The Impact of Analogical Reasoning on US Foreign Policy Towards Kosovo*

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NATO's military intervention in Kosovo, the southernmost province of Yugoslavia, in March 1999, was legitimized as the last resort to alleviate the suffering of the Kosovo Albanians. Diplomatic initiatives at Rambouillet, France, had earlier failed to broker an agreement between the Yugoslav authorities and the Kosovar Albanians, leading NATO to assert a moral imperative to intervene. Critics of the intervention maintain that the negotiations were a charade designed to facilitate the execution of a military operation. This article suggests that the failure to reach agreement was a direct consequence of the analogical reasoning employed by the chief US negotiators at the time, Madeleine Albright and Richard Holbrooke. It is difficult to identify what exactly Slobodan Miloševic's military advisers said during this period without undertaking exhaustive research into Yugoslav military correspondence during the period or conducting interviews with the people themselves, many of whom, such as Miloševic and Dragoljub Ojdanić, are standing trial, or have been tried, at The Hague. The main focus of this article, therefore, is on the analogical reasoning employed by US diplomats. The analogical lens, through which the events in Kosovo were viewed, steered the negotiations down a necessarily confrontational channel, which made it impossible to achieve an agreement. The use of analogical reasoning in international diplomacy is not unique to Kosovo, and this article will argue that future, and ongoing, analysis of US interventions, and foreign policy in general, must take account of the role played by analogical reasoning. Rather than searching for imperial motives behind US foreign policy, observers and academics should initially examine the suitability of the analogies employed by US policymakers and the extent to which they dictate action. Using Kosovo as a case study, this article will outline both the dangers inherent in the over-reliance on analogical reasoning in foreign policy situations and the need to understand the role played by analogies when formulating an accurate analysis of US foreign policy.

At Rambouillet, the United States and its allies proposed terms threatening Miloševic with loss of Serbian control over Kosovo. . . . This amounted to asking him to accept, in return for nothing of importance, a crushing nationalist loss that would delegitimize any Serbian government that accepted it. It is hard to imagine why the US government or other NATO powers really expected Miloševic to acquiesce. (Hagen, 1999: 59)

Râcak to Rambouillet

On 15 January 1999, Yugoslav forces moved into the town of Râcak in central Kosovo. The following day, media from around the world broadcast images of 45 dead ethnic Albanians, all reported to be innocent civilians. Upon seeing the bodies, William Walker, head of the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), an unarmed OSCE mission sent to monitor events in the province, stated, 'From what I saw I do not hesitate to describe the crime as a massacre, a crime

against humanity. Nor do I hesitate to accuse the government security forces of responsibility' (James, 1999: 4).

The effect of Râcak has been retrospectively inflated as having hardened Western political opinion against Slobodan Miloševic. It is portrayed as the juncture at which the West realized how oppressive Miloševic's forces in Kosovo were and the point at which 'America and Europe had finally said "enough" and struck a blow against a revival of genocide' (Wines, 1999: 1). Gow describes it as 'the turning point' and suggests that the killings confirmed the 'impending Serbian campaign' (Gow, 2003: 205). The lack of concerted action throughout 1997 and 1998 and the dismissal of repeated warnings from NGOs, regional governments and security services are ignored in this version of events, which suggests that the West acted immediately when excessive force was employed. In terms of external popular perceptions, however, Râcak very clearly identified aggressors and victims. This helped simplify the conflict and narrow its focus so that the terrorist activities of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), the implacability of the LDK (the largest Kosovar Albanian party) and the West's elevation of Miloševic to the position of lauded international peacemaker, to the detriment of pro-democracy movements in Yugoslavia, were effectively ignored. This, in turn, facilitated the approach advocated by US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and the US Envoy to the Balkans, Richard Holbrooke, who perceived the crisis as comprising NATO, as human rights defender, versus Miloševic, as oppressive tyrant, who responded only to force.

Holbrooke's and, more directly, Albright's control of events during this period was a consequence of the USA's customary dominance of Western diplomatic initiatives in the Balkans during the 1990s and President Clinton's domestic predicament. According to the *New York Times*, Clinton's judgement

at this time was greatly impaired by his ongoing impeachment, and Albright was given exclusive authority to deal with the issue. Sciolino & Bronner (1999: 2) assert, 'It is clear that his troubles gave him less maneuvering room to make his decisions' and quote Bob Dole as stating that the impeachment was 'all consuming' and that 'Kosovo may have been one of the casualties'.

While the response to Râcak was not as robust as had been previously threatened, thereafter US policy was based on the Albright/Holbrooke approach rather than that of National Security Advisor Sandy Berger and Secretary of Defence William Cohen, whose prior authority had ensured a focus on containment rather than confrontation. Râcak served as the definitive confirmation that the agreement signed between Miloševic and Holbrooke in October 1998 was not working and that the KVM were not in a position to stop the sporadic eruption of conflict or achieve any settlement to the dispute. This conclusion created the desire for concerted negotiations between the warring parties, backed up by a NATO threat of force. The Albright/Holbrooke view, which was supported by the UK, recommended coercive diplomacy as essential because, as Albright continually asserted, Miloševic 'understands only the language of force' (Independent International Commission on Kosovo, 2000: 352).

The preceding negotiations at Rambouillet ended in failure and prompted NATO's military intervention on 24 March. These talks, however, lacked some of the fundamental elements one would expect to find in peace negotiations. The parties never met and were ordered to the negotiating table by a NATO threat. The NATO threat was, according to Weller (1999: 397), 'entirely unprecedented in post-UN Charter history and somewhat reminiscent of an exercise of Great Power diplomacy in the classical balance of power system of the post

Napoleonic Concert of Europe'. Holbrooke described the negotiations as 'a very legitimate attempt to bring the parties together to *force* them to agree' (Frontline, 2000b). No representatives from the UN were present at the talks and neither were there any representatives from regional states.

On 30 January, the 'Non-Negotiable Principles' that were to form the basis of the subsequent negotiations were presented to the parties. Despite officially complaining to the UN about the NATO threat of force, Belgrade endorsed the principles and insisted that the Kosovar delegation do the same before the talks could begin. However, in their written response to the principles, the Kosovars stated, 'The present draft proposal cannot furnish, in its present form, a basis for a settlement' (Weller, 1999: 417). While Daalder & O'Hanlon (2000: 77) suggest that, by travelling to Rambouillet, the Kosovars 'implicitly' accepted the principles, they never formally accepted them. The Kosovars rejected, among others, the condition that the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia must remain intact. Though the Kosovar delegation was allowed to participate without signing the principles, this soured the opening proceedings and suggested that what was officially non-negotiable was potentially malleable.

The talks can essentially be divided into two phases. The first phase lasted until 19 February, and this phase constituted the period when the Holbrooke perspective was in the ascendancy. Though Holbrooke was not present at the talks, Chris Hill, one of the three chief negotiators, was 'committed to what might be called the Holbrooke doctrine' and remained in regular contact with him (Ignatieff, 1999: 35). During this period, genuine efforts were made to broker a deal as the negotiators were working to the Dayton analogy that suggested that a deal would eventually be done, albeit possibly at the last minute, and after tough negotiations.

The arrival of Albright on 19 February signalled a new phase that comprised less input from Hill and Holbrooke, with the agenda becoming more confrontational and the US position more intransigent.

The negotiations ultimately broke down because the Yugoslav delegation refused to sign the agreement proffered. Central to the refusal were the terms of Military Annex B, which stated, 'NATO personnel shall enjoy, together with their vehicles, vessels, aircraft and equipment, free and unrestricted passage and unimpeded access throughout the FRY including associated airspace and territorial waters'. These provisions, which gave NATO personnel unimpeded access throughout Yugoslavia with legal immunity, were more expansive than even the Kosovar Albanians had sought. In their opening address at Rambouillet, the Kosovars make no mention of NATO and, in fact, stated that to ensure compliance with any agreement reached at Rambouillet, 'there would need to be deployed ... a significant international military presence' (Weller, 1999: 418). The insistence on an exclusively NATO force and the provisions of the 'non-negotiable' Annex B were both initiated at the behest of NATO and Albright in particular. The Independent International Commission on Kosovo (IICK) said of the security annex, 'its provisions had a definite political impact on the process and are widely viewed in retrospect as a blunder' and concluded that compromising on this element of the deal was 'an obvious negotiating opening that might have broken the impasse' (IICK, 2000: 156, 157). At a press conference during the negotiations, Albright stated, 'I was asked earlier when we were all together, whether the force could be anything different than a NATO-led force. I can just tell you point blank from the perspective of the United States, absolutely not, it must be a NATO-led force', and her secretary James Rubin similarly stated, 'it is only a NATO force that is

being considered' (Weller, 1999: 473, 448). During the negotiations, the Serb delegation expressed its willingness 'to discuss the scope and character of an international presence in Kosmet (Kosovo and Metohija) to implement the agreement to be accepted in Rambouillet' (Weller, 1999: 470), and Rubin (2000: 9) acknowledges, 'The Serbs had said for weeks they could agree to lightly armed UN personnel rather than NATO peacekeepers'. The deployment of NATO thus appears to have been a sine qua non. While Albright and others identified this as the major stumbling block, with Christopher Hill acknowledging, 'There was nothing in the political agreement that was unsellable [sic] to the Serbs' (Independent International Commission on Kosovo, 2000: 157), the IICK reported (2000: 157), 'There is no evidence available that NATO offered to engage on this issue. . . . Albright and others had been so firm about the supremacy of NATO over any other institutional actor . . . that there was little reason for Serbia to have expected flexibility from NATO.' Significantly, the deal brokered by the EU and Russia that finally ended the airstrikes omitted the contentious provisions rejected at Rambouillet.

The manner in which the negotiations were pursued has become the source of much contentious debate. According to Daalder & O'Hanlon (2000: 89), 'The differences between the sides on key issues of policy were simply too great, their bitterness too deep, and their aspirations too distinct to be bridged by way of a political dialogue. . . . There was very little if anything that the negotiators could have done to overcome these momentous obstacles.' According to the then Yugoslav Minister for Foreign Affairs, Živadin Jovanović, however, NATO 'had made their plans before Rambouillet to attack Yugoslavia because Yugoslavia would not submit voluntarily to occupation' (Judah, 2000: 225). Similarly, Lord Gilbert,

Minister of State in the British Ministry of Defence from 1997 to 1999, told the Defence Select Committee of the House of Commons,

> I think certain people were spoiling for a fight in NATO at that time. . . . If you ask my personal view, I think the terms put to Miloševic at Rambouillet were absolutely intolerable; how could he possibly accept them; it was quite deliberate. That does not excuse an awful lot of other things, but we were at a point when some people felt that something had to be done, so you just provoked a fight. (Wintour, 2000: 1)

There was a clear disparity between the efforts made by the negotiators, and US officials in particular, towards the Kosovars and the Yugoslavs. According to Pleurat Sejdiu, a Kosovar press spokesmen at Rambouillet, 'it was an open secret that while sequestered with Hashim Thaçi, Albright was telling him that his delegation had to sign because otherwise NATO could not carry out its threat' (Judah, 2000: 212). In a statement to the press on 21 February, James Rubin stated, 'All of the officials who have worked on this have made very clear that in order to move towards military action, it has to be clear that the Serbs were responsible', and on 23 February Albright stated, 'it's now up to the Kosovar Albanians to create this black or white situation' (Weller, 1999: 451, 473). There is evidence, therefore, which suggests that efforts were made to orchestrate a Yugoslav rejection, and an Albanian endorsement, of the NATO plan. According to LeBor (2002: 287), 'The Albanians signed in much the same spirit that the Bosnian government had agreed to various peace plans – knowing that as the Serbs would reject them, they might as well take the diplomatic credit'. This interpretation of Rambouillet suggests that the negotiations, at best, constituted unnecessarily confrontational Western diplomacy and, at worst, were designed to facilitate the prosecution of a

NATO military campaign. In either scenario, the legitimacy of the decision to proceed to a military intervention is, at the very least, questionable.

The Role of Analogies

While there has been much commentary on the flawed nature of the negotiations and accusations that the intention was never to negotiate a settlement, there has been little examination as to why US negotiators would consciously choose this course of action. I have suggested that the failure of the Rambouillet negotiations was a result of a US-inspired determination to robustly confront Milošević, an insistence on certain military provisions and the belief, held by Albright and others, in the ultimate need for a military intervention. This theory, however, constitutes an explanation only for the direct cause of the diplomatic breakdown; why this diplomatic course was pursued remains unanswered. The desire on the part of certain actors involved in the diplomatic process to engage militarily with Milošević has been taken in some quarters as evidence of a US conspiracy to increase its dominance in Europe (Blackburn, 2000), while others have viewed Milošević's refusal to sign Rambouillet as indicative of his singular belief in a strategy of ethnic cleansing and the extensive use of military force to overcome political obstacles (Gow, 2003).

It is my contention, however, that the rationale behind undertaking the negotiations in the manner chosen was based on the analogies employed by Madeleine Albright and Richard Holbrooke. I argue that the use of these analogies necessarily steered the negotiations down a course that made it impossible to reach agreement. These analogies convinced the key negotiators that Milošević was pursuing policies that could be stopped only through military might, or at least the threat of force, and that an uncom-

promising, confrontational attitude should be adopted when dealing with him. There is also evidence to suggest that the analogical reasoning employed by Milošević and his advisers similarly made achieving any agreement impossible, as the rationale adopted, on the basis of analogical reasoning, determined that a refusal to sign had consequences preferable to those that would follow an agreement.

Analogical Reasoning

Analogical reasoning is a fundamental human cognitive trait. According to social psychologists Nisbett & Ross (1992: 24–25), 'Objects and events in the phenomenal world are almost never approached as if they are sui generis configurations but rather are assimilated into pre-existing structures in the mind of the perceiver'. Humans perceive contemporary events through equations with history because of biological compulsions rather than any bias or conscious choice. According to Khong (1992: 25), 'Human beings are assumed to have and have been shown to have, limited computational capacities . . . [they] have to rely on some sort of simplifying mechanism to cope and to process – to code, store, and recall – the massive amount of information they encounter in their daily lives'. The simplifying mechanisms, or 'short cuts' (Houghton, 1996: 524), used are analogies and the lessons learned from these historical events. These 'lessons' from history enable individuals to decide how to react to contemporary events by analysing similar situations from their past. Houghton (2001: 25) describes the process thus: 'The essence of analogical thinking is the transfer of knowledge from one situation to another by a process of mapping – finding a set of one-on-one correspondences (often incomplete) between aspects of one body of information and aspects of another'. Individuals identify

with a past situation, a 'base', to understand the present situation, the 'target', and map the base onto the target. According to what the individual learned from the past experience, he/she will pursue a certain course of action. If subjects are given the same set of problems many times, they may learn how to solve them then stop analysing similar situations if the parallels are believed to be complete (Houghton, 2001: 25). Humans, therefore, do not continually assess oncoming situations as unique, requiring concerted examination; rather, they recognize similarities, at least perceived similarities, and revert to behavioural patterns based on lessons learned from past events and thus pursue a course of action based on historical data rather than the characteristics of the contemporary situation. Salmon (1984: 105) represents the reasoning process as follows:

- objects of type X have properties G and H
- objects of type Y have properties G and H
- objects of type X have properties F
- objects of type Y therefore have properties F.

This cognitive reasoning occurs constantly and, given the myriad simple tasks performed daily on the basis of this trait, is usually a successful way to proceed. Difficulties occur when people are confronted with new situations where the historical analogy employed has less of a parallel with the new situation. Despite the unique nature of the present situation, individuals will still attempt to find historical precedents and employ analogical reasoning. In this situation, the person will have to use his/her judgement in deciding what event from their past is most like the present situation, and what lessons they learned from that event will dictate their response to the new situation.

Policymakers and statesmen use what Khong describes as the 'Analogical Explanation' (AE) framework to make decisions in international affairs. He details the six functions that the AE framework performs that help policymakers decide on a course of action (Khong, 1992: 10). Analogies (1) help define the nature of the situation confronting the policymaker, (2) help assess the stakes involved, and (3) provide prescriptions. Analogies help evaluate alternative options by (4) predicting their chances of success, (5) evaluating their moral rightness, and (6) warning about dangers associated with the options. The first function dictates the second and third, and the choice of analogy determines the fourth, fifth and sixth functions. The choice of analogy is, therefore, vitally important, and the manner in which an analogy is chosen depends on the availability and representativness of the analogy. According to Khong (1992: 35), extensive research shows that 'policymakers tend to rely on the analogies that come most readily to their minds, that they are impressed by superficial similarities and that they seldom probe more deeply or widely in search of less obvious but perhaps more relevant analogies'. Khong (1992: 31) describes as the 'availability heuristic' that which indicates that policymakers tend to rely on recent events with which to form analogies and describes how this limits the possible choice of analogy and, therefore, impacts negatively on the course of action chosen. While the reliance on historical analogies, and on the lessons learned from these events, is an inherent psychological compulsion, the choice of analogy with which to compare a unique contemporary event, and the lessons learned from that analogy, depend on the individual and are, therefore, open to bias and error. Thus, analogies are often chosen based on superficial similarities and selected from more recent events rather than more similar events.

Two discernable features of the application of analogical reasoning worsen the

problems associated with the use of the AE framework. First, according to Jervis (1996: 228), 'Decision makers usually fail to strip away from the past event those facets that depend on the ephemeral context. They often mistake things that are highly specific and situation bound for more general characteristics because they assume that the most salient aspects of the results were caused by the most salient aspects of the preceding situation.' In this sense, decisions are made on the application of flawed analogies, the poor use of analogies or the flawed lessons garnered from past events. As Khong states (1992: 31), 'available evidence therefore strongly supports the notion that decision makers recurrently use analogies poorly'. Second, once an analogy has been used, it becomes implacable and can lead to what Khong (1992: 39) describes as 'the phenomenon of perseverance' whereby, despite increasingly obvious shortcomings, the person who proffers an analogy will continue to support its applicability and 'the non-parallels between their faith in their favourite analogy and the actual situation is unlikely to erode their faith in their analogy'. In addition, the suggestion of an analogical link by one actor will influence those around him/her who will similarly channel their understanding of contemporary events through the events from the past and proffer solutions according to the lessons learned from those events, regardless of their applicability or validity. Analogies may become accepted as accurate the more convincing the initial advocate of the analogy is, rather than as a function of the correlation between the present and the past. Houghton (2001: 202) suggests, 'If we get others to accept our analogies then we have gone a long way towards convincing them that the world is in fact as we see it'. The combination of these two consequences of analogical reasoning, the phenomenon of perseverance and the dominance of analogies once articulated,

impacts greatly, and potentially negatively, on decisions taken in relation to contemporary events. The dominant analogy and the lessons learned from it cloud the decision-maker's judgement and determine how he/she approaches events at hand. In circumstances where an analogy is not relevant, or the lessons learned from a genuinely similar event from history are flawed, the chances of successfully dealing with a crisis or negotiating a solution are dramatically reduced. Where the analogy is not valid, the perseverance phenomenon and what Khong describes as 'schema theory' have ensured the shortcomings of the analogy are ignored. Schema theory suggests that the application of analogies is not limited to the events of the present or the similarities between the present and the past. In fact, once applied, analogies ensure that the policymakers are capable of 'going beyond the information given . . . allowing default values to fill in for missing information' (Khong, 1992: 29). Filling in missing details and inventing similarities compensate for shortcoming in an analogy's applicability and evident flaws.

The vagaries of the international system are such that diplomats and statesmen are routinely confronted with unique situations. Despite the novel nature of these situations, the reversion to the AE framework is automatic. Within the category of international relations policymakers, US officials seem particularly predisposed to analogizing. Khong (1992: 7) describes it as part of the US 'national style', while Hoffman (1968: 135) suggests, 'Americans use history as a grab-bag from which each advocate pulls out a "lesson" to prove his point'. Analogical reasoning and the 'warnings from history' have consistently dictated US foreign policy, and there are numerous incidents where US policymakers have relied on analogical reasoning to formulate a policy. Post-World War I isolationism was prompted by the sense that the USA was wrong to have become embroiled in

European affairs, and each call for subsequent involvement was countered by the 1917 analogy. After World War II, the Munich analogy dominated and was the expressed rationale for President Truman's policy in the Korean peninsula when North Korea invaded South Korea. The USA continually cited the Cuban analogy, relating to the spread of communism, to legitimize its interventions in Latin America, as in the Dominican Republic in 1965, while the Vietnam analogy, with its connotations of mission creep and heavy casualties, continues to influence debate on US intervention policy.

Analogical Reasoning and Kosovo

In respect of the West's perception of the conflict in Yugoslavia and the later crises in Kosovo, the following analogies dictated policy. The initial reluctance to become involved in the dissolution of Yugoslavia was the fear of becoming embroiled in not just the Balkans but also numerous other conflicts around the world. The Viet-Malia analogy, the fear that an intervention in the Balkans could result in either a new Vietnam or a disaster akin to the intervention in Somalia in 1992 when 18 US Rangers were killed (Holbrooke, 1998: 217), and the ethnic hatreds analogy, the suggestion that contemporary events in the Balkans were analogous to eruptions of ostensibly endemic ethnic hatred throughout Balkan history (Kaplan, 1994), dictated initial policy towards the region. These fears of becoming embroiled in a modern Vietnam or another Somalia-like disaster, coupled with the ancient hatreds theory, were eventually replaced by a greater fear, that of a regional, if not global, conflagration. This Balkan war analogy suggested that conflicts that started in the Balkans had a tendency to engulf the wider region. The example of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914

and its global repercussions was cited as justification for intervening in the region.

While the West did increase its involvement in the Balkans in the mid-1990s, its initial reluctance to do so has been widely criticized and cited as one of the contributing factors in the escalation of the conflict (Holbrooke, 1998: 27). However, this sequence was repeated after the Dayton agreement with respect to Kosovo. Again, caution was advised on the logic of the Viet-Malia analogy,[1] and the conflict was portrayed as ancient, endemic and beyond Western influence. Yet again, however, the fear of the spread of violence eventually compelled action. In his address to the nation on the day the bombardment of Yugoslavia began, President Clinton stated, 'We act to prevent a wider war; to diffuse a powder keg at the heart of Europe that has exploded twice before with catastrophic results. . . . Let a fire burn here in this area and the flames will spread' (Associated Press, 1999: 15).

In terms of the manner in which the West took an active part in the resolution of the crisis in Kosovo, three principal analogies had a major impact: the Dayton/Bosnia analogy, adhered to by Holbrooke; the Munich analogy, proffered most commonly by Albright; and the Operation Deliberate Force analogy, to which, against the advice of the military, most political observers adhered. Initially, the Dayton/Bosnia analogy was dominant, and this suggested that Milošević was a man who would eventually see sense and broker a peace deal if offered enough incentive and threatened with enough intent. Holbrooke and his supporters drew parallels between the events in Kosovo and those in Bosnia five years earlier and the eventual peace deal struck at Dayton. According to Daalder & O'Hanlon (2000: 38), 'As a result of that earlier triumph, Holbrooke was

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[1] Albright acknowledged, 'we had discussed in many forums whether [Kosovo] would be another Vietnam' (Frontline, 2000a).

widely regarded as the one person able to convince Miloševic to reach a political settlement with the Kosovar Albanians'. Sciolino & Bronner (1999: 1–2) similarly wrote, 'Throughout [the Rambouillet negotiations], the NATO allies hoped, even assumed, that they were dealing with the Miloševic who negotiated the Bosnian peace at Dayton, Ohio, the man who lied and manipulated and ranted in all night Scotch-laden negotiations and then cut a deal in the morning'. According to this analogy, Miloševic would not risk incurring a NATO bombardment and, when threatened with consequences that would impact upon his security or his economic and political status, he would back down. Holbrooke claimed that based on his experience, 'it is obvious that Miloševic only responds to force or the absolute credible threat of the use of force' (Frontline, 2000b). His commitment to the defence of Kosovo was believed to be as malleable as his support for the Bosnian Serbs proved to be at Dayton. This logic of brinkmanship tied to a threat of military intervention prompted the October Agreement and the manner in which the negotiations at Rambouillet proceeded. Holbrooke believed that the bombing in 1995 had been critical to the eventual deal struck at Dayton, and after the agreement he brokered in October 1998, he stated, '[It is the 1995] bombing which Miloševic knows makes our threats today credible' (News Hour, 1998). Miloševic's initial resistance to proffered agreements was seen as bluster that would dissolve if a credible threat of force were maintained; therefore, it was advisable to take a hardline stance and wait for a last-minute capitulation. Rubin (2000: 9) argued, 'Experience had shown that if Miloševic would compromise at all it would be at the last minute'.

The analogy with the Bosnian Serbs was shortsighted, however, because, as Layne (2000: 11) states, 'US officials and their NATO colleagues never understood the his-torical and emotional importance of Kosovo to the Serbian people'. The Dayton analogy suggested that a deal could be done which involved Miloševic compromising greatly on the issue of Kosovo, as he had done at Dayton with respect to Bosnia. This neglected to take into consideration that, at this time, Miloševic was in coalition with Vojislav Sesilj's ultra-nationalist Serbian Radical Party, which would not countenance any major concessions in Kosovo. Kosovo, unlike Bosnia, was a recognized province of Yugoslavia and regarded as the cradle of Serbian civilization. More so than the issue of Bosnia at Dayton, compromises on the status of Kosovo directly impacted on Miloševic's status in Yugoslavia. His regime was largely dependent not only on Sesilj, but also on the military, and his very political success had been built on the back of the Serbian love for Kosovo. To sign up to an agreement that would have given NATO carte blanche to travel with unimpeded impunity throughout not only Kosovo but also the entire territory of Yugoslavia would surely have been political suicide. The political provisions of the agreement represented major concessions on the part of Miloševic to the Kosovar separatists, concessions that few, if any, countries in the West would have granted, particularly in the light of the activities of the KLA. These concessions would have been enough to turn many Serbs against the agreement but, when tied to the military provisions, they were doubly unpalatable. In addition, at Dayton, the Yugoslavs had no desire to continue the conflict, and the military were keen to broker a settlement. At the time of Rambouillet, however, the Yugoslav military were eager to return to armed conflict in Kosovo and were convinced that they could solve the problem of Kosovar secessionism with military might (Gow, 2003: 282–283). The belief in the parallels between Bosnia and Kosovo extended to the proffering of identical military

provisions for the implementation force, the contentious Annex B.

In tandem with the Dayton analogy, Albright continually proffered the Munich analogy. From the West's early tentative involvement in Kosovo, Albright advocated the use of force. She suggested that Milošević was intent on regional domination and that the only way to stop him was militarily. As noted by Daalder & O'Hanlon (2000: 69), 'From the beginning of the conflict in Kosovo, Madeleine Albright believed that a strategy relying solely or even mainly on negotiations with Milošević to achieve a political solution was likely to fail'. Negotiations, compromise and the quest for diplomatic solutions were, thus, akin to the failed policy of appeasement used at Munich in 1938 to contain Hitler. Albright supported a robust diplomatic effort that made little or no compromises and was prepared for an eventual confrontation with Milošević, whom she expected would ultimately reject a peaceful solution, as she believed he 'only understands the language of force'. While the accuracy of Albright's analysis was questionable, this analogy had a major impact, and Albright's dogged adherence to it supports one of the traits identified by Khong. He suggests, 'When the generational and personal lessons of history reinforce one another, they are likely to overpower the unique characteristics of a new foreign policy situation' (Khong, 1992: 35). As a child, Albright had fled Czechoslovakia following Hitler's invasion and, like many Eastern European immigrants into the USA who experienced both Nazism and Stalinism, she advocated taking a hard line with foreign threats and perceived any softening of the approach to Milošević as Munich-like appeasement. In her memoirs, Albright (2003: 384) recalls, 'At one point [during a Contact Group meeting] the ordinarily hawkish Jamie Rubin urged me to compro-

mise on a particular measure. I glared and said "Jamie, do you think we're in Munich?"' Her personal experiences of the consequences of the failure to appease Hitler influenced her approach to Milošević. She once admitted, 'My mind-set is Munich; most of my generation's is Vietnam' (Lippman, 1997: A30). Albright (2003: 27) writes that her father, a Czech diplomat with the foreign office at the time of the Munich agreement, instilled in her 'the lessons of Munich', namely, 'Unspeakable tragedies ensue when great countries appease evil'. Albright's emotive personal history and the lessons she drew from it appear to have been a primary factor in dictating her modus operandi at Rambouillet. Rubin (2000: 9) acknowledges, 'NATO's war against Slobodan Milošević and the Belgrade regime had become a very personal war for Albright.' She maintained that what was happening in Kosovo 'happened before the Second World War in Munich' (Paris, 2002: 3) and thus chose a confrontational diplomatic style. The parallels between Hitler and Milošević, however, are largely superficial and, though used to great propaganda effect, should not have had as central a bearing on the negotiations as they did. The situation in Kosovo in February 1999 was not comparable to the Nazi's genocide of the Jews of Europe, and Milošević, though authoritarian, was not a messianic fascist dictator. As evidenced by both the Dayton Agreement in 1995 and the October Agreement in 1998, there were grounds for supporting the notion that Milošević, unlike Hitler, could be reasoned with and was susceptible to external pressure and economic inducements.

The final, arguably flawed, analogy was the Operation Deliberate Force analogy. This involved the formulation of the belief that if no agreement could be reached the Yugoslav leadership would back down after a brief military campaign similar to that in

1995 in Bosnia (Judah, 2000: 228). In that instance, NATO's bombardment of certain key Bosnian Serb arms dumps and weaponry posts achieved its objectives quickly without any need to broaden the campaign. In 1999, there was a sense that what was needed was a similar short but severe use of force that would shock Milošević back to the negotiating table. The proponents of a military intervention believed that they were not pursuing tactics that would result in a long war; rather, they aimed to initiate a short burst of force of sufficient intensity to force Milošević's capitulation. On 24 March, the day the airstrikes began, Albright stated 'I don't see this as a long-term operation. I think that this is something . . . that is achievable within a relatively short period of time' (Daalder & O'Hanlon, 2000: 91). This assumption was based on the events in Bosnia in 1995 rather than the realities of Kosovo in 1999. Again, this analogy presupposes a similar relationship between Milošević and Kosovo as there was between Milošević and Bosnia, which proved to be an erroneous assessment of the ability of the Yugoslav society, infrastructure and military to endure heavy bombing. While the targets in 1995 comprised a scattered array of sub-state actors dependent on external support, Yugoslavia was a well-equipped, independent state with a powerful army. In the course of the operation in 1995, more ordnance was fired from the ground than from the air, while in 1999 no ground element was planned. In addition, as Fitchett (1999: 1) notes, this comparison was flawed because, 'the stakes were incomparably higher in Kosovo. NATO leaders, forgetting that Serbian forces were already on the retreat when Belgrade yielded in Bosnia, let themselves believe that a few air strikes might again stun Mr. Milošević into surrender.' Military advice stated categorically that the campaign would not be a short one, and the day before the bombing,

General Wesley Clark (2001: 185), Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, had stated bluntly, 'Don't plan on a short campaign'.

The Yugoslavs' refusal to sign was prompted by not only their opposition to the deployment of military personnel throughout the entire territory of Yugoslavia, but also a suspicion that the West had a hidden agenda that comprised a desire to overthrow Milošević and impose a favourable regime. US negotiator Chris Hill admitted that as far as he could ascertain, Milošević 'felt that the true intention of the force [proposed in the agreement] was to eliminate him and/or detach Kosovo from Serbia' (Independent International Commission on Kosovo, 2000: 137). There is some evidence to suggest that the Serbs themselves saw the situation as analogous with events from history. The Yugoslav army believed that the bombing would not last long, because they saw the situation as being like Operation Desert Fox in Iraq in 1998, when the USA and Britain carried out a four-day bombing campaign. This operation, initiated only four months earlier, had inflicted minor damage on Iraq and was terminated without any new commitment on the part of Saddam Hussein to abide by the wishes of the USA and the UK. Similarly, the USA had initiated very limited, albeit highly destructive, bombing sorties against both Sudan and Afghanistan in August 1998. With respect to Operation Desert Fox, Bellamy (2002: 150) states, 'Alliance consensus about that attack withered away very quickly allowing Saddam Hussein to claim a diplomatic victory. Hardliners like General Dragoljub Ojdanić advised Milošević that it would be the same this time.' It would thus appear that military advisers counselled Milošević's regime to hold out against what they assumed would be a similarly short campaign, the consequences of which need not be a political compromise. A 27 January CIA National Intelligence Daily sent to senior decisionmakers in the Clinton

administration warned that Milošević, 'might assume he could absorb a limited attack and allies would not support a long campaign' (Gellman, 1999: A1). As noted by Bellamy (2002: 153), 'For coercive diplomacy to work the target has to be made aware that the costs of non-compliance far outweigh the costs of compliance. In this case NATO simply failed to persuade the Yugoslav president of this.' Therefore, the need to compromise at Rambouillet in the face of the NATO threat was not as pressing for the Yugoslavs as the negotiators imagined it would be. According to Gow (2003: 206), 'Rather than trying to avoid an aerial assault, and partly reassured by the probability that any bombing would last no more than three weeks (and might last only three days), the Belgrade leader seems to have set out to provoke such an attack'. However, this logic was flawed, as NATO was unlikely to compromise its credibility by engaging in a campaign without any concrete achievements, especially in Europe, where its action would receive particular scrutiny. NATO was on course for expansion in Eastern Europe, and backing down in Kosovo would have tarnished its credibility among prospective members. The refugee flows, which began after the initiation of Operation Allied Force, made early suspension of the campaign a political impossibility, given the widespread public revulsion.

Conclusion

Houghton (2001: 222) suggests that analogies, though usually flawed, are an inherent part of the international relations system, and he laments, 'Inevitably we will almost always be misled by analogy; nevertheless we are compelled to use history and experience as our guide'. Jervis (1996: 228) similarly concludes that the lessons policymakers learn 'will be applied to a wide variety of situations without a careful effort to determine whether the cases are similar on crucial dimensions'. The application of the AE framework,

though an intrinsic human trait, can have grave consequences if misapplied, and the theory of perseverance, the availability heuristic and schema theory suggest that the analogy chosen will more often reflect biases, personal experiences and be an incomplete parallel with the contemporary event.

With respect to the negotiations at Rambouillet and the positions adopted by the parties, it is clear that analogical reasoning impacted greatly on the efforts made to resolve the crises. Gow (2003: 293) notes, 'Milošević had not behaved as expected by key figures in Washington and other Western Capitals. Equally, it is reasonable to infer that Milošević and his confidants were taken by surprise when NATO, in a mirror of its own misjudgements of Belgrade, did not behave as expected by the Serbian leadership.' The analogies employed by both sides distorted the reality of the situation, embedded prejudices and reinforced convictions that proved implacable. These events reinforce Khong's (1992: 9) belief that 'Statesmen frequently turn to historical analogies for guidance when confronted with novel foreign policy problems. . . . they usually pick inappropriate analogies and as a result make bad policies.'

According to Daalder & O'Hanlon (2000: 85), 'For some in the Clinton administration, as indeed in key allied capitals like London, the purpose of Rambouillet was not so much to get a deal that few thought attainable. Rather it was to create a consensus in Washington and among the NATO allies that force would have to be used.' In April 2000, James Rubin admitted, 'Our internal goal was not to get a peace agreement at Rambouillet' (PBS, 2000). While this statement could be used to support assertions that the negotiations were a grand conspiracy motivated by Western expansionist aims, it more plausibly supports the proposition that analogical reasoning determined events. While Albright's goal may not have been to broker an agreement at Rambouillet, I would argue this stemmed

from her belief in the ultimate need for the use of force against Milošević, a belief formulated by analogical reasoning. Albright therefore did not see an inability to reach agreement at Rambouillet and the resort to war as a failure but, rather, as an inevitability.

Similarly, Holbrooke supported the robust uncompromising approach taken at Rambouillet, albeit not because he sought the military conflict Albright deemed inevitable, but because he believed the situation was analogous to the Dayton Accords, which he had personally been party to. The lesson of Dayton was that Milošević would cave in at the last moment. This explains Holbrooke's journey to meet with Milošević on 22 March in Belgrade where, despite the failure at Rambouillet, he endeavoured to broker a deal. Holbrooke's belief in his own personal ability to succeed where others had failed can be explained both by his use of analogies and by reference to Jervis (1996: 234) who notes, 'Because an actor's actions loom large to him, over generalising often involves the belief that his behaviour was a major influence on the outcome . . . he will not notice alterations in the context in which the policy is to be applied'. Both Holbrooke and Albright had personal reasons for adopting their respective analogies in line with theory that personal experiences will influence the choice of analogy.

The general sense among certain US negotiators that the USA was both indispensable to, and somehow in control of, the crises in the Balkans further contributed to the sense of singular righteous determination that characterized the Rambouillet negotiations. Writing in early 1999, Ignatieff (1999: 39) noted, 'Holbrooke and a dedicated team of diplomats are committed to the proposition that only American leadership can bring stability to the Balkans'. Indeed, in a letter to President Clinton, Holbrooke (1998: 339) stated, 'Of the many organizations in the former Yugoslavia in the last five years only NATO – that is, the US – has been respected.

What it demands happens.' This belief that NATO, pliant to the USA's wishes, can make demands that others will follow, certainly provides an insight into the mindset of those who adopted the hardline negotiating stance at Rambouillet and continually proffered 'non-negotiable' provisions.

Houghton (1996: 549) notes, 'The evidence suggests that personal experiences stemming directly from the individual play a much more potent role in decision making than organisational or bureaucratic politics perspectives would suggest'. The Albright approach, and her reliance on the Munich analogy, stemmed from her personal experiences and a misreading of Milošević's goals, while Holbrooke's experience with Milošević at Dayton appears to have convinced him that what NATO demands it gets, albeit possibly at the last moment.

Once the intervention began, the analogical rationale adopted by Albright imbedded itself in the official NATO conception of events. In his speech to the nation on the night the bombing began, Clinton articulated 'a single, concentrated barrage of emotionally charged images from the distant and recent past' (Paris, 2002: 437). In the course of his impassioned justification for the intervention, Clinton noted that World War I had started in the Balkans and likened the violence in Kosovo to the Holocaust. He further stated,

> Sarajevo, the capital of neighbouring Bosnia, is where World War I began. World War II and the Holocaust engulfed this region. In both wars, Europe was slow to recognize the dangers, and the United States waited even longer to enter the conflicts. Just imagine if leaders back then had acted wisely and early enough. How many lives could have been saved? How many Americans would not have had to die? (Associated Press, 1999: 15)

He repeatedly referred to the 'lessons' learned in Bosnia in 1995, noting,

> We learned some of the same lessons in Bosnia just a few years ago. The world did not act early enough to stop that war either. And let's

not forget what happened. . . . We learned that in the Balkans inaction in the face of brutality simply invites more brutality, but firmness can stop armies and save lives. We must apply that lesson in Kosovo, before what happened in Bosnia happens there too. (Associated Press, 1999: 15)

Drawing on the World War II analogy, Clinton said the USA was intervening 'so that future generations of Americans do not have to cross the Atlantic to fight another terrible war. It is this challenge that we and our allies are facing in Kosovo' (Associated Press, 1999: 15). The use of emotive analogical reasoning during a time of war can be readily identified, and, as Wander (1984: 341) noted, analogies enable political leaders to 'inspire their partisans, attract other groups with whom coalitions might be formed, and recruit from the vast, unorganised aggregate known as the "mass audience"'.

Because of his refusal to sign the agreement at Rambouillet, Miloševic was variously portrayed as a 'psychopath', a 'cold blooded animal' (Johnstone, 2002: 19) and, according to Albright, 'genuinely evil' (Frontline, 2000a). This constitutes a simplification based on superficialities. Miloševic's rationale for rejecting the agreement was, in fact, a rational choice borne out of both a genuine opposition to certain expansive provisions therein and the analogical reasoning he employed. The availability heuristic and the influence of personal experiences seem to have impacted on Miloševic's choice of analogies and his subsequent policy.

The failure to reach agreement at Rambouillet can thus be seen to comprise factors other than those most commonly articulated. An exclusive focus on sectional agendas and political positions fails to appreciate the role played by less obvious factors in the failed negotiations and strengthens the assertion by Steinmo, Thelen & Longstreth (1992: 4) that 'analysts should focus not on the formal attributes of government institutions but instead on informal distributions of power, attitudes and political behaviour'. The use of analogies in the formation of foreign policy is not necessarily problematic. If there is a genuinely accurate correlation between past and present events, then analogical reasoning may well positively contribute to policy formation. Analogical reasoning becomes problematic when, as illustrated in the case of Kosovo, policymakers choose incorrect analogies, either consciously or subconsciously, and refuse to deviate from a course of action on the basis of an implacable belief in the analogies' accuracy. The analogies employed by Holbrooke, Albright and, seemingly, Miloševic created conditions hostile to a peaceful resolution of the crisis, and none of the positions adopted envisaged the initiation of a military operation as an outcome to be avoided at all costs. The failure at Rambouillet is, therefore, indicative of neither a grand NATO conspiracy nor Miloševic's predilection for warfare. It was, in fact, to a large extent, the product of a fundamental human cognitive trait that induced mutually exclusive policy stances.

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