



KOSOVO

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The dead waved no flags

(excerpt)

By Hilary Keenan, 21st century Socialism

http://21stcenturysocialism.com/article/the_dead_waved_no_flags_01706.html

A notable feature of this war has been the apparent conversion of the USA- following its long history of undermining, bombing and invading other countries; including the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq and its recent recognition of 'independent' Kosovo- to the loftily and irrevokable principles of national sovereignty and integrity. In fact the USA has never rejected these principles *per se*; rather, it has applied them only as and when they have been useful in promoting the single over-riding principle, that of US advantage and domination.

Thus, following the break-up of Yugoslavia, the USA with the support of its NATO allies did not allow the ethnic Serbian areas within Bosnia to achieve independence from Bosnia. That aspiration of the Bosnian Serbs was refused because it would have strengthened Serbia; and for reasons which included the affinity of the Serbs with Russia, one of the USA's objectives in the Balkans was to isolate and weaken Serbia. And in the same spirit, the ethnic Albanian majority in Kosovo was facilitated in achieving de-facto separation from the rest of Serbia by means of a three month aerial bombing campaign. When in February 2008 the USA and its NATO partners formalised their military defeat of Serbia by recognising Kosovo as an independent state, Vladimir Putin issued the following warning, as quoted by the *International Herald Tribune*:

"The Kosovo precedent is a terrifying precedent. It in essence is breaking open the entire system of international relations that have prevailed not just for decades but for centuries. And it without a doubt will bring on itself an entire chain of unforeseen consequences," he said in televised comments.

Those who have recognized Kosovo "are miscalculating what they are doing. In the end, this is a stick with two ends and that other end will come back to knock them on the head someday," he said.

The USA has the special privilege of being able to pick and choose when to apply, and when not to apply, the principles of national sovereignty and integrity because it is the most powerful country in the world. But Russia, though still very weak in comparison to the United States, is getting stronger.