parts of the former Yugoslavia had successfully separated on demographic grounds, in what was an artificial and ethnically incoherent state to begin with, gave Kosovo Albanians hope that they also had a legitimate right to independence under international convention. The attacks in the

Drenica area, according to Albanians, were directed mostly against unarmed civilians including women, the elderly and children, in order to strike fear into the population and pressure them to either flee the country or submit to Serbian rule.<sup>21</sup>

In the week after images from the Drenica massacres first reached the West, 22 stories were aired on ABC, CBS, NBC and CNN, collectively. Each of these stories was reviewed and coded, based on a selection from four options:

1 – Pro-Albanian Framing

Examples of language in this framework includes:

- Kosovo Albanians victims, under oppression, repression, suffering etc.
- Albanians constitute 90 percent of the population of Kosovo
- Albanians have right to freedom, determine own affairs

2 – Pro-Serbian Framing

Examples of language in this framework includes:

- Serbs trying to control or defend against terrorism (KLA are terrorists)
- Kosovo is part of Serbia, internationally recognized as part of FRY

3 – Both positions represented

4 – Neutral position

The following table provides a summary of the framing in the coverage:

**Table 1: American Television Framing of the Drenica Area Massacre on Leading Networks (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) – March 5, 1998 – March 11, 1998**

	<b>Number Of Stories</b>	<b>Percentage Of Coverage</b>
Pro-Albanian Framing	9	41%
Pro-Serbian Framing	1	5%
Both Perspectives	11	50%
Neutral	1	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100%</b>

At this stage, Western media presented both perspectives in half their coverage and the Albanian position in slightly over 40 percent. Surprisingly, one story was framed from a Serbian viewpoint, while one did not present either perspective. At this stage, the Kosovo conflict was still new to many journalists and the public in the West and, as a result, most coverage was relatively neutral. Nonetheless, pro-Albanian framing still dominated pro-Serbian by a ratio of nine to one when only one framework was presented. This was likely due to the collective memories of past Serbian atrocities and ethnic cleansing. Despite the three years that had passed since the end of the Bosnian conflict, the Milosevic-led regime was still vilified over its past actions in Western political culture.

### *Incident 2: The Gornje Obrinje Massacre*

The second major set of unexpected and emotive images from Kosovo came from the village of Gornje Obrinje, which fell victim to a massacre on September 26, 1998. The Gornje Obrinje incident occurred at the end of a summer offensive by the MUP and VJ that took back almost all of the KLA's gains from the spring and early summer of 1998. In this attack and several others in nearby villages, thirty-six civilians including women, children and the elderly were brutally killed. The attack appeared to be carried out in revenge for the killing of 13 Serbian police officers by the KLA in the days preceding the massacre.<sup>22</sup>

### *Images of the Gornje Obrinje Massacres*

Three days after the massacre, international journalists and human rights activists reached Gornje Obrinje to document the atrocity's aftermath. Over the next few days, gruesome images from the village dominated television news in the West. These included images of burned homes still smoldering; homes damaged by shrapnel, bullets, and tank fire; cattle that had been shot; hay stacks and food supplies that had been torched; and many corpses. What made this incident particularly shocking and emotive was the fact that many of the dead were the weakest in the village that were too slow to escape their attackers, including women, children and the elderly. In one example, a mother with her children and infants were apparently chased into a local forest and gunned down at close range where they were hiding.<sup>23</sup> Besides focusing on damaged property and dead victims, much of the footage focused on images of mourning relatives and interviews with surviving family members. The interviews made the tragedy even more personal to Western audiences, who could identify more closely with the victims.

### *Framing from the Gornje Obrinje Massacres*

To the Kosovo Albanians, the Gornje Obrinje massacre was another example of Serbian attempts to intimidate the Albanian population into submission. Their accounts of the incident were similar to versions presented by Western media, who rarely questioned allegations of Serb brutality. To the Serbs, the deaths were a continuation of earlier fighting with the KLA that had left 13 police dead. The Serbs saw the massacre interpretation of the story as part of an anti-Serb media campaign that had been present in previous Yugoslav wars.<sup>24</sup> Initially calling media reports unverified and in need of an official investigation, Serb officials later referred to them as fabrications created by Albanian terrorists and Western media to manipulate public opinion and find an excuse for NATO to intervene militarily against the FRY.<sup>25</sup> They also criticized what they referred to as a double standard by the international community, in which KLA "terrorist crimes" were ignored, while their anti-insurgency actions were magnified.<sup>26</sup> After Gornje Obrinje media reports surfaced, the Serbian side pointed to an alleged KLA massacre of 34 Serbs and Albanians that was discovered by Yugoslav police on September 9, 1998. The failure of international media to cover this finding suggested a bias to the Serbs against them.

The following table provides a summary of American television framing of the Gornje Obrinje massacre during the week after images from the incident first surfaced:

**Table 2: American Television Framing of the Gornje Obrinje Massacre on Leading Networks (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) – September 29, 1998 – October 5, 1998**

	<b>Number Of Stories</b>	<b>Percentage Of Coverage</b>
Pro-Albanian Framing	17	77%
Pro-Serbian Framing	0	0%
Both Perspectives	2	9%
Neutral	3	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100%</b>

Compared to the Drenica massacre of March 1998, Western framing had clearly become much more sympathetic towards the Kosovo Albanian perspective, growing from 41 percent of media framing to 77 percent, while all other options dropped from 59 to 27 percent.

### *Incident 3: The Racak Massacre*

On January 8, 1999, the KLA ambushed and destroyed an armored vehicle with an anti-tank weapon near the village of Suva Reka, 50 km south of Pristina. In the incident, three Serb policemen were killed and eight soldiers were taken hostage.<sup>27</sup> Another similar ambush on January 10, 1999 resulted in the death of another policeman. In response, Yugoslav forces began a build-up about half a kilometer from Racak, a village with a KLA base that was blamed for recent attacks.<sup>28</sup> By January 1999, Racak, which had a pre-conflict population of 2,000, had about 400 inhabitants, as it had been shelled the previous summer.<sup>29</sup> At 6:30 am on January 15, an assault on Racak began when MUP forces exchanged gunfire with KLA fighters on a hill outside the town, with VJ T-55 tanks and MUP armored vehicles positioned around the village perimeter.<sup>30</sup> The KLA resistance that morning lasted at least several hours, after which the Yugoslav forces took Racak, staying until 4:30 pm that day.<sup>31</sup> What happened after they entered the village has become a subject of controversy. According to Kosovo Albanian accounts and those of international human rights organizations, MUP forces raided houses where civilians had taken refuge, and in one house separated a group of 30 men, 23 of whom were led into the hillside several hours later. At about 3 p.m., villagers reported hearing shots from the hillside where 25 bodies would be found the next day.<sup>32</sup>

According to Serbian accounts, all firing was the result of continued fighting that day with KLA forces in the surrounding hills. On the day of the attack, the Serbs had been open with intentions to conduct a military operation and even invited some journalists and international monitors to watch from the surrounding hills. Associated Press journalists and American monitors from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) mission were present as events unfolded throughout the day,<sup>33</sup> although the monitors were intentionally kept at a distance from the village and had a

limited view.<sup>34</sup> The Serbs pointed out that they had even issued several press releases before, during, and after the offensive, with updates on events.<sup>35</sup> Immediately after the attack, for example, they issued a press statement that claimed a success operation, which included the killing of 15 KLA fighters and a seizure of armaments.<sup>36</sup> All the dead from that day were KLA combatants, according to Serb accounts, who had fallen in combat.

#### *Images of the Racak Massacres*

Journalists and monitors arrived on the scene in Racak the next morning on January 16, 1999. Throughout the village, 45 dead bodies were discovered. The vast majority of victims were men who, local eyewitnesses claimed, were separated for execution. Other victims included a 16-year old girl, a 12-year-old boy, and a 70-year-old man. One of the worst images was from a gully at the edge of the village, which contained a mangled pile of about 18 bodies.<sup>37</sup> In presenting the footage to television audiences, images of the carnage were intermingled with scenes of bewildered villagers, some of whom had just returned to the village. There were also interviews with family members crying over their lost relatives. What made these images exceptionally powerful was the presence of William Walker, the head of the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), who walked through the corpses and was visibly shaken by what he saw. In one scene, Walker, along with a group of journalists, is seen standing around the body of a decapitated person saying, “he’s been beheaded?...Jesus Christ...lets give him the dignity of covering him up.”<sup>38</sup> At another point, surrounded by microphones, he pronounced, “This is about as horrendous an event as I have seen and I have been in some pretty nasty situations.”<sup>39</sup>

#### *Framing from the Racak Massacre*

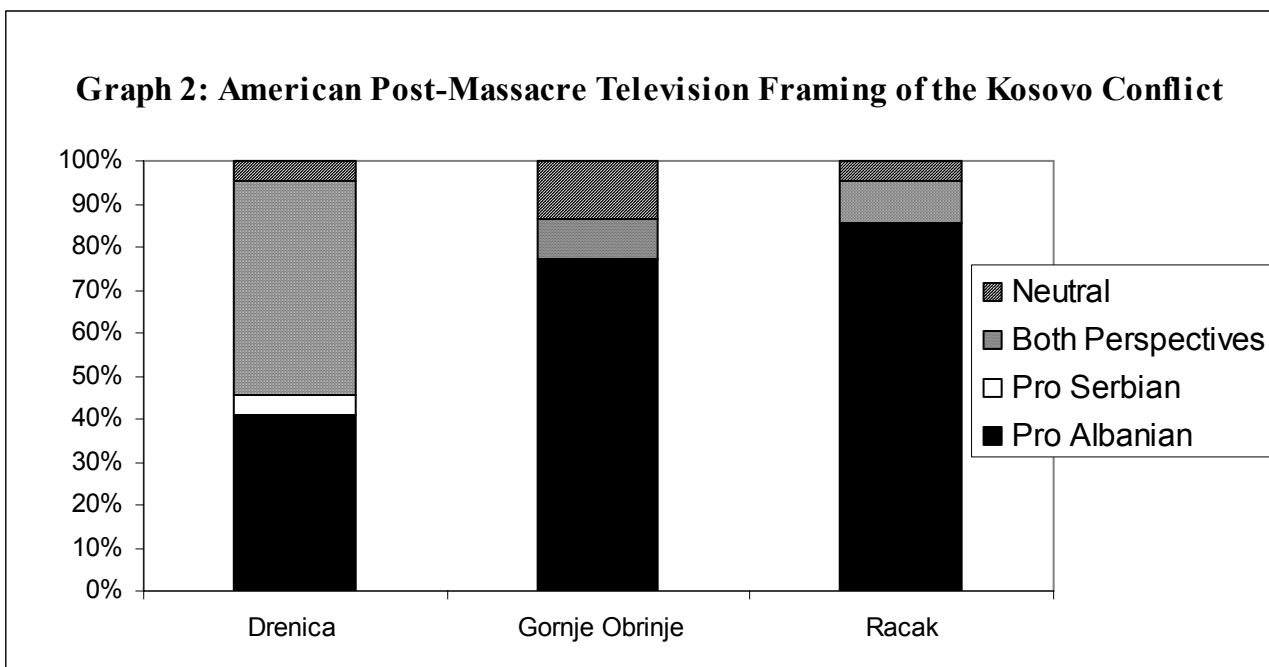
To the Albanian side, Racak, like previous massacres, was another attempt by Serbian authorities to project their power and garner submission. To Serbs, the events of January 15, 1999, were not a massacre, but a battle against terrorists who had killed FRY police the previous week. In their attempt to arrest terrorists who had a base in Racak, Yugoslav forces encountered stiff resistance from the KLA. To Serbs, Racak was an attempt to frame a massacre scene and create international outrage. This was done by gathering fallen KLA from the day’s battle, dressing them up in civilian clothes and placing them in a fashion that depicted a massacre the next day.<sup>40</sup> William Walker particularly offended the Serbs for making public judgments on the incident without a full investigation.<sup>41</sup> Two weeks after the incident, Serbian authorities believed that they were vindicated by a forensic team’s investigation that concluded that the dead from Racak were shot from a distance and had evidence of gunpowder on their hands. Western media, however, largely dismissed the forensic team’s findings as biased due to the Yugoslav and Belorussian composition of the team. This conclusion was further refuted several months later when a EU-sponsored Norwegian forensic team that had access to the same corpses referred to the incident as a crime against humanity. In the week after images from the Racak massacre first reached the West, 21 stories were aired on ABC, CBS, NBC and CNN, collectively.

The following table provides a summary of the framing in the coverage:

**Table 3: American Television Framing of the Racak Massacre on Leading Networks (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) – January 16, 1999 – January 22, 1999**

	<b>Number Of Stories</b>	<b>Percentage Of Coverage<sup>42</sup></b>
Pro-Albanian Framing	18	86%
Pro-Serbian Framing	0	0%
Both Perspectives	2	10%
Neutral	1	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100%</b>

Western framing of Kosovo continued to become more sympathetic towards the Albanian position with each massacre. After Racak, 86% of all stories employed pro-Albanian framing, while all other options represented only the remaining 14% of coverage. As Graph 2 comparing framing after all three massacres demonstrates, American television coverage was largely sympathetic towards the Albanian framework throughout the conflict, but became more pro-Albanian as massacres accumulated over time.



## Proportionality of Media Response

This section reviews the three unexpected and emotive incidents highlighted earlier in order to assess whether they received disproportionate media coverage. Disproportionate media response is coverage that exaggerates the importance of particular events in relation to their importance within a larger set of events, such as a war. While such a response is not always necessary for a CNN effect, its presence is a good indicator that a CNN effect is a strong possibility. This review is conducted in two parts. The first assesses the percentage of overall media coverage these three incidents attracted in relation to all Kosovo media coverage. The second analyses the percentage of the total death and destruction in the overall civil war that these incidents represented. These findings are presented in Tables 4 and 5, respectively.

**Table 4: Television Coverage of Kosovo Massacres versus Total Coverage on Leading Networks (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) – March 1 1998 – March 20, 1999**

	<b>Total Minutes</b>	<b>Total Weeks</b>	<b>Average Minutes/Day</b>	<b>Percentage of Time</b>	<b>Percentage of Coverage</b>
<b>Overall</b>	1061 5/6	55	2 3/4	100%	100%
<b>Drenica Massacre</b>					
2 wks	79 1/6	14	5 2/3	3.6%	7.5%
4 wks	99 2/3	28	3 5/9	7.3%	9.4%
<b>Gornje Obrinje Massacre</b>					
2 wks	175 1/3	14	12 1/2	3.6%	16.5%
4 wks	254 2/3	28	9	7.3%	24.0%
<b>Racak Massacre</b>					
2 wks	85 1/6	14	6	3.6%	8.0%
4 wks	155 2/3	28	5 5/9	7.3%	14.7%
<b>All Three Massacres</b>					
2 wks	344 5/6	42	8	10.9%	32.0%
4 wks	515 1/6	84	6	21.8%	48.0%

The Kosovo conflict of 1998-99 was covered on American television news for the first time on March 2, 1998 in 3-minutes and 30-seconds of collective coverage on CNN, ABC and CBS, although images of the incident in the Drenica area did not emerge until March 5. As outlined in Table 4, from the week that began on March 1, 1998 to March 20, 1999 (a period of 55 weeks or 385 days), there was 1,061 minutes and 50 seconds of total Kosovo coverage, representing 3 percent of all American television news over this period.<sup>43</sup> Based on the total minutes devoted to Kosovo over this period, the conflict received an average of 2 minutes and 45 seconds of coverage each day. In periods immediately after the three massacre incidents, however, there was much greater coverage. In the two weeks (14 days) after images of the incidents first surfaced, for example, there was 8 minutes of average coverage per day – almost three times the daily average (5 minutes and 40 seconds average after Drenica, 12 minutes and 30 seconds average after Gornje Obrinje, and 6 minutes average after Racak). Although these three two-week periods after the massacres represented 10.9 percent of the total time reviewed, they accounted for 32 percent of the total Kosovo television coverage. In the four-week (28 day) periods after the massacres, which accounted for 21.8 percent of the time, media coverage was 48 percent of the total coverage. By this measure, these three incidents and their aftermath accounted for nearly half of all Kosovo media coverage on American television news.

But were these incidents significant enough to justify such disproportionate coverage? Table 5 addresses this question by reviewing the significance of these incidents in relation to two variables that reflect the total violence in the conflict – the number of Kosovo Albanians killed and the number of villages destroyed during the civil war. If the percentage of individuals killed and villages destroyed in the three incidents is similar in percentage terms to the media coverage they garnered in the overall conflict, then it could be argued that the incidents received proportionate attention for their significance in the conflict. If the incidents represent far less damage in relation to the overall conflict, however, then media coverage was disproportionate.

**Table 5: Massacres as Proportion of Overall Death and Destruction During the Kosovo Civil War – March 1, 1998 – March 20, 1999**

	<b>Kosovo Civil War</b>	<b>All Three Massacres</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
<b>Total Kosovo Albanians Killed</b>	2,000	156	7.8%
<b>Total Villages Attacked/Destroyed</b>	400	8	2.5%

As outlined in Table 5, an estimated 2,000 Albanians died in the Kosovo civil war, while 400 of their villages were destroyed.<sup>44</sup> Although some of these incidents involved fighting between Yugoslav authorities and KLA militants, the majority of those killed were believed to be civilians who died in ways not captured by cameras. In the three incidents outlined above, a total of 156 people were killed.<sup>45</sup> This means that an estimated 7.8 percent of the total deaths and 2.5 percent of the villages destroyed in the conflict preceding NATO military intervention were due to these three incidents. These events, therefore, were clearly over-represented in terms of the media attention they garnered in relation to other violence resulting in death and destruction that escaped the media spotlight.

### **Western Government Actions during the Kosovo Civil War**

This section of the paper now turns to the second element that is essential for a CNN effect – change in government foreign policy. Without such influence, then there can be no CNN effect. To determine if the CNN effect occurred during the prelude to the 1999 NATO intervention, this section reviews Western Kosovo policy over the fifteen-month period preceding the intervention to identify possible changes in policy in relation to the media incidents outlined in the first section. If incidents outlined in the first section challenged and influenced distinguishable shifts in Kosovo policy, then it can be claimed that a CNN effect occurred during the prelude to the 1999 NATO intervention.

In conducting this analysis, this paper utilizes a unique methodology centered on a comparison of media and government activity, the coding of government documents and an assessment of policy content. Before describing this approach, four terms need to be defined – “Western,” “government,” “actions” and “attitude”. “Western” refers to the US and EU, with greater emphasis on the US.<sup>46</sup> “Government” refers to the following six institutions: the US Department of State, the US Department of Defense, the US White House (Presidency), the Contact Group, NATO, and the European Union Council.<sup>47</sup> “Actions” refer to two activities: the issuance of press releases and statements by these institutions in which the majority of the content (50 percent or more) refer to the Kosovo conflict and acts of diplomacy specifically aimed at dealing with this crisis. “Attitude” refers to how governments position themselves between the two sides in terms of the framing they adopt and references they make to the need for a military intervention as a solution to the conflict. Throughout the rest of this paper, whenever these terms are used, they refer to the definitions outlined here.

This section begins with a quantitative review of all the Kosovo-specific Western government actions, which are recorded and accumulated on a weekly basis from January 1, 1998 to March 24, 1999.<sup>48</sup> These findings are first analyzed on their own and then compared to media activity over the same period. This is followed by a qualitative assessment of Kosovo-specific press releases/statements based on the coding of two variables: framing and propensity for military intervention. Finally, Kosovo policy

content before and after each of these incidents is reviewed to identify potential policy change.

### **Government Action and the CNN effect – A Quantitative Overview**

Throughout the fifteen-month period preceding NATO intervention, a number of significant developments occurred in Kosovo. However, a review of all government actions over this period on a weekly basis shows that only seven periods garnered a significant number of government actions, as outlined below and in Graph 3:<sup>49</sup>

- 1) The Drenica area massacre of late February and early March 1998 and its aftermath.
- 2) NATO operation “Determined Falcon” involving air exercises around borders of the FRY in mid June 1998.
- 3) Third week of September after the passage of a UN Security Council Resolution and NATO Activation Order.
- 4) Beginning of October lasting for two weeks. Based on government reactions to the Gornje Obrinje massacre and attempts to broker a cease-fire and monitoring agreement.
- 5) Mid-January lasting for two weeks after the Racak massacre.
- 6) Mid-February lasting for two weeks during the Rambouillet conference.
- 7) Week preceding the beginning of the NATO intervention involving final diplomatic efforts to avoid conflict.

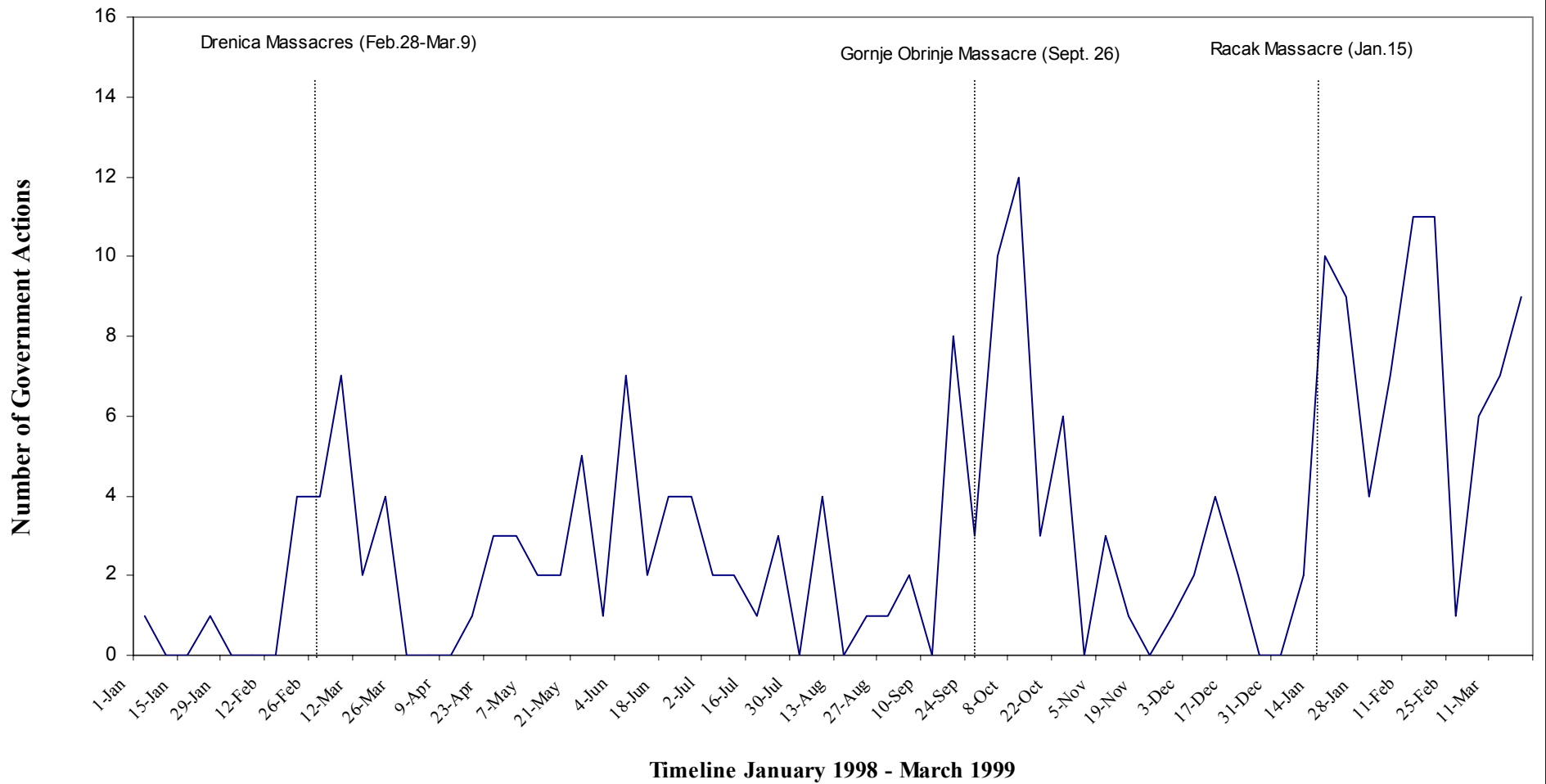
In relation to the media activity outlined in the first section, three of the seven periods of heightened activity are closely linked to the incidents in Drenica, Gornje Obrinje, and Racak. In the first case, the Drenica massacres broke an uneventful January and February and sparked a pattern of Western activities involving three phases that would repeat after other massacres. The first phase involved shock and condemnation, as manifested through press releases and statements; the second was highlighted by the introduction of some form of imposed solution; and the third entailed a relatively quiet period when the solution was implemented. In each case, the solution led to conciliatory countermeasures by the FRY authorities, which created a short-term lull in the violence.

In Graph 3, lines in the shape of a double-hump illustrate this three-stage process after each massacre. After Drenica, the West’s solution, after the initial outrage and denunciations, was a series of threatened sanctions that emerged at a March 9 Contact Group meeting, which called for, amongst other measures, an arms embargo on the FRY. This request was implemented through UN Security Council Resolution 1160 on March 31, 1998. After the Gornje Obrinje massacre, the imposed solution was the cease-fire and monitoring regime incorporated in the Holbrooke-Milosevic Agreement of October 13, 1999. After the Racak massacre, the proposed solution was either the Rambouillet Conference, if it is assumed that NATO acted in good faith, or the actual military intervention itself, if it is assumed that Rambouillet was only a cover to legitimize the war, as many critics have argued.<sup>50</sup>

Of course, not all Western government Kosovo activity relates to the CNN effect. As evident in Graph 3, four periods of notable government activity had only a limited relationship to the CNN effect. These could more accurately be tied to other factors outside any media images and were largely based on government-driven initiatives and reactions to events in Kosovo. The first of these centered on NATO's "Determined Falcon" operation on June 15, 1998 – an air exercise in which NATO jets flew over Kosovo's borders in Albania and Macedonia, signaling NATO's willingness to take action in Kosovo if necessary.<sup>51</sup> Unlike the unexpected incidents such as the Drenica massacres, this heightened level of activity was based on a very different pattern that built over time and was driven by events planned by Western governments. There were no reactionary condemnations of the emotive type seen after the massacres and no attempts at implementing a different solution. The nature of these activities was largely incremental.

The second increase in activity not related to the CNN effect took place during the week of September 20, with the passage of important resolutions at both the UN and NATO. Although no single event accounts for the timing of these two actions, a massive counter-offensive against the KLA and its support base in August and September had emptied hundreds of villages and uprooted several hundred thousand people, many of whom were stranded in hillside camps in Southern Kosovo.<sup>52</sup> The third government-driven spike centered on the Rambouillet Conference of February 1999. This event, and especially the arrival of US Secretary of State Albright several weeks after its initiation, was the basis of further heightened government activity not related to the CNN effect. Final attempts to pressure the Serbian side to agree to the West's plan through last minute shuttle diplomacy during the last week before the NATO military campaign was the basis of the fourth and final spike that was not directly related to the CNN effect. By this stage, Western policy had already decidedly turned towards war, so the type of CNN effect under review in this paper was no longer relevant and media images were often a propaganda tool of official government policy.

**Graph 3 - Western Governmental Actions Related to Kosovo Preceding NATO Intervention**



## Media Coverage Versus Government Actions

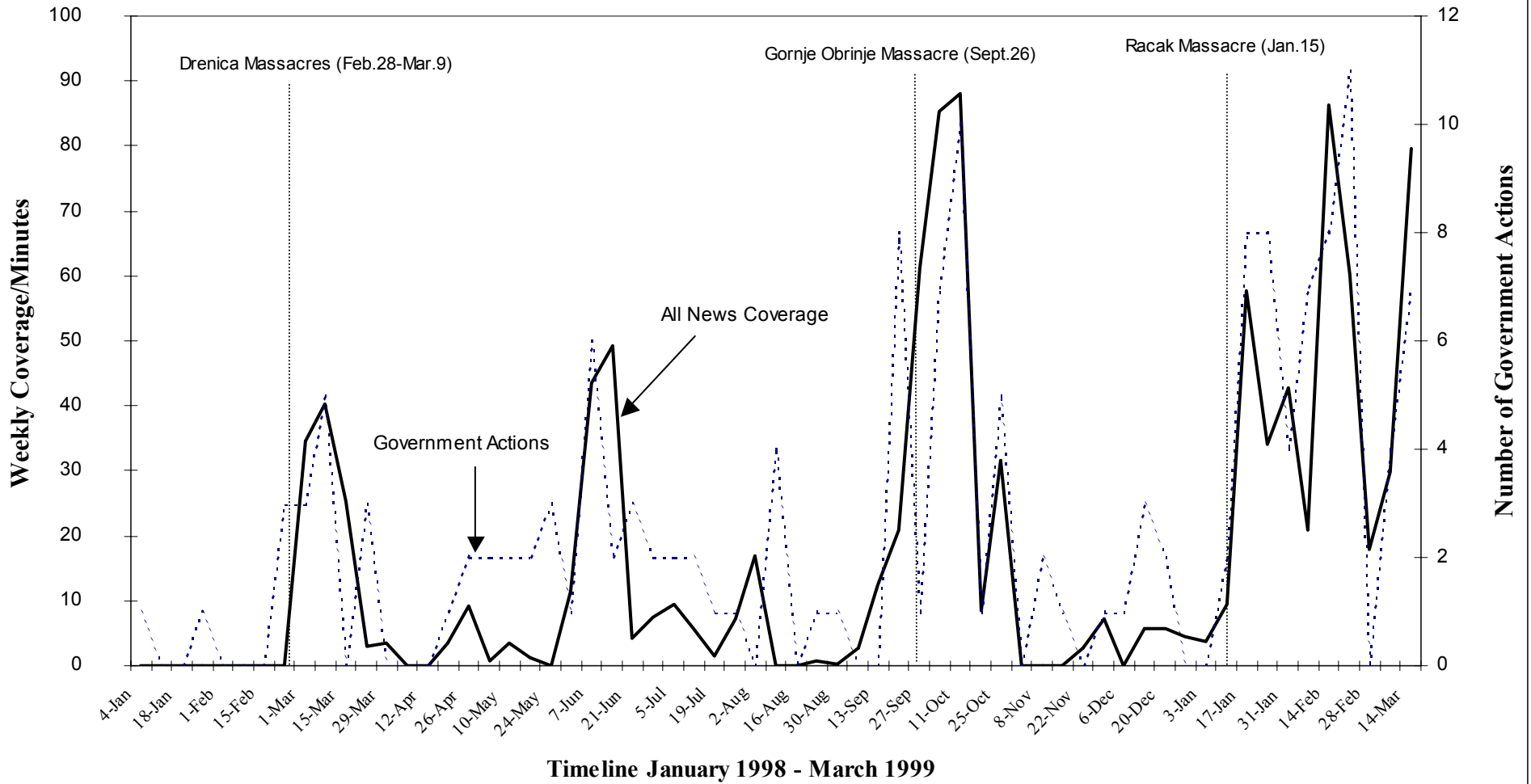
Graph 4 compares Kosovo media coverage and government activity in the West over the period under review. It shows that many of the periods of heightened media coverage also involved greater government activity. The main exception to this case occurred during the third week of September 1998 when government actions generated only limited media coverage. Similarly, above-average government activity from late April 1998 until early August 1998, also generated little media activity, except during Operation Determined Falcon in mid June.

In addressing the question, “Who leads whom?” between the media and government over these spikes, the content of the media’s coverage was examined to determine if references were made to official government actions or unexpected events from the zone of conflict? As media and governments often act within hours of each other’s activities, it is not always possible to demonstrate spikes in one domain followed by the other. Such activity often occurs almost simultaneously, especially if measured on a weekly basis as done in this study. If cases do emerge, however, that show a clear spike in one domain followed by the other, and if both media coverage and government documents refer to the same events, then this can certainly provide additional evidence that can either strengthen a case for a CNN effect (if media leads) or diminish it (if the government leads). Table 6 reviews the six joint media-government spikes and answers three key questions:

- 1) What was the main reference for the media’s coverage?
- 2) Was this reference unexpected or based on their official government policy actions?
- 3) Was there a discernable media or government spike first or did the spikes occur simultaneously?

Results show that two of the three media incidents outlined in the first section – the massacres at Drenica and Gornje Obrinje – were clearly media led. The Racak massacre, which was the third potential CNN effect incident, however, involved almost simultaneous media coverage and government activity. This was because of the unique circumstances of this incident, in which government officials (OSCE monitors including head monitor William Walker) and media arrived on the scene at the same time on the day following the massacre. By this time, Western governments were already involved in the Kosovo civil war, compared to the earlier massacres, and had moved much closer to supporting the Albanian position on the conflict, which allowed them to make judgments regarding the conflict much quicker and with less inhibitions than in earlier phases of the conflict.

**Graph 4 - American Television Coverage of Kosovo Versus Government Actions**



**Table 6: Review of Major Spikes in Both Media Coverage and Government Actions Over Kosovo – January 1 1998 – March 23, 1999**

<b>Spike Period</b>	<b>Main Reference</b>	<b>Unexpected or Official Gov. Act</b>	<b>Media/Gov. Led or Simultaneous</b>
First 2 wks. of March/98	Drenica massacres / attempted solutions	Unexpected	Media led
Mid June/98	Operation Determined Falcon	Official	Government led
First 2 weeks of October/98	Gornje Obrinje massacres/ attempted solutions	Unexpected	Media led
Last 2 weeks of January/99	Racak massacre/ proposed solutions	Unexpected	Simultaneous
Last 2 weeks Of February/99	Rambouillet	Official	Simultaneous
Week of March 14	Final Diplomacy before war	Official	Simultaneous

### **Government Action and the CNN effect – A Qualitative Overview**

While Western government activity did increase following and in conjunction with media coverage, policy change towards military intervention could not have occurred without qualitative shifts, as manifested by the government's attitude towards the conflict and the content of its policy. To demonstrate change towards a policy of war, it is important to show not just increased concern in the form of heightened activity, but also a shift in the actual policy. This section of the paper conducts a qualitative assessment of Western Kosovo policy to this end over two parts. The first reviews all press releases and statements by relevant Western government institutions regarding the Kosovo conflict over this period for two factors: How the West framed the conflict between the two sides and its propensity for military involvement in the conflict. A non-intervention policy would likely frame the conflict in neutral terms and not mention the possibility of Western military engagement. A bellicose policy would likely frame the conflict from the perspective of one side and openly mention military options against the other side. The second part of this section analyses the actual content of Kosovo policy before and after each media incident to identify specific changes that might have occurred and additionally looks for policymaker references linking such changes to media images.

## Framing

In the context of the Kosovo civil war, the West could frame its approach to the situation in a number of ways. It could take a position that favored the Albanian viewpoint, the Serb, use language that incorporated both perspective, or use language that intentionally was neutral to both positions. In this study, the following coding system was used to identify the framing of each of the 161 documents:

- 1 – Pro-Albanian Framing
- 2 – Both positions represented
- 3 – Pro-Serbian Framing
- 4 – Neutral position taken

Overall, just over half of all Western statements were framed solely from the Albanian perspective (81 out of 161), one statement incorporated the Serb viewpoint exclusively, and 79 were either neutral or attempted to incorporate both frameworks (18 both, 61 neutral). In reviewing the three massacres in relation to framing during the entire period, as illustrated in Table 7 and Graph 5, there are sharp increases in pro-Albanian framing just after each of the massacres and framing increasingly becomes pro-Albanian as the conflict moves closer to Western intervention.

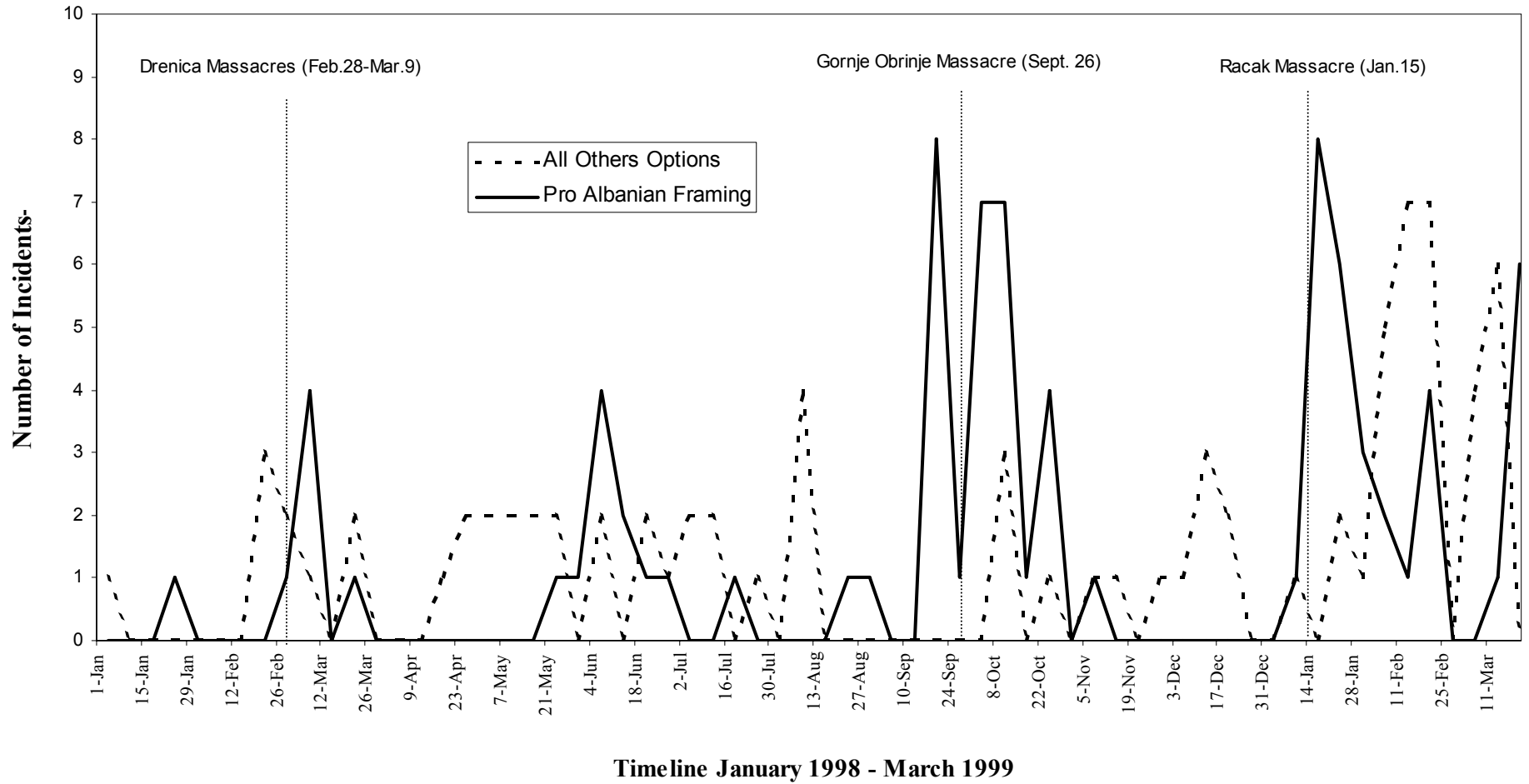
**Table 7: Review of Western Government Framing of Kosovo Civil War – January 1, 1998 – March 23, 1999**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Pro-Albanian</b>	<b>All Other Options</b>
Entire Period	50.3%	49.7%
Post Drenica	62.5%	37.5%
Post Gornje Obrinje	82.4%	17.6%
Post Racak	87.5%	12.5%
Post Massacres	80.5%	19.5%

Three other periods also record sharp increases in pro-Albanian framing. These were during the period surrounding NATO exercise “Determined Falcon” in mid-June, the passage of UN Resolution 1199 and NATO Activation Warning during the third week of September, and the final week before the war.

In other periods throughout the Kosovo civil war, and especially in periods when the West attempted to implement a solution, framing became more neutral as the West attempted to appear as a neutral player. More neutral framing was recorded after the passage of UN Resolution 1160 in late March, the Holbrooke-Milosevic Agreement, and during the negotiations at Rambouillet and Paris in February and March 1999.

**Graph 5 - Western Framing Leading to NATO Intervention in Kosovo**



## Propensity for Intervention

The second factor reviewed in this research is the propensity for or likelihood of military intervention as a proposed policy solution to the Kosovo problem. If Western policy is shifting towards a military solution, it is likely that such an option would increasingly be mentioned in press releases and statements. In this research, documents are coded into three different options in relation to military intervention:

1 – No military option mentioned

2 – Military option in background

Examples of language used to indicate this type of approach include:

- Force used as last resort if diplomacy fails
- Additional approvals still needed to use military option

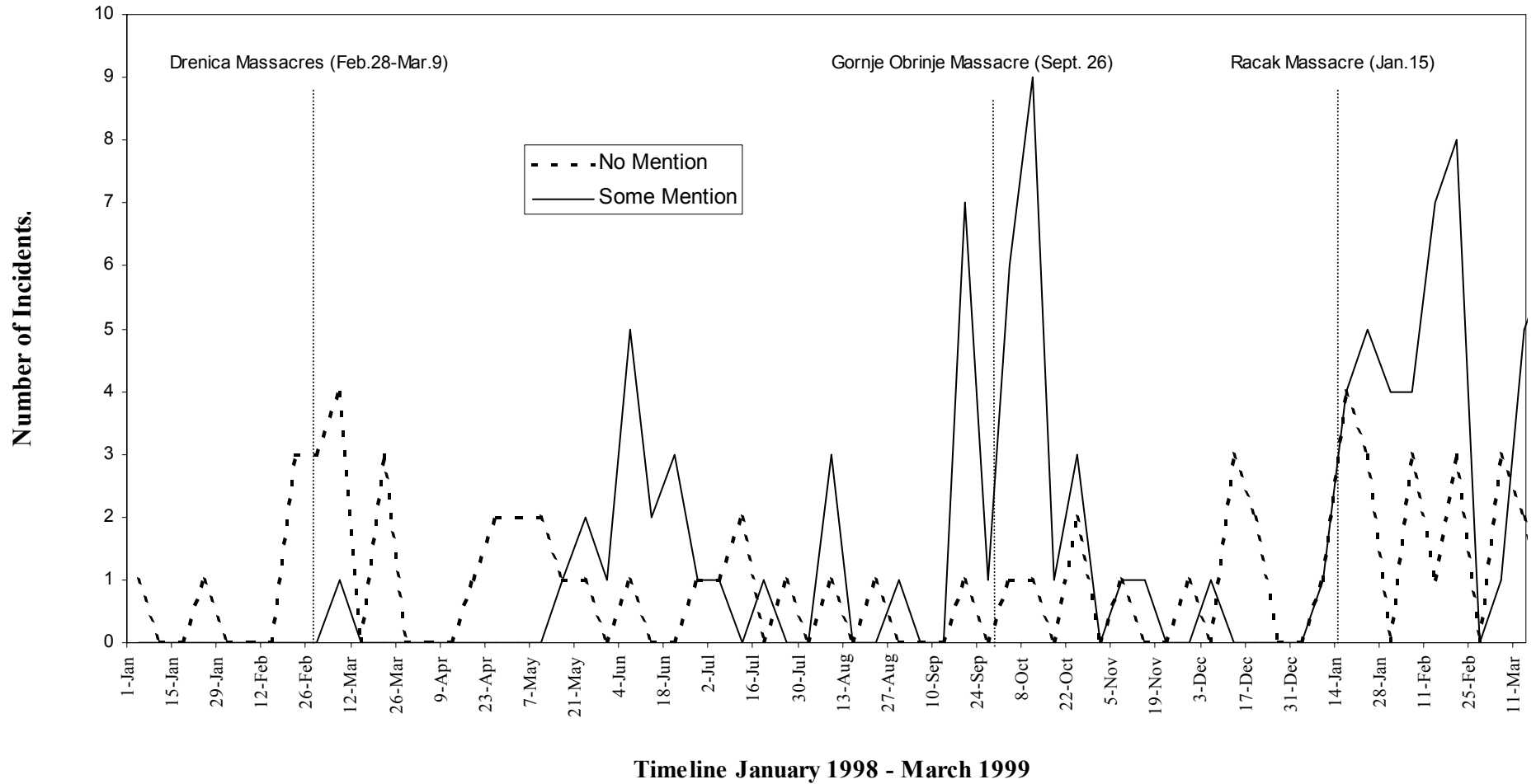
3 – Clear and imminent threat of military intervention

Examples of language used to indicate this type of approach include:

- All necessary approval given, now up to military to act at will
- Use of force imminent, unless conditions change (such as Serbs sign agreement or pull back forces etc.)

Overall, the majority of Western documents referred to the possibility of military intervention. Of the 161 documents surveyed, 97, or 60 percent, mentioned the possibility while 64, or 40 percent, made no reference to it. Out of the 97 statements that mentioned intervention, only 18 made clear threats of this possibility, while 79 referred to it in the background. In the lead-up to NATO intervention, serious discussion of military engagement emerged on four separate occasions, as illustrated in Graph 6. It first appeared in late May when NATO entered the fray after initial diplomatic efforts were failing. It then retracted for several months only to re-emerged in September after the passage of UN and NATO accords, and then in early October after the airing of footage from the Gornje Obrinje massacre's aftermath. This massacre, in fact, was the first event to garner a clear threat of military intervention. The reaction to the Drenica massacres in the spring of 1998 had some very minor references to the military, but was largely dealt with through diplomacy and the threat of sanctions. The reaction to the Gornje Obrinje massacre was the first time that NATO Activation Orders (ACTORDs) were issued, making air strikes legally possible.<sup>53</sup> It was only after the Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement that references to force subsided again. For nearly three months, there was very little mention of Western military intervention, but this trend again reversed after the Racak massacre in mid-January 1999. After this, NATO threats were always an active part of the vocabulary until March 24, 1999, when they became a reality.

**Graph 6 - Western Propensity to Use Force Leading to NATO Intervention in Kosovo**



## The West's Kosovo Policy – A Content Review

This section has so far demonstrated that the events that met the media criteria for a CNN effect also influenced Western government framing towards a more pro-Albanian position and increased the West's propensity for military engagement, as measured through the review of press statements and releases. A more detailed assessment of the actual policy itself in relation to these events, however, could add weight to this assertion, especially if policy content changed and if policy decision makers attributed these changes to the media images they saw. To this end, the remainder of this section reviews the West's Kosovo policy content before and after each of these incidents.

### *Western Policy Before the Drenica Massacre*

During the first two months of 1998, Kosovo garnered very limited Western government interest. Although there was a notable increase in tensions between the two sides since at least late 1997, there were relatively low numbers of casualties on either side. Over the 6 months leading to the outbreak of the first significant clashes in Kosovo, Western leaders met through the Contact Group to discuss Kosovo on four occasions and issued three press releases. The Contact Group, which was set up originally to deal with the Bosnia conflict, became increasingly interested in the Kosovo crisis as tensions increased in the province over 1997 and early 1998. The West, however, was also careful not to push the FRY too hard on Kosovo, fearing that its cooperation, which had proven critical in reaching and implementing the Dayton Peace Accords, may be at risk. Maintaining the FRY's cooperation on Bosnia was more important than Kosovo at this stage. The West's policy sought greater Kosovo Albanian autonomy while rejecting both the status quo and Albanian calls for independence. According to the Contact Group statement of February 25, 1998: “[The Contact Group] supports neither the independence nor the maintenance of the status quo... The Contact Group supports an enhanced status for Kosovo within the FRY and recognizes that this must include meaningful self-administration.”<sup>54</sup>

To promote dialogue towards Albanian autonomy, the West used its remaining “outer wall” of sanctions over the FRY from the Bosnian conflict as leverage. Since the Dayton Peace Agreement of 1995, there had been a growing trend in the West towards welcoming FRY back into the international community and the normalization of relations.<sup>55</sup> In late February 1998, the US Special Representative to the FRY Robert Gelbard continued this trend on a visit to the FRY, where he offered a number of concessions to lure compliance from Belgrade on Kosovo and to reward the country for its cooperation in influencing Bosnian Serbs to implement the Dayton Accords.<sup>56</sup> These concessions included the acceptance of the FRY in the Southern European Cooperation Initiative; landing rights permission for JAT (Yugoslav) Airlines in the United States; increased diplomatic representation for the FRY's diplomatic office in New York; and permission to establish a consulate in the United States.<sup>57</sup> Although he condemned the FRY for maintaining the status quo in Kosovo, Gelbard was even harsher towards the KLA, stating, “We are tremendously disturbed and also condemn very strongly the

unacceptable violence done by terrorist groups in Kosovo and particularly the UCK – the Kosovo Liberation Army. This is without any question a terrorist group.”<sup>58</sup>

*Western Policy After the Drenica Massacre*

In response to the Drenica massacre, an emergency meeting of the Contact Group was arranged on March 9<sup>th</sup> and a statement of condemnation was issued, placing responsibility largely with the FRY. The statement called on the FRY to withdraw some forces, provide access to humanitarian organizations, and begin dialogue with the Kosovo Albanians. If compliance was not achieved within ten days, the Contact Group threatened to impose a package of sanctions involving an arms embargo, visa restrictions on senior government officials, a moratorium on government credit for investment and trade, and limited economic sanctions.<sup>59</sup> Following this recommendation, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1160, which established an arms embargo against the FRY, including Kosovo.<sup>60</sup> The Resolution was enacted under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter and condemned the FRY police for using excessive force against civilians in Kosovo.

The US also showed displeasure at the FRY by initially revoking the concessions it made in late February. This was followed by a return visit by Gelbard on March 10, but this time with a very different tone. Whereas Gelbard’s mission several weeks earlier had focused on conciliatory measures, the message this time was one of condemnation, referring to recent government actions as “brutal, disproportionate and overwhelming force.”<sup>61</sup> Gelbard criticized the FRY’s government for resorting to violence and blocking the Red Cross and other independent groups investigating war crimes from access to the victims’ bodies. To appear even-handed, Gelbard also visited Rugova and the Albanian political leadership in Kosovo and outlined Washington’s opposition to their goal of independence. Other states including Britain, Germany and France took similar actions, sending representatives to both the Serb and Albanian sides to pressure them into dialogue and a political resolution.

Since late 1995, the West had carefully attempted to balance the need for FRY cooperation in Bosnia with the desire to pressure FRY into granting political rights to the Kosovo Albanians. In Western calculations, the cost of losing FRY cooperation was higher than the benefits from pressuring the FRY on Kosovo. Thousands of Western troops were now peacekeeping in Bosnia, and the Bosnians had already died in the tens of thousands. If Bosnia were to slip into war again, it would not only endanger the Western troops but also cost potentially thousands of additional lives. The Bosnians had already shown an appetite for mass killing, whereas the Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo had not. Kosovo Albanians, while repressed, had been relatively peaceful. Their official political leadership, after all, was philosophically opposed to the use of force.

Events on the ground, however, were changing in important ways by the end of 1997. In Bosnia, the importance of Serbia proper as a guarantor of peace had diminished gradually as local leaders gained greater powers and the Dayton Accords gained a greater grip on

the political culture of the population. The Accords were defusing tensions and moving people towards more moderate political leadership. In Kosovo, the reverse was occurring. Belief in Rugova's pacifism was losing the support of the Albanian population, who compared their unsuccessful plight to other groups in the former Yugoslavia that had gained independence through violence. This belief took root with the emergence of the KLA, a group dedicated to gaining independence through armed struggle. The growth of the KLA and its activities were moving Kosovo towards greater radicalization and violence. Small-scale KLA provocations and Serb reprisals became increasingly common throughout late 1997 and early 1998. Until February 28, 1998, the violence had been random, and bearable for the West. The Drenica massacre – which was the FRY's attempt to deal a crushing blow to the KLA – increased the severity of the conflict to a new level and as a result, achieved the exact reverse of its intentions.

Images from the Drenica massacre exposed inadequacies in the West's delicate and conciliatory approach to the FRY over Kosovo, challenging the policy and making it impossible to maintain the status quo. The cost of violence in Kosovo had escalated and the bloodshed in Drenica exposed just how high the cost had become. On the other hand, while a return to war in Bosnia was still a possibility, the FRY's ability to determine such an outcome was limited. As a result, Western policy began to shift, and pressure on the FRY over Kosovo that was previously minimal, increased significantly. Furthermore, concessions made just days before the Drenica incident that had now become clearly inappropriate were withdrawn and replaced by new sanctions, signaling an important shift in Western policy.

As decision makers were meeting and altering the West's approach to Kosovo, some important comments seemed to link policy shift directly to the media images of recent days. For example, while on a trip to discuss the Kosovo crisis with European leaders, Albright commented, "We are not going to stand by and watch Serb authorities do in Kosovo what they can no longer get away with doing in Bosnia."<sup>62</sup> After the Contact Group meeting, Albright again acknowledged the importance of media images by stating, "History is watching us... In this very room our predecessors delayed as Bosnia burned..."<sup>63</sup> US President Bill Clinton made perhaps the clearest link among the images from Drenica, previous failure to prevent bloodshed in Bosnia and the new Western policy stance when he stated, "We do not want the Balkans to have more pictures like we've seen in the last few days so reminiscent of what Bosnia endured."<sup>64</sup>

The media images were also often mentioned when the US Senate passed Concurrent Resolution 85 by a vote of 98 to 0 "Calling for the end of violent repression on the people of Kosovo." Connecticut Senator Chris Dodd, for example, stated:

I think it is appropriate, in light of events we have all seen in our newspapers and television stations, events that have occurred in Kosovo in the last couple of weeks, to speak, to be heard... we will be heard expressing, I think, the outrage of our constituents across this country, regardless of where we live, letting those who are suffering know that their voices are being heard, letting those who perpetrate this violence and outrage know that we know what is going on and we will not forget it.<sup>65</sup>

*Western Policy Before Gornje Obrinje*

The period from March to the end of September 1998 was marked by four discernable stages. The first and third involved periods of military relaxation and appeasement by the FRY towards the West, while the second and fourth involved attempts to regain control on the ground from the KLA through military campaigns, with less regard for Western disapproval. After the Drenica massacres, tougher Western policy pressured the FRY to make a number of concessions to appease the West. These included at least three calls in March 1998 for direct negotiations with the Albanian leadership; requests for the return of the OSCE mission which had been asked to leave several years earlier; and the signing of an education agreement with the Kosovo Albanians regarding their return to the state education system from which they had been excluded since 1991.

The rise of the KLA, however, was overtaking what would ultimately prove to be only hollow signs of progress. The Drenica massacre swelled the KLA's ranks from hundreds to thousands, drawing significant support from Albania and the Albanian Diasporas.<sup>66</sup> By mid-July, the KLA claimed to control 40 percent of Kosovo.<sup>67</sup> To reverse this pattern, the FRY launched a major summer counter offensive involving the military, paramilitary and interior police. Throughout the summer of 1998, tens of thousands of Albanians in Kosovo were forced to flee their homes and became refugees, as an estimated 300 villages were emptied.<sup>68</sup> From early September, the West reversed its passivity of recent months and again began to take action on Kosovo, fearing a looming humanitarian crisis. Of greatest concern were the estimated 50,000 homeless Kosovo Albanians living in makeshift camps in mountains surrounding their villages. With winter beginning as early as mid-October, these people could starve or freeze during the coming months if no action was taken.

In addition to the human cost, the repeated threats that had been hollow over the previous six months seriously placed the West's, and especially NATO's, credibility at stake. NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana was especially concerned about this issue and often repeated a joke a Serb diplomat told him: "A village a day keeps NATO away," believing that the Serbs were mocking NATO.<sup>69</sup> This statement bore a certain truth that related to the CNN effect. As long as the FRY's offensive in Kosovo was slow and methodical and avoided shocking scenes of mass killing, it was believed that NATO would complain but not intervene. Only when scenes became unbearably painful would it be impossible for the West to ignore the situation.

To reverse the trend in Kosovo, the West, through the UN Security Council and NATO, passed two important measures: UN Security Council Resolution 1199, and a NATO activation warning (ACTWARN), on September 23 and 24, respectively. These two actions addressed two important questions that needed answers at this stage. Namely, what was to be done and how would it be done? At the UN, diplomats had attempted to pass a resolution to deal with the FRY counteroffensive for over one month. This military action had successfully crushed many of the KLA strongholds and retaken almost all of the lost territory. The UN resolution did not refer to enforcement but

instead called for a ceasefire, withdrawal of forces from civilian areas, stronger international monitoring, facilitation of refugee return, unfettered access for humanitarian organizations and increased negotiation towards a political solution. The NATO measure put the organization one step closer to military action, through a limited air option and a phased air campaign in Kosovo code named operation Allied Force, although it was not a commitment to action.<sup>70</sup>

The FRY summer offensive caused the largest number of casualties on the Albanian side since the beginning of hostilities in early March. The estimated number of dead since the beginning of 1998 to the end of the offensive was 800. The scale of the damage was massive, yet the reaction, due to the slow and methodical nature of the offensive and the limited Western media access was relatively mild.

#### *Western Policy After Gornje Obrinje*

The Gornje Obrinje massacre of September 26 delivered unexpected and very graphic images from Kosovo. These images reached Western television screens and newspapers over September 29 to October 2 and led to an unprecedented degree of condemnation against Belgrade. For the first time in the crisis, the West, through NATO, took the final step necessary to make air strikes imminent and set a timeline for engagement should Milosevic not meet demands. Before the massacre, action had been taken to allow for the possibility of a NATO air campaign; after the massacre, the final push was made for decisive action unless strict conditions were met. To get this message to Milosevic, Holbrooke was sent to threaten Milosevic with force if he did not meet the conditions of UN Security Council Resolution 1199, which called for a FRY military withdrawal and a more rigorous monitoring system. In conjunction with diplomacy, NATO took the unprecedented step of issuing an ACTORD on October 13, an Activation Order for both a limited and phased air campaign in Yugoslavia that had a 96-hour deadline for initiation.<sup>71</sup> The accord was implemented after all 16 NATO nations, including final holdouts such as France, Germany and Italy, decided to approve the measure.

The Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement became the basis of Western policy after Gornje Obrinje and its implementation led to a relaxation of tensions in Kosovo. The agreement was enshrined in UN Security Council resolution 1203 which was enacted on October 24, 1998, and called for a ceasefire, withdrawal and strict international monitoring. The monitoring system, referred to as the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), was established as a result to ensure compliance with UN Security Council resolutions and to supervise elections for Kosovo self-government, which were to be held within nine months of the agreement.<sup>72</sup> In response, FRY authorities withdrew to their pre-March levels leading NATO to report that “substantial compliance” had been made by October 27.<sup>73</sup>

There was clearly a shift in Western policy after the images of Gornje Obrinje surfaced at the end of September. While Western Kosovo policy was strengthened after the FRY summer offensive, as demonstrated by the passage of UN and NATO resolutions, the use of Western military force was not approved and remained in the background. According

to the NATO press statement of September 24, 1998, the activation warning, or ACTWARN, took NATO “to an increased level of military preparedness...the use of force will require further decisions by the North Atlantic Council.”<sup>74</sup> But it was, as its name suggested, largely a warning. Western nations at this stage were prepared to raise the level of rhetoric, but were not ready to engage militarily. Many of NATO’s members in Europe, especially France and Italy, insisted that an explicit UN mandate was necessary for any military action.<sup>75</sup> This reluctance to move beyond words was also strengthened by a FRY announcement on September 28 that they had defeated the KLA and were withdrawing their troops from Kosovo.<sup>76</sup> This move, which was announced as a possible attempt to appease the West’s recent demands, seemed to have some effect. In an interview FRY withdrawal, US Secretary of Defense Cohen was positive, suggesting that meeting the UN demands would negate any possibility of military action and even suggested that the KLA also needed to reduce its talk of conflict and, instead, engage in negotiations.<sup>77</sup> Whatever relief the declaration to cease operations had, however, was reversed by the massacre and its images, which led to immediate condemnations and a change in Western policy. Before the massacre, the West had always put diplomacy ahead of military action as a solution. In the post-Gornje Obrinje environment, however, for the first time since the beginning of the conflict in March, support for military action was proposed as the leading choice.

Media images clearly played a role in this shift. In the US, the news of the Gornje Obrinje massacre led to an emergency NSC meeting, which was a key turning point in shifting US policy towards one in support of military intervention. At that meeting, a particularly powerful media image of the Gornje Obrinje massacre was apparently a vital influencing factor in the decision-making. According to Richard Holbrooke, a participant at that meeting,

The *[NY] Times* sat in the middle of the oak table in the middle of the situation room like a silent witness of what was going on. And it was one of those rare times where a photograph just kind of, that terrible photograph of that dead person in that village was kind of a reminder of a reality and it had a real effect on the dialogue...<sup>78</sup>

Albright, who had previously been a lone advocate of military action, now found previously skeptical colleagues on the NSC also open to a military option if Milosevic did not back down and meet Western demands. Describing the meeting and the role of media images, she said, “When the pictures showed up of these massacres and there was this sense, the sense that I had from the beginning of the year, that we are reliving the stories of Srebrenica and the terrible things that had happened in Bosnia and that we knew better now.”<sup>79</sup> When asked by a reporter about whether stories of the Gornje Obrinje massacre were as bad as some reports suggested, she countered, “Its very bad, and you can’t make up photographs.”<sup>80</sup>

The impact of the massacre images also influenced the thinking of many US lawmakers, who would debate the Kosovo conflict and the case for intervention in the days following the massacre. On October 1, for example, Congressman Engel made one of the strongest cases linking images to the need for military action, stating,

We read about it in the paper today on the front page, that there were several massacres, that bodies were found of innocent civilians, men, women and children, as the Serbian police forces and military units continue their campaign of genocide and ethnic cleansing against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo...Mr. Speaker, it is time for action. We need to have immediate NATO air strikes on Serbian positions in Kosovo.<sup>81</sup>

Similar sentiments soon followed in the Senate. On a debate on Kosovo on October 6<sup>th</sup>, clear links were again made between media images of the suffering in Kosovo and the need to take military action. Ohio Senator Mike DeWine made one such compelling argument, stating:

This past week, Americans and people all over the world have been witness to some horrific images coming from the tiny province of Kosovo in the Republic of Serbia...The victims of the latest massacre included old men, women and children... There is little to ponder about what must occur. The threat or actual use of military action by NATO, such as air strikes, is needed if some form of Serbian withdrawal or cease fire in Kosovo province is going to occur.<sup>82</sup>

### *Western Policy Before Racak*

The Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement solved the short-term humanitarian problems that most concerned the West. It also bought time. The agreement, however, was flawed because it dealt primarily with compliance instead of the underlying problems of Kosovo. The agreement was also problematic because it was made between NATO and the FRY, largely ignoring the KLA.<sup>83</sup> As Milosevic had feared while negotiating the agreement with Holbrooke, the KLA had no incentive to comply with the ceasefire. Instead, they took advantage of the shifting power structure left by the FRY military withdrawal to recapture territory lost during the summer offensive. According to General Agim Ceku, the KLA's Military Leader, "The cease-fire was very useful for us, it helped us to get organized, to consolidate and grow."<sup>84</sup>

On January 15, a meeting of the NSC took place in the White House basement to evaluate Kosovo policy.<sup>85</sup> Recent increases in violence, often initiated by the KLA, were undermining the Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement. Albright believed that the situation was deteriorating and that the time had come to strengthen the military component of the policy. The other member of the Principals Committee, however, did not support this position, believing it to be too risky.<sup>86</sup> Leading the opposition was Defense Secretary William Cohen, who was reluctant to engage in another Balkan conflict with no clear end in sight.<sup>87</sup> In the end, a 13-page classified Kosovo strategy document was approved, informally referred to as "Status Quo Plus."<sup>88</sup> This document proposed minor changes to push the agenda forward – but nothing that could seriously risk escalating tensions. To improve the situation, it proposed enhancing the security of the KVM monitors with helicopters and bodyguards, training Albanian policemen, and beginning plans for an election. All of these suggestions, of course, would need Milosevic's tacit approval.<sup>89</sup> The proposed changes outlined in the policy document were largely cosmetic, and ultimately, things were left largely as they were. According to Ivo Daalder, "The decision by the principals is, no, we will just muddle through. Decisive actions, we just

can't stomach it."<sup>90</sup> Albright was reported to be frustrated after this decision, stating, "We're like gerbils running on a wheel."<sup>91</sup>

### *Western Policy After Racak*

There is perhaps no clearer example of policy shift over the fifteen-month period under study than after the Racak massacre. On the day of the massacre on January 15, as mentioned, the NSC met and decided to maintain the Hoolbrooke-Milosevic agreement with minor changes as the basis of Kosovo policy. News of the massacre would not reach those attending until the next day. The status quo changed quickly in the US and Europe, however, once images of the massacre reached the West the next day, leading one US newspaper to describe the NSC decisions of January 15 as "obsolete at birth."<sup>92</sup>

The shift in policy began to germinate almost immediately after the massacre at the US State Department. In devising a new approach, it was clear that the incremental measures of past months had failed and that the conflicting parties could not reach an agreement on their own – they had to be pushed into an interim political settlement devised by the West. The new policy, in essence, contained four elements:<sup>93</sup>

- Devise an interim settlement based on principles agreed to by the Contact Group, with an autonomous Kosovo protectorate as its core;
- Demand attendance of conflicting parties to a conference to agree to the interim settlement;
- Enforce interim settlement with an international implementation force,<sup>94</sup> and
- Force parties to sign agreement with a credible ultimatum threatening force for non-agreement.<sup>95</sup>

The policy shift was officially initiated during another NSC Principals meeting on January 19 that was called in response to Racak. At this meeting, Albright received overwhelming support for the new approach from the same group that had rejected her approach just four days before. According to National Security Advisor Sandy Berger, Albright found herself "pushing on an open door" at this meeting.<sup>96</sup> The next day Clinton signed off on the new policy.

The US Executive Branch including the full NSC was now committed to the new plan and ready to end the Kosovo crisis by imposing a solution, by force if necessary. Agreeing on this plan, however, was the easy part in many ways. The difficulty involved convincing the US Legislature and skeptical European allies to back the plan. In the US and Europe, however, the Racak images were having a significant influence on decision-makers. In Germany, for example, a NATO member traditionally amongst the most reluctant to consider the use of force, there was a strong shift towards the military option after Racak. According to German Foreign Minister Joschka Fisher, "If people are being massacred, you cannot mutter about having no mandate. You must act."<sup>97</sup>

Perhaps the greatest transformation in policy position occurred in the US Legislature. Before the Racak incident, the majority in the US Congress had opposed US military involvement in Kosovo. After Racak, the political landscape moved significantly in favor of a military solution and Racak's images had clearly played a role. According to influential foreign policy Senator Joseph Biden,

For the American people and many in Congress, the horror wrought by Milosevic was brought home in horrific fashion when images of the massacre in the village of Racak were transmitted around the world in January 1999. Forty-five Kosovar Albanians were slaughtered, and the pictures of their corpses galvanized public opinion in favor of some Western action.<sup>98</sup>

The main Congressional debates that demonstrated that the political ground had clearly shifted towards military intervention occurred in March 1999. In the House of Representatives, Concurrent Resolution 42 regarding the use of US Armed Forces as part of a NATO peacekeeping operation implementing a Kosovo peace agreement was passed on March 10th.<sup>99</sup> In the Senate, Concurrent Resolution 21 authorizing "the President of the United States to conduct military air operations and missile strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)" was passed on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.<sup>100</sup> During these debates, it was apparent that the Racak and other more recent images of atrocity and suffering had played a significant role. According to Congresswoman Jackson-Lee of Texas, for example,

There is not one that has not watched the bloodshed, has seen the reports of massacres, seen the untold graves that have been discovered...I wonder if those who are opposed to the use of troops are paying attention to the daily reports of atrocities, as some 2,000 people have been killed.<sup>101</sup>

## Conclusion

Did media images of death and human suffering influence the West's decision to shift policy during the Kosovo civil war from one of relative neutrality to one of war? This paper has attempted to gain insights on this question by conducting an analysis of the time between January 1, 1998 and March 24, 1999. In assessing this question, the paper first reviewed US media coverage of the Kosovo conflict over this period to identify incidents that met the media criteria for a CNN effect. In total, three incidents were identified: the massacres of Drenica in late February and early March 1998, Gornje Obrinje in late September 1998, and Racak in mid January 1999. While the deaths surrounding these incidents were tragic, they accounted for less than 8 percent of the total deaths during the civil war. Yet by one measure, almost 50 percent of the media coverage during this period related to these events. Clearly, these incidents generated disproportionate media coverage. However, to claim a CNN effect, it is necessary to also demonstrate influence towards a shift in foreign policy. To this end, the Kosovo specific actions and policy of the West was reviewed over this same period to assess if there were disproportionate quantitative government reactions and qualitatively distinguishable changes in policy attitude and content.

Overall, there is strong evidence supporting a CNN effect after each of the three incidents. Each incident exposed inadequacies in existing government policy and set off a flurry of Western government activity that involved attempts to find a solution to the problem that the massacre represented. The failure of each solution only became manifest when another massacre's televised aftermath emerged, signifying the need for a new policy. The final Kosovo policy that increasingly became inevitable over time involved the use of military intervention to enforce an interim political plan, which was enforced by NATO bombing beginning on March 24, 1999.

While the CNN effect was an important factor in shifting policy towards war, it was not the only variable at play. As the review of media coverage and government activity regarding Kosovo clearly showed, other factors, often related to the fighting and related refugee problems, which were often not televised, also drove Western policy toward intervention. Also, it is important to realize that the political context of the Kosovo civil war was critical in the final outcome. To conclude, three points will be made on this issue.

First, the Kosovo civil war began in 1998, after the Croatia and Bosnian conflicts that claimed tens of thousands of lives. Had Kosovo become violent in 1991 instead of 1998, it might have taken many years and thousands of deaths before an intervention by Western powers. The Milosevic regime, no doubt, was already vilified in the West by this stage and it did not take long to identify the perpetrators and victims when hostilities broke out in Kosovo. Second, the conflict emerged close to the turn of the twenty-first century and the third millennium. Many Western leaders seemed to feel the weight of history on their shoulders. Based on their statements, many seemed determined to avoid entering the new century while activities reminiscent with the darkest periods of the twentieth century were still taking place. Ethnic cleansing and mass murder were supposed to belong to the past – particularly in Europe. Finally, the Kosovo conflict occurred in a period that was relatively quiet in international affairs. Had the events in Kosovo taken place after September 11, 2001, when the Western world was caught up in the “War on Terror”, it may have not been noticed or given much importance. Allegations of links between the KLA and Osama Bin Laden's network would also have been much more detrimental to the Albanian cause after September 11th. Certainly, news of human rights violations in Chechnya are not getting the attention in the West that they once commanded.

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**ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> According to Samuel Huntington, “There is...considerable evidence to suggest that the development of television journalism contributed to the undermining of government authority.” Cited in Daniel C. Hallin, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam* (Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 1985), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the term “CNN effect” is not solely linked to the Atlanta-based Cable News Network but rather is an umbrella term to describe a number of alleged media effects. For more information on different CNN effects in the literature, please see: Steve Livingston, *Clarifying the CNN Effect: An Examination of Media Effects According the Type of Military Intervention* (Cambridge, MA: The Joan Shorenstein Barone Center of the Press, Politics and Public Policy at Harvard University, 1997). Research paper R-18, and Piers Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News, Foreign Policy and Intervention* (London: Routledge, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Framing is the attempt to simplify, prioritize, and structure events into interpretive frameworks that fit events into broader contexts. By prioritizing certain facts and images over others, journalists promote particular interpretations of events over others. See Pippa Norris, “News of the World,” in Pippa Norris, ed., *Politics and the Press* (Boulder, CO.: Lynne Rienner, 1997) p.275.

<sup>4</sup> The information for this study was initially gathered from the web site of Vanderbilt Television News Archive (<http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu/>) at Vanderbilt University based in Nashville, Tennessee, USA. The information was accessed from January to April 2002. Additionally, specific portions of television news video were viewed and coded at the Archive in May 2002.

<sup>5</sup> A notable spike is defined as at least 40 minutes of dedicated Kosovo coverage in one week.

<sup>6</sup> This operation (also informally referred to as the NATO Air Show) involved eighty NATO warplanes from 13 member states that flew over the Adriatic Sea, Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in a clockwise swirl. *CNN.com*, “NATO demonstrates firepower over Balkans,” June 15, 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9806/15/nato.kosovo/>.

<sup>7</sup> James Walsh, “A Volcano Explodes,” *Time Europe Website*, March 16, 1998. <http://www.time.com/time/europe/timetrails/serbia/sr980316.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> *CNN.com*, “At least 20 dead in Kosovo fighting,” March 1, 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9803/01/yugo.kosovo/>.

<sup>10</sup> R. Jeffrey Smith, “Eerie Quiet Follows Assault in Kosovo,” *Washington Post*, Monday, March 9, 1998, p. A13; *BBC News Online*, “Kosovo Killing: Belgrade’s official version of events,” March, 12, 1998. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/monitoring/64947.stm>.

<sup>11</sup> R. Jeffrey Smith, “Eerie Quiet Follows Assault in Kosovo.”

<sup>12</sup> *CNN.com*, “World leaders condemn Kosovo violence,” March 7, 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9803/07/yugo.kosovo/>.

<sup>13</sup> *CNN.com*, “Serbs say Kosovo guerrilla leader killed in crackdown,” March 8, 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9803/08/yugo.kosovo.wrap/>.

<sup>14</sup> James Walsh, “A Volcano Explodes.”

<sup>15</sup> R. Jeffrey Smith, “Eerie Quiet Follows Assault in Kosovo.”

<sup>16</sup> *BBC News Online*, “Behind the Kosovo Crisis,” March 12, 2000. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/674056.stm>.

<sup>17</sup> The head of the Serbian Orthodox Church is in the Kosovo city of Pec.

<sup>18</sup> Serbs see the Albanian majority as a function of high post WWII illegal immigration, high birth rates due to their backwardness, and repressive treatment of Serbs by Albanians after the 1974 constitutional amendments, which forced many Serbs to leave Kosovo.

<sup>19</sup> *CNN.com*, “Serbian police break up mass protests in Kosovo,” March 2, 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9803/02/yugo.kosovo/>.

<sup>20</sup> Louis Sell, *Slobodan Milosevic and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002) p.65.

<sup>21</sup> *CNN.com*, “Serbs say Kosovo guerrilla leader killed in crackdown.”

- <sup>22</sup> Human Rights Watch, *A Week of Terror in Drenica: Human Law Violations in Kosovo*, (New York, Human Rights Watch, 1999). <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/kosovo/> and *BBC News Online*, “UN Condemns Kosovo atrocities,” October 2, 1998. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/184698.stm>.
- <sup>23</sup> Cited in Human Rights Watch, *A Week of Terror in Drenica: Human Law Violations in Kosovo*, (New York, Human Rights Watch, 1999). <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/kosovo>.
- <sup>24</sup> Federal Government of Yugoslavia, *Press Statement*, October 2, 1998.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>27</sup> The Yugoslav soldiers were released five days later on January 13, 1999. *CNN.com*, “Kosovo rebels release Yugoslav soldiers,” January 13, 1999. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9901/13/kosovo.01/>
- <sup>28</sup> According to Hasim Thaci, “They set out to commit atrocities, because a key KLA unit was based in this area.” Hasim Thaci interview. Allan Little, *Mortal Combat – NATO at War*, BBC2, March 12, 2000. Also see Human Rights Watch, *Yugoslav Government War Crimes in Racak*, January 29, 1999. <http://www.hrw.org/campaigns/kosovo98/racak.shtml>
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup> Alex J. Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.114.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Yugoslav Government War Crimes in Racak*.
- <sup>33</sup> Renaud Girard, “Kosovo: Obscure Areas of the Massacre,” *Le Figero*, January 20, 1999. <http://www.balkanpeace.org/wcs/wct/wctk/wctk02.html>.
- <sup>34</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society*, p.114.
- <sup>35</sup> Michael McAuliffe, *The Road to Racak*, CBC Radio News World at Six Documentary, May 23, 2000.
- <sup>36</sup> *CNN.com*, “At least 15 rebels killed in renewed Kosovo fighting,” January 15, 1999. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9901/15/kosovo.02/>
- <sup>37</sup> *CNN.com*, “NATO convenes over Kosovo massacre,” January 17, 1999. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9901/17/kosovo.01/>
- <sup>38</sup> *War in Europe*, prod. Peter Boyer, Michael Kirk and Rick Young, Frontline PBS Documentary, 2000. Videocassette.
- <sup>39</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>40</sup> Renaud Girard, “Kosovo: Obscure Areas of the Massacre,”
- <sup>41</sup> Serbian President Milutinovic, *Press Statement*, January 17, 1999, and Interior Ministry of the Republic of Serbia, *Press Statement*, January 18, 1999.
- <sup>42</sup> Numbers do not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.
- <sup>43</sup> There were an estimated 40,425 minutes of television news coverage over this period:
- 60 minutes on CNN and 30 minutes on ABC, CBS and NBC each equal 150 minutes per day
  - Less 30 percent for commercials equals 105 programming minutes per day
  - 105 minutes times 385 days that constitutes this 55-week period equals 40,425.
- If this number is then divided by the 1061 minutes and 50 seconds devoted to the Kosovo civil war, an estimated three percent of all American news coverage over this period was devoted to the issue.
- <sup>44</sup> *US Department of Defense*, “Kosovo Albanians Agree to Accord; Serbs Still Holdouts,” February 25, 1999.
- <sup>45</sup> According to media reports, there were 75 killed in the Drenica massacres of February 28 to March 6, 1998; 36 killed in the massacre of Gornje Obrinje and surrounding villages on September 26, 1998 and 45 killed in the Racak massacre of January 15, 1999. It should be noted that there is some discrepancy in different reports on the number of deaths in these incidents.
- <sup>46</sup> This weighting is selected because the US played a dominant role in leading NATO into military intervention and in providing the majority of resources for the engagement. Thus, the policies of the US were more important than those of the EU, in general, and individual EU countries, in particular, in determining outcomes.
- <sup>47</sup> There is again more weight on US government institutions for the same reasons as in the previous footnote.
- <sup>48</sup> Over this period, 205 government actions were documented, 161 of the acts were press releases or statements, 31 involved direct diplomacy between Western officials and Yugoslav leaders (either with one

side or both), 38 involved diplomatic meetings amongst Western leaders to primarily discuss the Kosovo conflict. At some of these meetings, press releases and statements were also issued. However, such cases were only counted as one government action. As such, the total number of diplomatic meetings and press releases/statements exceeds 205 if counted separately.

<sup>49</sup> At least seven actions are considered significant.

<sup>50</sup> One critical article states, “the leading NATO powers wanted to bomb Yugoslavia, and imposed negotiating conditions on the Serb delegation that assured their rejection by inserting a proviso in ‘Appendix B’ of the Rambouillet agreement/ultimatum that required Yugoslavia to permit NATO forces occupying rights throughout all of Yugoslavia, not just in Kosovo.” Edward S. Herman and David Peterson, “CNN: Selling Nato’s War Globally,” in Philip Hammond and Edward S. Herman eds., *Degraded Capacity: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), pp.115-117.

<sup>51</sup> NATO, *Statement by NATO Secretary-General, Dr. Javier Solana, on Exercise Determined Falcon*, June 13, 1998.

<sup>52</sup> Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO’s War to Save Kosovo* (Washington DC, Brookings Institute, 2001), p.23; *CNN.com*, “UN demands cease-fire in Kosovo,” September 23, 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9809/23/kosovo.02/>; *CNN.com*, “NATO prepares for possible air strikes in Kosovo,” September 24, 1998. <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9809/24/kosovo.01/>

<sup>53</sup> NATO, *Statement to the Press by the Secretary General Following Decision on the ACTORD*, October 12, 1998.

<sup>54</sup> Contact Group, *Statement on Kosovo*, February 25, 1998.

<sup>55</sup> These included the re-establishment of diplomatic ties with EU countries in 1996; the lifting of UN sanctions that had been in place since May 1992 on September 31, 1996; EU preferential trade status in April 1997; and a European Commission aid package worth \$112 million on May 15, 1997.

<sup>56</sup> According to Robert Gelbard, “we certainly feel that there has been significant positive influence by this government to facilitate the establishment of conditions which have led now to a pro-democracy, pro-Dayton government in Republika Srpska.” US Department of State, *Robert Gelbard Press Conference*, February 23, 1998.

<sup>57</sup> US Department of State, *Robert Gelbard Press Conference*, February 23, 1998.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Contact Group, *Statement on Kosovo*. London, UK, March 9, 1998. It should be noted that Russia did not endorse all of the sanctions agreed to by other Contact Group states.

<sup>60</sup> UN, *Press Release SC/6496*, March 31, 1999.

<sup>61</sup> R. Jeffrey Smith, “US Envoy Warns Serbia, Kosovo Rebels,” *Washington Post*, Wednesday, March 11, 1998. P.A21.

<sup>62</sup> US Department of State, *Press Briefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, Rome, March 7, 1998.

<sup>63</sup> Cited in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.24.

<sup>64</sup> White House Office of the Press Secretary, *Remarks by the President and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in Photo Opportunity*, March 11, 1998.

<sup>65</sup> “Calling for an End to the Violent Repression of the People of Kosovo.” Remarks by Senator Chris Dodd on Senate Concurrent Resolution 85. *Congressional Record*, Proceedings of the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session, Vol. 144, March 18, 1998 (pp. S2203-4).

<sup>66</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.35.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Contact Group and Foreign Ministers of Canada and Japan, *Statement on Kosovo*, London, UK. June 12, 1998; Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History*, (New York: HarperPerennial, 1999), Preface.

<sup>69</sup> Barton Gellman, “Slaughter at Racak Changed Kosovo Policy,” *Washington Post*, April 18, 1999. P. A1.

<sup>70</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, pp.42-4.

<sup>71</sup> NATO, *Statement to the Press by the Secretary General Following Decision on the ACTORD*, Brussels, October 13, 1998.

<sup>72</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, pp.48-9.

<sup>73</sup> US Department of State, *Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright Remarks on Kosovo*, October 27, 1998.

<sup>74</sup> NATO, *Statement by Secretary General following the ACTWARN decision*, Vilamoura, September 24, 1998.

<sup>75</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.45.

<sup>76</sup> *CNN.com*, “US Warns Milosevic: Follow through on troop withdrawal,” September 28, 1998.

<http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9809/28/kosovo.02/>

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Interview with Richard Holbrooke. *War in Europe*.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> US Department of State, *Albright Press Remarks*, October 5, 1998.

<sup>81</sup> “Crisis in Kosovo,” Remarks by House Representative Elliot Engel, *Congressional Record*, Proceeds of the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session, Vol.144, October 1, 1998 (pp. H.9212).

<sup>82</sup> “Violence in Kosovo,” Remarks by Senator Mike Dewine, *Congressional Record*, Proceeds of the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session, Vol.144, October 6, 1998 (p.S11530).

<sup>83</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly* pp.50-9.

<sup>84</sup> Agim Ceku interview. Little, *Mortal Combat – NATO at War*.

<sup>85</sup> Attending the meeting were Sandy Berger, Madeline Albright, William Cohen, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Henry Shelton, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency George Tenet, all their top aides. Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.70.

<sup>86</sup> It is also important to note that January 15, 1999, was already a historic day because the US Senate was beginning its deliberations over the Articles of Impeachment for President Bill Clinton. Political opponents would have branded any major shift in Kosovo policy a diversionary tactic.

<sup>87</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.70.

<sup>88</sup> This paper has also been referred to as “October-plus,” Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, pp.70-1.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> *War in Europe*.

<sup>91</sup> Gellman, “Slaughter at Racak Changed Kosovo Policy.”

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> There was some disagreement on the role of US troops in an implementation force in the Kosovo protectorate, with the US finally agreeing to commit troops to this force after initial hesitation. Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.72.

<sup>95</sup> In reality, the ultimatum to agree or face military action would only be applied to the FRY. It was assumed that the Albanian side would agree to the solution easily through the threat of withdrawing assistance, but this proved not to be the case.

<sup>96</sup> Gellman, “Slaughter at Racak Changed Kosovo Policy.”

<sup>97</sup> Cited in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.75.

<sup>98</sup> Joseph R. Biden Jr., “Foreword,” in Philip E. Auerswald and David P. Auerswald, eds., *The Kosovo Conflict: A Diplomatic History Through Documents* (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000), p.xiv.

<sup>99</sup> “Peacekeeping Operations in Kosovo Resolution” House of Representatives, *Congressional Record*, Proceeds of the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session, Vol.145, March 11, 1999. (pp. H1179-1250).

<sup>100</sup> “Authorizing the President of the United States to Conduct Military Air Operations and Missile Strikes Against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)” Senate, *Congressional Record*, Proceeds of the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session, Vol.145, March 23, 1999. (pp. S3110-3119).

<sup>101</sup> “Peacekeeping Operations in Kosovo Resolution,” Remarks by House Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, *Congressional Record*, Proceeds of the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session, Vol.145, March 11, 1999. (pp. H1207-8).