

# **The Impact of Globalization on War:**

**The CNN Effect and Western Policy before the Kosovo Intervention**

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**PhD Dissertation**

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**Abstract:**

This dissertation attempts to provide insights regarding the impact of globalization on war. The methodology that is used to assess the primary question (What is the impact of globalization on war?) involves the utilisation of one manifestation of globalization – the CNN effect – that is operationalised to assess one area of potential impact – Western foreign policy during the Kosovo civil war. The dissertation is arranged into two sections. The first is largely theoretical and defines globalization, explains how the CNN effect is a manifestation of globalization and reviews the CNN effect on war at a theoretical level. The second is largely empirical and involves a detailed case study of Kosovo specific media coverage and foreign policy in the West over the fifteen-month period before the 1999 NATO intervention.

The employment of this particular case study opens other areas of potential insight that are also explored in this dissertation. The first relates to foreign policy making and how the CNN effect has impacted its traditional role and operation. The second relates to the specific case study itself and the role of the Western media in NATO's decision to intervene in Kosovo and the specific events that led to this decision. If it were demonstrated that the CNN effect did indeed play a role in this intervention, this would be a useful interpretive addition to the current analysis of this particular conflict. In addressing these questions, it is also hoped that a more detailed understanding of the nature of globalization itself emerges. As theory should develop from practice, and not the other way around, it is only through attempts to apply abstract and novel concepts such as globalization to practice that current attempts at theorising can improve.



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## Introduction

In 1998 and 1999, television images of human suffering from Kosovo shocked the Western world.<sup>1</sup> At the time, the story presented in mainstream Western media seemed relatively straightforward. An ultra-nationalist government in Belgrade, led by Slobodan Milosevic, had used brutal force to suppress the Albanian majority in Kosovo, a rump province of the fragmenting former Yugoslavia. This perspective was supported by images of massacres that were widely displayed and condemned on television screens throughout the West. In subsequent years, speculation emerged regarding the nature of the massacres, which many saw as a potent force in galvanizing Western support against the Serbian side. Although the Albanian community of Kosovo experienced much suffering, some observers questioned whether the images of carnage were part of a deliberate strategy by an insurgency group called the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) to gain the West's attention and sympathies for its independence cause. If true, these sacrifices appeared to have garnered their desired outcome by the spring of 1999 when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) initiated an air campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY)<sup>2</sup> over the Kosovo issue. This was, in some ways, a surprising policy reversal. Only thirteen months before the first bombs dropped, the West had been making concessions in order to bring the FRY back into the international community and openly referring to the KLA as a terrorist organisation. One year later, they were in tacit alliance with the KLA.

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<sup>1</sup> Western and the West include North America and Western Europe. A more specific definition of Western, for the purposes of the dissertation's case study, is presented in chapter six.

<sup>2</sup> Used interchangeably with former Yugoslavia.

During the 1999 NATO offensive, even more unique events occurred. Belgrade residents with satellite television watched NATO briefings on CNN and Sky News for clues on upcoming targeting.<sup>3</sup> Targets for NATO bombing were often selected via online consultation and teleconference calls that linked NATO headquarters in Brussels with Washington and a dozen European capitals. These consultations often reviewed recent drone and satellite imagery with teams of experts, including international lawyers, who scrutinised the validity and legal ramifications of each potential target.<sup>4</sup>

To television audiences in Western countries, the Kosovo intervention often looked more like a spectator sport than a real war; indeed, the battle was often fought as much on television screens as on the battlefield. Slobodan Milosevic appeared to understand this reality well, as he invited Western journalists to film NATO blunders, hoping to gain political points in the face of military inferiority. Conventional victory in this contest would be difficult for the FRY. As such, Milosevic could greatly benefit from images that might erode Western public support and government resolve to continue. NATO entered the conflict with only a narrow majority of public opinion support across many of its member states.<sup>5</sup> Throughout the 78 days of bombing, there seemed to be a new poll every few days outlining the most recent level of public support for the war based on the

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War* (London: Vintage, 2001), p.139.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp.100-02.

<sup>5</sup> In a study of public opinion support across five NATO states, the strongest support was recorded in France and the UK, where 60-70 percent of the public supported the war. Support was weaker in Germany and the US, where support ranged between 50 and 60 percent. The weakest level of support was found in Italy, where support was below 50 percent. David P. Auerswald, "Integrated Decision Model of NATO Policy in Kosovo," *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 4 (2004): pp.640-1, 59-60.

events of the previous few days.<sup>6</sup> As images of successful surgical strikes and Albanian refugees appeared on television screens, public support appeared to increase a few percentage points. As images of NATO blunders and civilian deaths were broadcast, it declined a few notches.

The Kosovo conflict in both its prelude and execution was markedly different from previous wars. Many of the features that made it unique were linked to the advent of new types of global interconnectedness that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century and accelerated in the 1990s. To students of the relatively new area of globalization studies, the Kosovo conflict manifested many examples of globalization in action. Throughout the last decade of the twentieth century, globalization had been linked to many areas of social studies. War studies, however, appeared to be a last bastion that had avoided its encroachment.<sup>7</sup> The Kosovo conflict was an important event in bridging this gap and bringing together globalization and war studies. Tony Blair was the first Western leader to make this link 22 days into the Kosovo war.<sup>8</sup>

This dissertation examines the impact of globalization on war through a unique approach. In using the term war, the primary focus is on the prelude to third-party military interventions – the period before the decision is made by a state or coalition to intervene militarily in other people's wars or crises. As such, references to the term war throughout this dissertation generally refer only to this

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<sup>6</sup> In one compilation of public opinion polls in the United States, fourteen polls were conducted in the first two weeks of the intervention. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, "Public Opinion in Kosovo"; available from <http://www.aei.org/>.

<sup>7</sup> Christopher Coker, *Globalisation and Insecurity in the Twenty-First Century: NATO and the Management of Risk, Adelphi Paper 345* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.7.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.12.

type of engagement. In this study, Western policy over the fifteen-month period before the NATO intervention in Kosovo is used to assess the relationship between globalization and war. Given the vast breadth and abstract nature of globalization, only one manifestation of globalization – the CNN effect – in one particular case study is analysed.<sup>9</sup>

The rest of this introduction has three sections. The first elaborates on the purpose of the dissertation, its relevance to the literature, its method, and the central questions that will be addressed. The second reviews the five chapters that compose the body of this dissertation. The third section explains some of the key limitations of the study.

### **Purpose of the Dissertation and Relevance to Literature**

Warfare has been a scourge on humankind for thousands of years, and the desire to eliminate it gave rise, after the First World War, to the field of International Relations. Globalization, on the other hand, is considered by some thinkers to be the most significant social phenomenon in recent human history. It seems inevitable that important gains can be made from a study of the relationship between these two subjects. Much of the published research on globalization to date has focused on economics and sociology/cultural studies. Students of international relations, however, have only a limited literature regarding the impact of globalization on war available to them. This dissertation attempts to

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<sup>9</sup> The CNN effect is defined in chapter two.

make a limited contribution to this gap in the literature.<sup>10</sup> At the end of this dissertation, for example, insight may be provided on whether globalization increases, reduces, or transforms war in any way. In addressing this question, it is also hoped that a more detailed understanding of the nature of the globalization process also emerges. As theory should develop from practice, and not the other way around, it is only through attempts to apply abstract and novel concepts such as globalization to practice that current theorising can improve.

### **Method and Central Questions**

The method that will be used to assess the primary question of this dissertation:

“What is the impact of globalization on war?” involves the use of one manifestation of globalization – the CNN effect, which is operationalised to assess one area of potential impact – Western foreign policy during the Kosovo civil war.<sup>11</sup> This is conducted through a detailed review of Kosovo-specific media coverage and foreign policy in the West before the 1999 intervention in Kosovo.

The employment of this particular case study opens up three other areas of potential insight that are also explored in this dissertation. The first relates to the CNN effect and its pattern of operation. The second concerns foreign policy and

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<sup>10</sup> This follows the research by a number of scholars who have also made inroads into the relationship between globalization and security/war studies. Examples include Ian Clark, *Globalization and Fragmentation: International Relations in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), and Coker, *Globalisation and Insecurity*.

<sup>11</sup> 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). The battles between the FRY and KLA over the one-year period before the NATO intervention fit the definition of a civil war as they were amongst organised groups within a state and involved over 1,000 deaths including at least 100 on each side. See James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (2003): pp.75-90.



how the CNN effect influences its traditional role and function. The third relates to the specific case study itself and the role of the CNN effect in NATO's decision to intervene in Kosovo, along with the specific events that led to that decision. If it were shown that the CNN effect did indeed play a role in the intervention, it would become a useful interpretive addition to the existing analysis of this particular conflict. In summary, this dissertation addresses five central questions:

- 1) What is the impact of globalization on war?
- 2) What insights does this study provide on globalization?
- 3) How does the CNN effect operate?
- 4) What is the impact of the CNN effect on foreign policy?
- 5) Did the CNN effect play a role in the NATO decision to intervene militarily in Kosovo?

These questions are raised again in the conclusion of this dissertation, where findings and insights from the body of the text are presented.

### **Summary of Chapters**

The following dissertation is arranged into two sections. The first section, which comprises chapters one to four, is largely theoretical: It defines globalization, the CNN effect, explains how the latter is a manifestation of the former, and links the CNN effect to war. The second section, which comprises chapters five to seven, is a case study that assesses the CNN effect on Western foreign policy during the prelude to the Kosovo intervention, seeking to uncover whether it was a factor in the West's decision to intervene militarily through NATO.

The first chapter defines globalization and reviews a number of issues that are important for its conceptual clarification and subsequent analysis including the causes of globalization and the role of fragmentation. Globalization, of course, manifests itself in many ways and through a diverse range of processes. The next three chapters review one of these alleged manifestations – the CNN effect. The second chapter begins by defining the CNN effect, outlining the agents of change, describing what is affected according to claims in the literature, reviewing the different types of CNN effects, and examining the nature of the effects. It then addresses the link between the CNN effect and globalization, reviewing how the former is a manifestation of the latter. The third chapter assesses the methods used in the CNN-effect literature to demonstrate its validity and then develops a new model by which the effect can be operationalised in the dissertation's case study. The chapter concludes by reviewing some of the current theoretical challenges to the CNN effect. The fourth chapter examines the impact of the CNN effect on the prelude to war at a theoretical level. It uses one interpretation of the model set out by nineteenth-century military thinker Carl Von Clausewitz and his concept of trinitarian war involving the three central elements of the people, military and government.

The second section, consisting of three chapters, involves a case study on the fifteen-month period preceding the 1999 NATO intervention in Kosovo and the alleged role of the CNN effect in influencing Western policy. At the beginning of 1998, Western policy toward the FRY was characterised by moves towards normalisation, marked by the granting of concessions. By the spring of 1999,

policy became bellicose towards the FRY. Like all wars, the NATO intervention resulted from a number of circumstances that came together at a unique time and place. Before examining the role of the CNN effect, this section attempts to take a more detailed account of the macro factors that influenced the potential for the CNN effect in the intervention. The fifth chapter reviews media coverage of the Kosovo crisis based on the model outlined in the third chapter. The sixth and seventh chapters then turn to the second part of the CNN effect and review government policy in relation to Kosovo. While the sixth chapter conducts a macro analysis of Western policy over the entire fifteen-month period before NATO bombing, the seventh chapter involves a micro analysis, in which the same period is segmented into seven phases.

In the concluding chapter, the five central questions identified in this introductory chapter are revisited and examined, based on the findings of the study.

### **Limitations of this Dissertation**

This dissertation has a number of limitations in its research scope that need to be highlighted at this stage in order to provide a clear outline of the parameters within which the study will be conducted. This is important because, although the first part of the title of this dissertation, “The Impact of Globalization on War” covers a large terrain, the scope of the research cannot be as broad. As such, seven limitations are outlined here in the order they appear in the study’s chapter sequence.

First, only one definition of the term globalization is employed in this dissertation. This is a necessity in order to structure a clear analysis, free from the ambiguity and confusion that currently surrounds the term. If this study, like the term globalization itself, is to mean anything, then it can't mean everything. Second, only one type of war is reviewed—a third-party military intervention. Third, given the many impacts that even this relatively narrow definition of globalization can have during the prelude to war, only one manifestation of globalization – the CNN effect – is reviewed. Fourth, only one type of CNN effect is assessed. As the second chapter outlines, there are a number of alleged CNN effects in the literature that can come into play at different times in relation to policy. Fifth, while the CNN effect has been an allegedly important factor in a number of conflicts and non-coercive humanitarian interventions since the end of the Cold War, only the Kosovo conflict of 1989-99 is reviewed in the case study. The Kosovo conflict is chosen as a case study because its timing was unique at the end of the 1990s when it was assumed that the world was in a period of rampant globalization and when the term was in high fashion in geopolitics. If there were ever a time when globalization was to have an impact, it could be argued that this would have been it. Sixth, even the case study on Kosovo does not cover the entire period of conflict, but only the period of civil war between the KLA and FRY forces up to the NATO military intervention. The study does not focus on the 78 days of NATO bombing that constituted the second phase of the Kosovo civil war or the time after hostilities ceased. Finally, the study is primarily focused on the CNN effect on Western policy, in general, and US policy, in

particular, as the US and the West are considered highly globalized and powerful enough to do something about an alleged CNN effect.<sup>12</sup>

While these restrictions minimise the breadth of insights that can be drawn on the larger question of how globalization impacts war, they also allow for a deeper analysis that would otherwise not be possible.

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<sup>12</sup> A number of studies that have attempted to quantify globalization have identified the states of North America and Europe as amongst the most globalized. For example, see A.T. Kearney and Foreign Policy, "Measuring Globalization," *Foreign Policy* 141, no. March/April (2004): p.57.

## Chapter 1: Globalization

The social sciences are rife with examples of vague concepts, which rise and fade in popularity and influence over time. Globalization emerged in the last decade of the twentieth century as such a concept. Hardly a day passed during this period when it was not used as a cause, effect, justification, or scapegoat for anything beyond and increasingly within the control of man. Despite such a high degree of importance attached to the concept, it seems strange that it was used to mean so many different things to so many different people, and in some cases, different things to the same people.<sup>13</sup> If it can mean almost everything, then does it really mean anything? Is it anything beyond the buzzword or cliché of our times?<sup>14</sup> And if there is something to it, is it anything new?

While there are clear problems with defining globalization as a term, the recent history of social sciences suggests that one should not readily dismiss terms due to ambiguity. The terms “nation” and “culture”, for example, lack definitional consensus but have nonetheless been the basis of rapidly expanding literature and debate.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps the ambiguity is actually one of the reasons for this growth. If such terms were clear, there would be less reason to explore deeper.

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<sup>13</sup> For a good example, see Clark, *Globalization and Fragmentation*. In this review of the Twentieth Century, Clark uses the term inconsistently throughout the book to refer to a number of relatively distinct ideas such as internationalisation, co-operation, liberalisation, Americanisation and general openness in foreign policy. Similar problems exist in Ian Clark, *Globalization and International Relations Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), in which Clark argues that no definition of the term can be made (p. 34 and p. 167), but still attempts to make use of the term for analysis. The result is ambiguity when the term is employed for analysis.

<sup>14</sup> David Held et al., *Global Transformations: Politics, Economy and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), p.1.

<sup>15</sup> E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

There are a host of questions that any serious analysis of the term globalization invokes. A review of the literature reveals significant contestation on a number of issues, often due to the multi-disciplinary nature of the subject, which has left few subjects unscathed. Given this problematic situation, there are at least two approaches that may be employed in reaching a single and consistent definition. The first is to attempt to synthesise the range of definitions into a single formula. This approach, however, is unlikely to succeed given the enormous range of definitions on offer. The second approach involves developing a definition of globalization by first establishing a set of criteria that any definition should meet. These criteria should evolve from a review of the globalization literature, from which the key shortcomings with current attempts at defining can be identified (which then become the criteria). A new definition of globalization, in this regard, should then be developed that can overcome such shortcomings and meet the criteria. The following chapter builds a definition of globalization largely from this latter approach.

The globalization literature has generated significant debate about the factors important when defining the term.<sup>16</sup> A review of this literature reveals three criteria that a definition should meet, if it is to be robust. These are novelty, empiricism, and globality. Each of these factors derives from major flaws over definitions most often cited in the globalization literature. These problems underscore much of the critique and scepticism around the concept. If a definition

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<sup>16</sup> While many books in the 1990's mentioned globalization in their titles, only a fraction dealt with the term as anything beyond a buzzword or a marketing scheme. The majority of these books make some vague reference to the term but deal with other topics that are sometimes completely unrelated. When reference is made to the globalization literature, concern is only with that small segment in which globalization is the key focus.

of globalization can meet the criteria and overcome these critiques, then it could potentially become a basis for more thorough subsequent analysis.

### **Criteria 1 - Novelty**

Globalization is often used as an umbrella term for older ideas with their own history and literatures. However, if globalization is used as only a new word for an older idea, it is redundant. Globalization presented in this manner only increases the ambiguity around the term. Jan Aart Scholte outlines four redundant ways in which globalization is currently understood: internationalisation, liberalisation, universalisation, and westernisation.<sup>17</sup> Scholte concludes that each is an inappropriate way to describe globalization, as the concepts incorporated in these terms already existed well before the new term emerged. For Scholte, only globalization as deterritorialisation or supraterritoriality is novel. The other ways of defining the term can best be understood by the use of other terms that are more specific and established. For example, when processes of internationalisation, involving the growth of interstate relations are mentioned, it is not necessary to refer to globalization.

The coining of the term globalization in the 1960s<sup>18</sup> and its widespread acceptance three decades later has been compared to the term “international,” which first

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<sup>17</sup> Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction* (London: MacMillan, 2000), pp.44–46.

<sup>18</sup> Globalization first appeared in Webster’s dictionary, the first dictionary to cite it, in 1961. See Webster, *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* (Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam, 1961). Academically, the term was first used in business studies literature. It was introduced into the social sciences in the mid to late 1980s, pioneered by Roland Robertson and Anthony Giddens, who Malcolm Waters calls the fathers of globalization. See Malcolm Waters, *Globalization* (London: Routledge, 1995).



emerged two centuries earlier.<sup>19</sup> Jeremy Bentham coined “international” in 1780 in *Principles of Morals and Legislation* to refer to the ‘law of nations’ in a more significant way. By 1814, the word began to gain greater acceptance and embrace a wider context in inter-state politics and economics.<sup>20</sup> By the late eighteenth century, it was clear that a new system of interaction between states was emerging, and the word international became the key English term to describe it. Likewise, globalization was first used in the 1960s and entered popular vocabulary only in the 1990s. As such, it can be assumed that something new is occurring from which the word has emerged. Novelty as a criterion, therefore, means that the idea must describe or incorporate something unprecedented.<sup>21</sup>

## Criteria 2 - Empiricism

Most analysis on globalization is descriptive and relies largely on anecdotal evidence.<sup>22</sup> This is particularly the case in the fields of sociology and politics. Even the proclaimed fathers of globalization, Anthony Giddens and Roland Robertson, have little empirical evidence to back their claims. But without verifiable evidence to back claims, many arguments are speculative, subjective and open to dispute. The exception to this case can be found in economics, where much of the analysis, regardless of findings, flows from an empirical basis. A

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<sup>19</sup> Jan Aart Scholte, “The Globalization of World Politics,” in *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, ed. J. Baylis and S. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.14.

<sup>20</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., (Online Version, 1989).

<sup>21</sup> Keohane and Nye believe that it is not important to ask how novel globalization is, but how thick or thin it is at any given time. For them, there are new elements in what they term “contemporary globalism” based on thick network interconnections. Therefore, while globalization is not new, there is a new phase under way. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, “Globalization: What’s New? What’s Not? (and So What?),” *Foreign Policy* 118 (2000).

<sup>22</sup> Hugh Louch, Eszter Hargittai, and Miguel Angel Centeno, “Phone Calls and Fax Machines: The Limits of Globalization,” *The Washington Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (1999): p.84.

definition of globalization that incorporates empiricism is much more useful for subsequent analysis.<sup>23</sup>

So far, it has been argued that globalization should be defined in a way that is both novel and empirically justifiable. But these criteria are only thresholds that a definition must meet, not a substantive basis for describing the concept. A good building block for describing globalization is the idea of interconnectedness,<sup>24</sup> one of the only relatively uncontested claims of globalization.<sup>25</sup> To build a substantive definition of globalization, therefore, interconnectedness is a good place to begin. But what does interconnectedness mean? Most writers seem to just mention its existence as a basis for globalization without elaborating on what it entails. Avoiding a more rigorous examination of interconnectedness, however, can lead to exaggerated or understated conclusions about the significance of globalization. Interconnectedness, or connectivity – which will be used synonymously in this dissertation – refers to regular or patterned direct or mediated contact between two or more points. The points of contact can be individuals, groups, or institutions such as corporations, special interest groups or governments. When interconnectedness involves more than two parties with a high degree of frequency, it is referred to as a network – which is defined as “regularised or patterned interactions between independent agents, nodes of activity, or sites of power.”<sup>26</sup> To assess interconnectedness further, the following

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<sup>23</sup> Of course, empiricism is only relevant within a well-thought-out context, and can be meaningless if not explained and analysed effectively. If this is not the case, empiricism can also be misleading. What is required is a balanced approach, in which qualitative analysis flows from a systematic empirical base. Held et al., *Global Transformations*, p.11.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p.16.

<sup>25</sup> John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), p.2.

<sup>26</sup> Held et al., *Global Transformations*, p.16.

paragraphs examine its underlying infrastructures and then review some of its central dimensions.

### **Infrastructures and Dimensions of Interconnectedness**

Interconnectedness on today's transcontinental scale rests on a rapidly changing and complex infrastructure. This foundation has a technological base, in so far as it is based on the application of advanced mechanical sciences manifested most clearly in the areas of communication and transportation. Interconnectedness has historic roots that have developed at an accelerated rate in the last decades of the Twentieth Century. Looking at the claimed manifestations of globalization in the literature, whether they relate to economics, politics or culture, one can see that little progress would be feasible without the technological infrastructure to make such linkages possible. Highlighting the importance of the technology, however, does not mean that globalization is driven or caused by it. Such a deterministic conclusion would fail to account for the complex interplay of social and political forces behind its growth, which are explored later in this chapter.

Interconnectedness is multifaceted and involves at least four dimensions: reach, density, speed and frequency.<sup>27</sup>

#### ***Reach***

The most basic dimension of interconnectedness is reach. It refers to the distance between the points of interconnectedness. Other terms that have been used to

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<sup>27</sup> A similar set of dimension is presented in Ibid. The Held et. al. model, refers to these as the spatio-temporal dimensions of globalization.

refer to this dimension are extensity<sup>28</sup> and breadth. In many depictions of global interconnectedness, reach is the only factor considered. In terms of reach, interconnectedness works on at least four levels: the local, national, regional, and global. Local generally refers to a defined and geographically bounded area; in an urban setting, this may be a town or city; in a rural setting, it may be a village or county. Local is not an exact measure and varies depending on the cultural context in which it exists. The national level, for the purposes of this study, refers to the domain of a nation-state. A region refers to the group of states that form a continent. The breadth of global interconnectedness, or globalization thus, refers to intercontinental or transcontinental interaction. While certain connectivity is unique to one level, there is also overlap amongst levels, and interconnections on all four levels can exist simultaneously. For example, a Londoner can buy a loaf of bread in his city, telephone his parents in Manchester, practice his German by reading a German website and send a fax to a Japanese client all in the same day.

Global reach has been possible for centuries. Marco Polo, for example, travelled from Europe to China in the Thirteenth Century. The Mongols set off on their dramatic conquest to Europe the same century; and Ferdinand Magellan circumnavigated the earth in 1519. These transcontinental activities were significant events; however, they are not comparable to the globalization of today because they lacked the density, speed, and frequency of recent interconnectedness. While reach is a prerequisite for globalization, density is the first of three dimensions – along with speed and frequency – that distinguishes today's globalization from forms prevailing in previous eras.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p.17.

### ***Density***

Density refers to the number of connections or users, and the quality of interconnectedness. Connections refer to the number of points or nodes from which global connectivity can occur. These connections can either be from one point to another or from one point to many, such as in a broadcast. Users refer to the number of individuals, groups and institutions that participate in those connections. On both counts, contemporary globalization involves greater numbers of participants in both absolute and relative terms than at any other time in human history. The distribution of these participants, however, is far from egalitarian and is linked to the wealth of potential users. As a result, penetration is higher amongst wealthier states, classes, and individuals.

The second element of density that makes contemporary globalization particularly unique is the improving quality of interconnectedness. Interconnectedness today is largely facilitated through technologies that operate on a global scale or globalizing technologies. These technologies are related to either communications or transportation and are often associated with the instruments that are commonly used by end users. Communications technologies, for example, include telephones, fax machines, the Internet, radio, and television. These end-user devices, however, are dependent on a range of secondary technologies such as lasers, fibre optic cables, microprocessors, software, satellites and bandwidth-enhancing technologies such as multiplexing. Even these technologies, however, are enhanced and dependent on more foundational technological improvements such as digitisation and improvements in the physics of materials. Three trends

have been the hallmarks of globalizing technologies over the last three decades of the twentieth century: improved quality involving enhanced features and capacities, declining costs, and miniaturisation. The following examples highlight the improvements in density and provide significant highlights:

- Commercial flights have grown from offering services to just a few thousand elites in the early decades of the twentieth century to almost 1.66 billion passengers by 2003.<sup>29</sup>
- Over 1.15 billion land telephone lines and 1.34 billion cellular mobile subscribers exist in the world by 2003. By region, there are 24.7 million landlines and 50.8 million cellular mobile subscribers in Africa, 290.1 million in the Americas (with 181.6 million in the US alone), 493.1 million in Asia, 326.6 million in Europe and 12.9 million in Oceania.<sup>30</sup>
- Almost 2.2 billion radios in the world with almost 900 million in developing countries. Radios can be found in the remotest parts of the world, as radio has become the central information source for the poorest states. In Africa, for example, there were 141 million radios in 1996. This was almost a threefold increase from the 49 million sets in the continent in 1980. On a per-capita basis, this means that there is now almost one radio per five people in Africa. Assuming 4 people, on average, have access to each of these radios, this means that 80 percent of

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<sup>29</sup> International Civil Aviation Association, "Annual Report of the Council 2003," (2004), p.2.

<sup>30</sup> International Telecommunications Union, "*Free Statistics Home Page*" (ITU.org, 2004); available from [http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/at\\_glance/main03.pdf](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/at_glance/main03.pdf).

Africans – the continent with the lowest density of radios – may have access.<sup>31</sup>

- In 1996, there were 1.361 billion television receivers in the world. This is a 140 percent expansion from the 561 million units of 1980. Notably, most of this growth has been in the developing world, where the number of sets has grown by over 700 percent to 692 million over the same period. The developed world, over this same time, has only increased units by 41 percent to 669 million. This means that there are now over 20 million more sets in the developing world than in the developed.<sup>32</sup>
- In July 1995, there were an estimated 6.5 million computers online and perhaps as many as 45 million Internet users.<sup>33</sup> By 2003, there were an estimated 675.7 million Internet users worldwide.<sup>34</sup>

### *Speed*

Perhaps the most important dimension of contemporary globalization is speed. While global reach has progressed slowly for centuries and density has, to some degree, fluctuated over time, it is the speed of recent interactions that makes this era unique. In many ways, it is the rapid nature of today's interconnectedness that is responsible for most of the novelty in contemporary globalization. It is also the factor responsible for increasing the intensity of global interconnectedness, enabling instantaneity, deterritorialisation, and time-space compression.

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<sup>31</sup> United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Statistical Yearbook 1998* (Paris: UNESCO, 1998).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Brian Winston, *Media Technology and Society* (London: Routledge, 1998), p.334.

<sup>34</sup> International Telecommunications Union, "Free Statistics Home Page."

In relations to the impact on space, before the introduction of steam power in the mid-nineteenth century, horse-drawn carriages and sailing ships provided the fastest modes of transportation at around ten miles per hour. Steam power helped the locomotive to break this barrier with a six-fold increase in speed and a converse effect on distance that made the world over six times smaller. A century later, jet aircraft increased the speed barrier another ten fold with speeds of up to seven hundred miles per hour. By the end of the twentieth century, the world could be reached at speeds seventy times faster than two centuries before, making the world seventy times smaller in human transportability terms, so that people could reach Tokyo from New York faster today than they could have reached Philadelphia a century and a half ago.<sup>35</sup> In terms of time, when George Washington died in 1799, it took two months for the news of his death to reach the entire population of the United States; but when John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, the news reached a billion people (including all Americans) in less than 24 hours. And when Princess Diana died in 1997, the news reached half of the world's population in less than 12 hours.<sup>36</sup>

### ***Frequency***

Frequency is usually overlooked as a factor in interconnectedness although its implications are no less significant than other dimensions. While connectedness, due to its regularity, is distinct from a single contact between two points, the degree of regularity is determined by frequency. This dimension ranges from random contact to patterned contact to permanent or continuous contact. Today's

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<sup>35</sup> Peter Dickens, *Global Shift* (London: Paul Chapman, 1992), pp.103-05.

<sup>36</sup> Anthony Giddens, "The Director's Lectures - Modernity and Its Futures" (Lecture at London School of Economics, 19 November 1997).



global interconnectedness involves a higher degree of frequency. Frequency, of course, is not an independent variable, but based on the speed limitations of the time and the choice of potential participants.

Having so far defined globalization as processes of interconnectedness that are novel and empirically grounded, it is now important to turn to the third threshold that should be included in any rigorous attempt to define the concept – globality.

### **Criteria 3 - Globality**

Globality works at the ontological level and involves the awareness of the globe as a single spatial reference point and domain of human activity.<sup>37</sup> While largely a social construct, the notion of the globe as a single space is based on empirical processes that reinforce and sustain it. The global framework is an extension of frames of reference more commonly associated with social space such as the local, national and regional, with which, as mentioned, it exists concurrently.

Globality creates a new sense of proximity across former spatial barriers that had hitherto only been possible in localities. In effect, globality provides substance to the notion of the world as a single space by transforming previously held notions of time and space.

This transformation has been the focus of a number of theorists across different disciplines. In 1967, Marshall McLuhan referred to this when he described the

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<sup>37</sup> Ontology is defined simply as how reality is perceived.

vanishing of time and space.<sup>38</sup> For McLuhan, these new changes were largely a result of technologies of the electronic age, which he believed were transforming the world into a “global village.” These new technologies were mediums that, by their very existence and operation, promoted social transformation. McLuhan’s ideas led to what became known as medium theory, in which the means were believed to be the significant variable that determined outcomes. The validity of this school of thought, however, has often been dismissed for excessive technologic determinism.<sup>39</sup>

McLuhan’s visionary approach led Giddens to credit him with opening the path for subsequent globalization theorists. Giddens elaborated greatly on McLuhan’s ideas in the 1980s, providing substance to McLuhan’s largely exploratory ideas. For Giddens, globalization involves the lateral extension of social relations across time and space. In a process Giddens calls “time-space distancing,” social relations are stretched so that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away. For Giddens, time-space distancing is a part of late modernity, which he argues is inherently globalizing.<sup>40</sup> Roland Robertson, refers to globalization as the compression of the world and the linking of geographically dispersed localities and individuals.<sup>41</sup> Robertson, however, does not believe that these transformations are a consequence of modernity, as this creates a false global-local polarity. For Robertson, the term “glocalization” is the most accurate

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<sup>38</sup> Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *The Medium Is the Message: An Inventory of Effects* (Random House: 1967), p.63.

<sup>39</sup> For more detailed critiques of McLuhan’s work, see Ronald Deibert, *Parchment, Printing, and Hypermedia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp.22-28.

<sup>40</sup> Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), pp.59-65.

<sup>41</sup> Roland Robertson, “Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity,” in *Global Modernities*, ed. Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson (London: Sage, 1995), p.35.

term to describe the process, as all global transformations are only manifest at the local level, where they can actually be observed. For Robertson, the compression of the world has been caused by the salience of space over time – not a dual elimination or reduction. Manuel Castells, who conducted one of the most extensive studies on the societal impacts of the information age in the late twentieth century, described a similar process when he wrote of the “Space of Flows.”<sup>42</sup> The transformation of space and time in human’s perception of their world has been a key feature of globalization. As such, a definition of globalization would not be complete without recognition of this element.

### **The Causes of Globalization**

While a detailed examination of the causes of globalization is beyond the focus of this study, it is important to provide a brief summary on the factors that led to the emergence of globalization in order to distinguish them from the process itself and its consequences. Within the globalization literature, Jan Aart Scholte provides one of the most comprehensive explanations on this subject, perfectly compatible with the understanding of globalization provided here.<sup>43</sup> According to Scholte, globalization is caused by both structure and agency. Outcomes in this approach are based on a combination of structural forces that encourage agents to take certain decisions over others, and the accumulation of agent decisions that create and mould structures over time. Neither dominates the other all the time, although agent influence will be stronger in times of structural flux and weaker in times of structural stability. The two main structural factors behind the rise of

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<sup>42</sup> Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996).

<sup>43</sup> Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*, pp.89-110.

globalization are the spread of rationalism as the dominant knowledge framework and the development of capitalism and global markets. The two main agency causal dynamics are technological innovation and entrepreneurship in areas such as communications and transportation, and legislation favourable to the growth of globalization. While Scholte considers these four factors the primary drivers of what he terms supraterritoriality,<sup>44</sup> this explanation is also useful in describing the conceptualisation of globalization developed in this chapter.

### **Globalization and Its Content**

Global interconnectedness requires two variables: infrastructures (or networks) and content to flow over the networks. If one is to consider the analogy of plumbing, the water that moves within the pipes is the content, while the pipes themselves are the global networks-both are needed for globalization to operate. The content of global connectivity is significant and often the focus of analysis within the globalization literature. Global infrastructures by themselves can exist but would be little more than hollow vessels if not for the content that flows through or over them. Without content, globalization would have no social consequences and therefore would be of little interest for social inquiry. The economic, political, and cultural domains, the three areas from which the majority of the globalization literature derives, are different types of content. The following section briefly reviews the content of these three areas.

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<sup>44</sup> Supraterritoriality refers to non-territorial relations between people involving a transformation in social geography. See Ibid., p.46.

In the economic sphere, advocates of globalization claim that a global market is supplementing and in some cases replacing local, national, and regional ones.

Some of the areas in which globalizing activity is developing are in production, finance and trade. In production, for example, goods and services are increasingly being supplied from around the world with the assistance of rapid transportation and communication networks. This trend is boosted by the increasing importance of information and other non-tangible asset inputs in production, which can flow across space instantaneously.

In the cultural domain, proponents of globalization suggest that global networks have enhanced existing communities and created new ones, which are often non-territorial. While existing territorial-based affiliations and local communities remain, global networks have made it easier for people to find and associate with others with similar interests. These interests can revolve around a host of commonalities such as class, gender, sexual orientation, race, or belief.<sup>45</sup>

In the political realm, advocates of globalization claim that global governance has emerged to deal with a range of issues. Some of these relate to new global problems that are not bound by borders and require global coordination to monitor and resolve. While the growth of some of these problems, such as terrorist networks, can be directly linked to the new global networks upon which they operate, others, such as environmental degradation, are either not related or only related indirectly. In many cases, these problems have motivated new intergovernmental and non-governmental organisation (NGO) networks to

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., pp.172-78.

monitor and combat them. Unlike economic and cultural globalization, most activities in the political realm are reactionary and emerge as a counter to other globalizing activities, with the aim of creating order and law around them.

### **The Role of Fragmentation in Globalization**

While the world witnessed many globalizing trends over the last decades of the twentieth century, such developments were also accompanied by many incidents of fragmentation, which seemed to present a direct challenge. This section addresses this apparent dilemma and explains how fragmentative movements may not be in conflict with globalization, as widely suggested in recent literature.

Fragmentation refers to the breakdown of established economic, social, and political systems. Fragmentation is clearly not the term that is the best antonym of globalization. Localization, for example, is a more accurate opposite because it incorporates a geographic reference. Fragmentation, however, is the more appropriate antithesis of globalization because it is an umbrella term that reflects the broad range of human activities deemed to be opposing reactions to globalization.

Fragmentation, of course, cannot solely be explained by the recent emergence of globalization, as the fragmentation of established structures has been a common theme throughout human history. The collapse of the Roman Empire is one amongst many examples of fragmentation predating globalization. It is argued here, however, that globalization has been a critical force in the rise of fragmentation over the last three decades of the twentieth century. Its impact has been both direct and indirect, with the latter having more significant consequences

than the former. Directly, globalization has instigated reactions to the imperatives that it has imposed on the status quo. These reactions are part of the new dynamic that emerges when traditional cultures are exposed to new external influences.<sup>46</sup> Indirectly, globalization has stimulated fragmentation by transforming traditional structures, such as nation states, that brought stability on potentially explosive underlying tensions.

Two distinct schools of thought explain the existence of fragmentative movements in an era of globalization: The first sees the two processes as competitive, while the second views them as complementary. The competitive position equates increases in fragmentation to zero-sum losses of globalization, and vice versa. The competitive position is captured most dramatically in Benjamin Barber's provocative article, "Jihad versus McWorld," a thesis that describes the world as torn between opposing forces of Jihad – which signifies the disintegrative process of fragmentation – and McWorld – the term used to describe the integrative processes of globalization. The tendencies of these forces, according to Barber, "operate with equal strength in opposite directions, the one driven by parochial hatreds, the other by universalising markets, the one re-creating ancient sub-national and ethnic borders from within, the other making national borders porous from without."<sup>47</sup> Barber and others who support the competitive position between globalization and fragmentation usually define globalization as the universalisation of liberalisation. This definition, of course, differs from the one

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<sup>46</sup> Culture is one of the most ambiguous terms in the social sciences, but is defined in this dissertation as the collective historical experience of a political community, such as a nation state. Culture is generally associated with a set of commonly held traditions, practices and beliefs amongst that political community.

<sup>47</sup> Benjamin Barber, "Jihad Vs. Mcworld," *The Atlantic Monthly* 269, no. 3 (1992): pp.53-65, <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/foreign/barberf.htm>.

presented in this chapter, which sees liberalism as the dominant content of globalization and universalisation as an expansionary process distinct from globalization.<sup>48</sup> However, for the sake of differentiating the complementary approach later in this section, it has been important to review Barber's definition, which sees fragmentation as a reactionary drive to escape the imperatives of McWorld. Looking at this dichotomy from different disciplines, the same reactionary characteristic can be seen in the economic, cultural, and political spheres.

Economically, fragmentation can be seen as the response of groups displaced by globalization or excluded from its gains. At the international level, states that have faced financial crisis as a result of rapidly shifting capital flows and currency speculation have been characterised as victims of the globalization. Within states, nationalised industries and union labour that had previously enjoyed state protection are often considered the losers of globalization.<sup>49</sup> Whereas previous dependency theories painted a world of poor and wealthy states, some globalization-based accounts diminish the role of geography from the equation. With the demise of welfare states, particularly in the West, it is suggested that the birthplace is no longer be a guarantor of prosperity – one's position within the global economy is far more important. A child born in an American inner city, for example, will likely have a lower standard of living than one from an elite family in India, who will go to the same international universities, apply to positions at

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<sup>48</sup> There is no reason to assume that liberalism is the only content that can flow on global infrastructures. A socialist or communist global system, for example, might also be able to thrive on global networks using an entirely different economic system.

<sup>49</sup> Louis Turner and Michael Hodges, *Global Shakeout: World Market Competition - the Challenges for Business and Government* (London: Century, 1992), p.2.



multinational firms and enjoy a similar standard of living as her elite counterparts in the West.

Culturally, fragmentation is believed to be a reassertion of local identity in the face of global influence and imperialism. While there is dispute on whether a global culture actually exists, proponents suggest that consumerism is a shallow culture that is becoming global.<sup>50</sup> This culture was developed in the United States in the 1950s and has been exported to the rest of the world ever since.<sup>51</sup> Its icons include a wide range of brand names such as McDonalds, Coke, and Disney, which now feature prominently beside traditional landscapes in other countries that predate them by centuries. Consumer culture, however, is about more than with just consumption. It has far reaching consequences for the societies it affects and brings with it a rationalisation that transforms all consumption and production into efficient, calculable, and predictable outcomes.<sup>52</sup> Consumer culture can even penetrate other domains such as politics, transforming it into a series of photo-shots, sound bites, and one-liners that are simplistic and packaged.<sup>53</sup> Image dominates substance in this world and even family and human relations are sometimes substituted by symbols.

Fragmentative reactions to cultural globalization are widespread and take on the greatest array of forms. These range from subtle reactions, such as movements towards rediscovering family values, to violent backlashes of religious fanaticism,

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<sup>50</sup> Anthony Smith, "Towards a Global Culture," in *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, ed. Mike Featherstone (London: Sage, 1990), pp.171-88.

<sup>51</sup> Waters, *Globalization*, p.140.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p.143.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, p.145.

as manifested by the rise of trans-national Jihadist networks and theocratic regimes. Samuel Huntington has claimed that perceptions of a world as single place exasperate social and ethnic consciousness, leading to religious revival and “the return of the sacred.”<sup>54</sup> The Iranian revolution stands as a dramatic example of such a backlash. Seeing their state overrun by what they deemed to be foreign and corrupt values in violation of their traditions, Iranian revolutionaries sought to purge these influences from their society through a violent revolution and create a society based on traditional religious values and laws. Traces of similar, although less extreme, reactions can be seen in almost every country.

Politically, fragmentation can be observed in both the international and domestic arenas. In the international realm, realists have suggested that powerful states ultimately dictate when to promote and when to reverse globalization based on their interests.<sup>55</sup> International institutions, under this scenario, are only tools for the manipulation of hegemonic powers, which utilise them to gain legitimacy for forwarding their state interests under the guise of collective interests. Today, for example, many critics see institutions like the UN, IMF and World Bank as bastions of Western interests in general, and US interests in particular. These arguments mirror those used by critics of liberalism in the nineteenth century, and internationalism in the 1930s and 1940s. In E.H. Carr’s *The Twenty Years’ Crisis*, for example, this very line of reasoning was used to discredit the League of Nations, which Carr saw as a means by which the winners of the First World War could maintain the post-war power status quo.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Cited in Coker, *Globalisation and Insecurity*, p.13.

<sup>55</sup> For a good overview of this position, see Clark, *Globalization and Fragmentation*.

<sup>56</sup> E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1940), Chapter 5.

In the domestic political sphere, globalization has led to a fundamental change in the relationship between governments and their citizens. Welfare states that emerged after the Second World War to provide a range of social services, it is claimed, have changed priorities to become competition states, seeking instead to attract foreign investment and jobs by promoting a business-friendly environment. The shift from welfare to competition has meant government cutbacks in social services and resulted in fragmentative backlashes for those most negatively affected by the changes.

The competitive approach can also pit different spheres against each other. The most commonly expressed form of this division is depicted between the economic sphere and the political. In this context, the economic sphere is identified as the driving force behind globalization, while the political is seen as a fragmentative agent. In *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi outlined such a thesis between nineteenth-century economic liberalism and political backlashes that followed this system's demise in the early twentieth century.<sup>57</sup> During the period marked by economic liberalism, markets expand rapidly and created new relationships based on common commercial interests. These relationships, however, inadvertently destroy existing social relationships that were not based on the same foundation. In times of excess, such rupture can result in a backlash by those disenfranchised from the new arrangement, resulting in political revolt to take back control from those benefiting from the market-based system. This is particularly relevant when there is a widespread perception that the market has caused harm to the masses.

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<sup>57</sup> Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon, 1944).

Scott builds on Polanyi's theorem and explains that globalization is only the most recent phase of economic liberalism, similar to the high levels of interdependence and economic co-operation amongst the great European powers of the late nineteenth century.<sup>58</sup> For Polanyi, the nineteenth-century system eventually became too overbearing and fragmented, leading to a backlash in the First World War, in which the historical pendulum swung back towards the political domain. Following this logic, it could be argued that globalization of the late twentieth century could also be reversed or significantly restructured by the political sphere. The attacks of Al-Qaeda and the West's reaction through the "War on Terror," involving the re-emergence of political barriers such as the US Patriot Act, could certainly be interpreted as a repeat of this pattern.

The second approach sees globalization and fragmentation as complementary in nature and part of the same process. In this framework, increases in globalization lead to growth in fragmentation. This relationship, however, is not relative but absolute. Fragmentation does not reverse globalization; it only changes the status quo and creates a new condition that is part of completing the full cycle of globalization. Instead of a zero-sum game scenario between the two, this analysis assumes correlated mutual advances. In explaining the nature of the complementary approach, it is important to outline two relationships. The first is that between the global and the local. The second is that between the means and the message, or the infrastructures and content of globalization.

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<sup>58</sup> Alan Scott, "Globalization: Social Process or Political Rhetoric?," in *The Limits of Globalization: Cases and Arguments*, ed. Alan Scott (London: Routledge, 1997), p.15.

### ***The Relationship between the Global and the Local***

Globalization is often described in abstract terms, whereas the local is familiar and identifiable. A different way to look at the global, however, is to see it as an aggregate of locals. From this perspective, the global becomes only a forum in which the content from locals is exposed and spread to other locals in other continents. Giddens describes such relationships in describing globalization, which he characterises as “the intensification of world-wide social relationships which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away [in other locals] and vice versa.”<sup>59</sup>

Globalization is the ever-improving forum that fosters contact and dissemination between locals. But this is only the first part of the relationship between the global and the local. The second is more complex, and involves the reaction of the local, once it is impacted by the global (other transcontinental locals).

This process has been described by sociologist Roland Robertson as glocalization, a term that attempts to capture the transformative impact of the global on the local.<sup>60</sup> According to Robertson, as global trends affect the local, different locals have unique reactions to the process, which are identity declarations, on the one hand, and a practical and natural response to adapt the local to the new situation.<sup>61</sup> Even groups that intentionally try to evade globalization are not immune from it. These groups, through their actions to differentiate, are reacting to globalization and relativising themselves to it. The relativisation process involves adapting to the changes brought on by globalization, leading to fragmentation from the status quo – not from globalization.

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<sup>59</sup> Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, p.64.

<sup>60</sup> Robertson, "Glocalization," pp.25-44.

<sup>61</sup> Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1992), pp.99-102.

Globalization is a forum that eliminates or significantly reduces time and space as barriers between intercontinental locals in their interactions with one another, and it is therefore only the means – not the message. The message is determined by participants in the forum and varies significantly due to the diversity of cultures that constitute the globe.

### ***The Relationship between the Means and the Message***

Earlier in this chapter, we distinguished the infrastructures of globalization from the content that flows over them. In deconstructing the process of globalization, the means (infrastructures) needs to be differentiated from the message (content). Although the message may be delivered in an identical mode, the content and interpretation can vary significantly. As Albrow explains, while there may be a standardisation of the channels of communication in globalization, there is a growing diversification of the content.<sup>62</sup> This argument is solidified when one observes the Internet. Although it acts as a homogenised medium for the dissemination of global information, it is one of the strongest propaganda instruments for the promotion of fragmentative movements around the world. Indeed, the neo-Nazis and white supremacists of the world are as active in their Web surfing as one-world advocates. Globalization, therefore, is clearly not the same as homogenisation, nor does it necessarily facilitate the process.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Martin Albrow, *The Global Age* (Cambridge: Polity, 1996), p.92.

<sup>63</sup> Robertson, "Glocalization," p.34.

Distinguishing the means from the message is also informative when assessing globalization by spheres of activity. In the domain of economics, capitalist actors in free markets will have incentives to create new niches tailored to local needs.<sup>64</sup> Arguments suggesting that globalization leads to consumer homogenisation often assume that products are, or will become, identical throughout the planet. Such assumptions, however, miss the subtleties involved in consumer marketing, which often involve segmenting markets and tailoring products to meet their particularities. In effect, they miss the fragmentative portion of globalization, which manifests itself in many discreet ways. As Robertson explains, the idea of glocalization originated from the Japanese business practice of creating a global outlook adapted to local condition. This is because the diversity of micro marketing sells much better than standardisation. It is informative to look at the history of the US automobile industry, in this regard. Henry Ford's Model T, as it is well known, revolutionised that industry with the first mass-produced and standardised automobile. The Model T, however, dramatically lost market share when General Motors began to diversify and segment markets based on differing tastes and needs.<sup>65</sup> The same processes are beginning to occur in global marketing, which is still only beginning to develop global products amenable to local diversities.

Distinguishing the means from the message is also important in the cultural sphere if one is to avoid the sweeping generalisations commonly associated with the hyperglobalization literature. The Iranian Revolution of 1979, according to the competitive framework set out earlier, was characterised as a fragmenting

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<sup>64</sup> Scott, "Globalization: Social Process or Political Rhetoric?," p.5.

<sup>65</sup> J.P. Womack, D.T. Jones, and D. Roos, *The Machine That Changed the World* (New York: Rawson, 1990), pp.39-43.

backlash to foreign cultural imperialism and a challenge to globalization. But a closer analysis based on the complementary thesis reveals that the rebellion was not against the means but rather the message. The Iranian revolution did not seek to reverse globalizing patterns, but rather offered an alternative interpretation (message) to the one it perceived as being proposed by the West. The revolutionaries did not believe that their ideas were isolated to their country but saw their situation as only the spark of a global movement for Islamic spiritual revival – a movement they fully intended for export to other states through global means. According to Christopher Coker, “radical Islam does not reject the means of globalisation, only its message. Islamism indeed thrives on globalisation...”<sup>66</sup>

In the political sphere, fragmentative movements were deemed a blow to globalization in the competitive position. The wars in Croatia and Bosnia in the 1990s were commonly used examples for this argument. But were these segregation movements really against globalization, or drives for self-determination within a globalizing world? The fact that almost all independence movements today seek recognition and representation in international institutions demonstrates their desire for external engagement, but under their own terms. What was challenged was not globality but the states from which Croatia and Bosnia sought independence. The fact that these entities may now represent themselves in the global arena does not belittle this domain, but in fact enriches it with more legitimate and transparent local representation.

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<sup>66</sup> Coker, *Globalisation and Insecurity*, p.16-17.



This chapter has defined globalization based on a model (in the form of a set of criteria) from which subsequent analysis can be conducted. The chapter has also outlined the causes of globalization, distinguished the infrastructures of globalization from its content, and accounted for the role of fragmentation within the process. In summation, globalization is a series of empirical and novel processes that create transcontinental interconnectedness and ontologically transforms social space and creates globality. Such connectivity often lead to glocalization, as localities relativise foreign content based on the subtleties of their culture.

Besides developing a definition of globalization, this chapter has also highlighted the enormity of globalization as a research topic. Indeed, globalization manifests itself in many ways and its advocates claim many impacts. As such, it is not possible to review all the ways in which globalization allegedly impacts war in any substantial depth in one dissertation. Therefore, the rest of this dissertation will primarily focus on one alleged manifestation of globalization – the CNN effect. The following chapter defines the CNN effect and explains how it can be understood as a manifestation of globalization, based on the definition set out in this chapter.

## Chapter 2 – The CNN Effect

At 2:38 AM, on 17 January 1991, the residents of Baghdad were woken by the launch of the Gulf War. Initial sounds of dogs barking were superseded by bright lights and thundering shots from anti-aircraft volleys that were eventually overshadowed by the explosive sounds of smart bombs destroying Iraqi infrastructure sites. For an awestruck international audience watching events unfold on television screens in their homes, the live images of the first night of bombing over Baghdad were unprecedented. Never before had a war scene been transmitted instantaneously and simultaneously around the world to millions of viewers literally as events unfolded. The images of the Gulf War, to one analyst, made the conflicts over Grenada and the Falklands, less than a decade before, look like nineteenth-century wars.<sup>67</sup>

Later that same night, a senior officer at the Pentagon Command Center checked his watch while speaking to those planning the air attack and stated, while watching one broadcast, "If the cruise missile is on target...the reporter will go off the air about.... Now!" He was right. At that moment, the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) and the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) reports from Baghdad stopped. These networks were relying on the Iraqi communications network, which had just been destroyed. Cable News Network (CNN), however, which was being transmitted over a dedicated circuit set up before the war, remained on the air.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Philip Taylor, *Global Communications, International Affairs and the Media since 1945* (London: Rutledge, 1997), p.119.

<sup>68</sup> Frank Stech, "Winning CNN Wars," *Parameters* 24, no. 3 (1994): p.37.

For the next two weeks, CNN was the only American television network broadcasting from Iraq. As a result, this relatively new and renegade organisation that promised to be different by delivering twenty-four hour news, surged in recognition and prestige. Its subscription base, in fact, increased more than ten fold over the period of the Gulf War.<sup>69</sup> Its name also became synonymous with rapid image and information transmission from the scene of action and, more importantly, the implication of this phenomenon on politics and foreign policy. Even former US President George Bush Sr. seemed fascinated, stating that he had learned more from CNN than the CIA.<sup>70</sup> The so-called CNN effect, as it became known, claimed to change the very politics surrounding war. In the immediate aftermath of the Gulf War, for example, it was widely believed that media images of Kurdish refugees were instrumental in the decision to establish safe havens.<sup>71</sup> Conversely, the fear of a backlash from television images of the “Highway of Death,” in which hundreds of Iraqis fleeing Kuwait were killed, was believed to be a factor in the US decision to terminate the Gulf War before the US military had time to destroy large segments of the Republican Guard. When asked about the decision to end the Gulf War, Brent Scowcroft, the US National Security Advisor at that time, responded, “...if you look, at the ‘highway of death’, look at the television pictures it’s just one mass of destroyed and burning, equipment, and that’s pretty graphic...I think it was a significant aspect of the decision [to end the

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<sup>69</sup> Susan Carruthers, *The Media at War: Communication and Conflict in the Twentieth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), Introduction. Its external arm, CNN International, grew its revenues from \$13.6 million to over \$100 million in the three years following the Gulf War. Taylor, *Global Communications*, p.95.

<sup>70</sup> Stech, “Winning CNN Wars,” p.38.

<sup>71</sup> Martin Shaw, *Civil Society and Media in Global Crisis* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p.88.

war] that we did not want to look like butchers who were bent on revenge by slaughtering people.”<sup>72</sup>

The CNN effect continued to be considered an important factor in subsequent Western humanitarian military interventions throughout the 1990s, such as those in Somalia, Haiti, and the former Yugoslavia. Those who believed in its power reached divergent conclusions as to its potential benefits. Although many diplomats and policy makers viewed it as an intrusive new player that could pressure governments into foolish policy, some in humanitarian circles saw it as a potential force for good, causing outside intervention in cases of human suffering that might otherwise be ignored.<sup>73</sup>

The academic study of the CNN effect has many similarities to that of globalization. Both subjects emerged in the early 1990s as an area of interest and inquiry and went through a similar path of analysis, at first gaining prominence through often exaggerated claims; then garnering a backlash by those who challenged and refuted these initial claims; followed by a new round of more refined scholarship that claimed moderate influence. This chapter has two main goals. The first is to introduce and define the CNN effect, by reviewing a number of issues that can assist in its conceptual clarification. The second involves linking globalization and the CNN effect by demonstrating how the latter is a manifestation of the former. By making this connection, it is then possible to use

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<sup>72</sup> Interview with Brent Scowcroft, in Eamonn Matthews and Ben Loeterman, *The Gulf War: Frontline PBS Documentary*, Videocassette, Boston, MA: WBGH Boston, 1996.

<sup>73</sup> Piers Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News, Foreign Policy and Intervention* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp.10-11.

an analysis of the CNN effect to draw insights upon the larger, more abstract concept of globalization, which is one of the primary goals of this dissertation.

### **Defining the CNN effect**

The CNN effect is defined by Steven Livingston as the impact of new global real-time media on diplomacy and foreign policy.<sup>74</sup> Piers Robinson describes it as the responses from domestic audiences and political elites to global events that are transmitted by real-time communications technology.<sup>75</sup> Joseph S. Nye characterises it as the impact on public opinion in free societies from the increased free flow of broadcast information and shortened news cycles.<sup>76</sup> Based on these three definitions, which are in no way an exhaustive list of all the current options, it is clear that differences exist in how leading thinkers perceive the phenomenon. Discrepancies exist on a number of issues, three of which will be highlighted here. The first relates to the scope of the agent;<sup>77</sup> in other words, what catalysts can and cannot be included when the CNN effect occurs; the second relates to what exactly is being affected; the third relates to the nature of the cause-effect dynamic.

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<sup>74</sup> Steven Livingston, "Clarifying the CNN Effect: An Examination of Media Effects According to Type of Military Intervention," (Cambridge, MA: The Joan Shorenstein Center Research on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1997), p.1,

[http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/presspol/Research\\_Publications/Papers/Research\\_Papers/R18.pdf](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/presspol/Research_Publications/Papers/Research_Papers/R18.pdf).

<sup>75</sup> Piers Robinson, "The CNN Effect: Can the News Media Drive Foreign Policy?," *Review of International Studies* 25, no. 2 (1999): p.301.

<sup>76</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr., "Redefining NATO's Mission in the Information Age," *NATO Review (Web Edition)* 47, no. 4 (1999): pp.12-15, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1999/9904-03.htm>.

<sup>77</sup> The term "agent" refers to the technologies, organisations, journalists and other institutions and individuals required for a CNN effect. The underlying factors behind the CNN effect are explored later in this chapter under the section "The CNN Effect and Causality."

### What is the Agent?

In the definitions reviewed earlier, Livingston refers to the agent of the CNN effect as “global, real-time media,” Robinson calls it “real-time communications technology,” while Nye believes it refers to “broadcast information.” In their assessment, each of these thinkers is looking at what constitutes the agent of the CNN effect from a different perspective. This is not necessarily a significant discrepancy, as without media, the right technology and information, there would be no CNN or other transcontinental news networks or potential effects – all are, therefore, important facets of the same factor. However, do all media play as important a role in the CNN effect? Certainly, the CNN effect is caused by more than just the CNN organisation, which is a symbol for a phenomenon much broader.<sup>78</sup> But how broadly does its breadth reach?

To assist with this task, it is important to review two points. First, the majority of people in the geographic focus of our study (the West in general, and the United States in particular) receive most of their news from television, which has gained market share in recent decades largely at the expense of the newspaper. In 1962, only 29 percent of Americans cited the television as their primary source of news, but by 1980 this figure had jumped to 51 percent.<sup>79</sup> In a recent study on the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, 81 percent of Americans surveyed stated that they received most of their information from

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<sup>78</sup> The CNN effect has inaccurately at times been attributed to the just the coverage of CNN - this interpretation seems to miss the point of the larger phenomena alleged to be at play. See Jonathan Mermin, *Debating War and Peace: Media Coverage of U.S. Intervention in the Post-Vietnam Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp.132-3.

<sup>79</sup> Taylor, *Global Communications*, p.85.

television.<sup>80</sup> Second, studies indicate that television is trusted more than other sources of news information, because words are often followed by moving images that verify claims, making them more convincing.<sup>81</sup> Based on these findings, and because CNN itself, the symbol of the effect, is received through television, this medium is usually prioritised when evoking the CNN effect.

The newspaper, while not as significant as the television for mass audiences, is an important contributor to the CNN effect because it plays a significant role in framing issues and informing government elite and decision-makers about perceived public opinion on issues. This is often done through the editorials of elite newspapers such as *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* in the United States, which are widely read by politicians, especially on foreign policy issues.<sup>82</sup> As the CNN effect requires not only media coverage but also changes in government policy for the alleged effect to be realised, how government elites are informed on issues and perceive public opinion is critical. The importance of elite newspapers are further amplified because local newspapers often syndicate their content and take their editorial cues, in terms of which issue to prioritise and how to frame stories, from these larger papers.

The Internet through broadband delivery provides images and promises to play an ever-increasing role in the future of any potential CNN effects. However, its

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<sup>80</sup> Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "How Americans Used the Internet after the Terror Attack," (Washington, DC: 2001), [http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/pdfs/PIP\\_Terror\\_Report.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/reports/pdfs/PIP_Terror_Report.pdf). Based on telephone interviews on September 12 and 13 with 1,226 adults.

<sup>81</sup> Taylor, *Global Communications*, p.85.

<sup>82</sup> Nik Gowing, "Real-Time Television Coverage of Armed Conflicts and Diplomatic Crises: Does It Pressure or Distort Foreign Policy Decisions?," (Cambridge, MA: The Joan Shorenstein Center Research on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1994), p.19.

relatively low penetration in many Western countries, even at the beginning of the twenty first century, means that it has been a relatively insignificant contributor to the CNN effect over the 1990s – the period of focus for many CNN effect studies. Also, the Internet has been problematic during crisis periods as servers hosting websites often get congested with too many users attempting to download the same information simultaneously. In the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on the United States, for example, over 40 percent of American Internet users could not reach their Website of choice to access news, and most switched to television for information.<sup>83</sup>

Interactive communications technologies, such as the telephone and fax, do not play a role in the CNN effect for two reasons. First, these media do not provide images, which are an important component of a CNN effect. Second, their individualistic nature does not allow a coherent message to reach a mass audience.<sup>84</sup> This would seem to be a necessity for political impact, which the CNN effect claims to be able to deliver through its capacity to reach large audiences. For the purposes of this study, therefore, it is assumed that the main agents for the CNN effect will be television and newspapers.

### **What is Affected?**

To gain a perspective on what is affected by the CNN effect, it is important to review the earlier definitions again. Livingston suggests that diplomacy and

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<sup>83</sup> Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, “How Americans Used the Internet.”

<sup>84</sup> Although it is noted that recent innovations in mobile telephone technology allow for broadcast capabilities (including the dissemination of images).



foreign policy are the areas of impact; Robinson believes that domestic audiences and political elites are significant; Nye suggests public opinion is the domain of importance. Although Livingston and Nye characterise the CNN effect as an impact, Robinson goes one step further and explains the phenomena in relation to the responses it provokes.

In the context of war, three areas of potential impact appear particularly relevant: public opinion, military tactics and strategy, and diplomacy and foreign policy. These three domains correlate to the three actors in the Clausewitzian concept of Trinitarian war - the people, the military and the state.<sup>85</sup> In this trinity, public opinion represents the position of the people, the military executes its mission through its strategy and tactics, and diplomacy and foreign policy reflect the agenda of the government. If the CNN effect were to have an impact on war and provoke change, its impact would likely be in these areas.<sup>86</sup>

In relation to foreign policy, it is important to distinguish different stages and aspects of foreign policy.<sup>87</sup> In terms of stages, distinction can be made between policy formulation and implementation. In terms of aspects, strategic aspects of a policy can be distinguished from tactical ones. It is entirely conceivable, for

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<sup>85</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (London: Everyman, 1993), p.101. Also see Martin Van Creveld, *On Future War* (London: Brassey's, 1991), p.35. The concept of trinitarian war will be examined in more detail in the fourth chapter.

<sup>86</sup> Although the government and its foreign policy will be the area of focus in the dissertation's case study.

<sup>87</sup> Other commentators have made similar distinctions between foreign policy process and outcome or process and policy. For process versus outcome, see Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, p.39; For process versus policy, see Warren Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), p.5.

example, that the CNN effect may play a role only on some stages or aspects of foreign policy without influence on others.<sup>88</sup>

### **Effect or Effects?**

The notion of the CNN effect has grown over time to encompass a number of distinct meanings. While the early references to it often related to diplomacy, much of the focus after the 1991 Gulf War has been on foreign policy. In his 1997 paper titled *Clarifying the CNN effect*, Steve Livingston conducted one of the most detailed studies regarding different CNN effects on foreign policy. In this analysis, Livingston distinguished the CNN effect as an accelerant of policy, an impediment to it, and a policy agenda setter.<sup>89</sup> The following section reviews these three effects.

### ***The Accelerant Effect***

As an accelerant, the CNN effect shortens the time available for governments to establish a position or formulate a policy.<sup>90</sup> Under this scenario, failure to react in a timely manner creates an image of aloofness and even irresponsibility for governments, leading them to rush to positions before knowing all the relevant facts or make judgments based on erroneous information. In order to react faster,

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<sup>88</sup> These distinctions are reviewed in more detail in the fourth chapter.

<sup>89</sup> Livingston's research takes a broad approach to foreign policy and intervention, looking at eight different types: Conventional War, Strategic Deterrence, Tactical Deterrence, Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (SOLIC), Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, Imposed Humanitarian Interventions, and Consensual Humanitarian Interventions. See Livingston, "Clarifying the CNN Effect," p.11.

<sup>90</sup> Steven Livingston uses the terms "accelerant" and "catalyst" to refer to the same type of CNN effect. The former term is used in *Ibid.*, pp.2-4, while the latter term is used in: Steven Livingston, "Media Coverage of the War: An Empirical Assessment," in *Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action, and International Citizenship*, ed. Albrecht Schanabel and Ramesh Thakur (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2000), p.361.

sources of information, such as diplomatic reports that had previously been critical to informed decision making, may be ignored. These sources, however, are often based on expert analysis and deliberated judgments that are more important in formulating pragmatic policies with a longer-term perspective.

There were many incidents throughout the 1990s in which media pervasiveness was blamed for rushed policy responses. For example, when Boris Yeltsin closed the Russian Parliament in October 1993, it was reported that the US State Department's upper echelon suspended normal activities in order to focus on the television response of the President and Secretary of State later that day. In a previous era, according to James Hoge Jr., the response would have been to wait and gather all the facts before responding.<sup>91</sup>

According to Livingston, the accelerant CNN effect is not always harmful for governments and can, in fact, be useful for reaching wider audiences much faster than conventional diplomatic channels. It can also be used to conduct more rapid diplomacy and communication with rivals with whom diplomatic channels are blocked.<sup>92</sup>

### ***The Impediment Effect***

The impediment CNN effect comes into play in the context of military engagements and generally operates under two scenarios. In the first, media images can raise doubts about the legitimacy of military engagements and the

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<sup>91</sup> James F. Hoge Jr., "Media Pervasiveness," *Foreign Affairs* 73, no. 4 (1994).

<sup>92</sup> The benefits that transcontinental media networks can provide governments through diplomacy are explored in more detail in the fourth chapter. Such usage of the media falls outside the CNN effect, as defined in this dissertation.

policies behind them by exposing the operation's shortcomings and negative consequences. In many cases, emotionally disturbing images from a military operation, such as those of enemy civilian casualties (or collateral damage) or dead military personnel from the home side, raise questions about the benefits of the engagement in relation to its mounting costs. This effect is particularly exasperated when the media successfully demonstrate a gap between rhetoric from political and military leaders and events in the conflict zone. In the United States, the decline of public support for the Vietnam War (especially after the 1968 Tet Offensive) is often blamed on television images of carnage and US bodybags from South East Asia. Significant amongst these images was summary execution of an armed civilian by South Vietnamese General Loan. According to Richard Nixon:

More than ever before, television showed the terrible human suffering and sacrifice of war. Whatever the intention behind such relentless and literal reporting of the war, the result was a serious demoralization of the home front, raising the question whether America would ever again be able to fight an enemy abroad with unity and strength of purpose at home.<sup>93</sup>

This effect explains why the American media has been tightly controlled during military operations ever since Vietnam and why great effort is made to sanitise images during war.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Cited in Daniel C. Hallin, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), p.3.

<sup>94</sup> This was a charge made often after the 1991 Gulf War. As veteran American television commentator Marvin Kalb explained:

General Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, got on television and urged journalists to "trust me" during the Gulf War. They did, almost all of them, and they were then subjected to the most sophisticated massage in the history of Pentagon salesmanship...In this journalistic revolution, news organisations were routed by the Pentagon through a clever use of pools and restrictive practices.

The second way in which the CNN effect can be an impediment relates to breaches in operational security that may occur from the transmission of sensitive information.<sup>95</sup> As information is delivered instantly around the globe, it not only informs the general public but is also accessed by potential adversaries that can use that information to their military advantage and endanger troops. For example, media information on whether a site they had targeted was hit and how badly it was damaged will give adversaries critical insights to decide whether that target should be targeted.<sup>96</sup> As Colin Powell stated during Desert Shield, a piece of information given to a journalist could be “in 105 capitals a minute later.”<sup>97</sup> The impediment CNN effect creates the possibility of grave danger to military personnel if information falls into the wrong hands at the wrong time. The inability of many inexperienced journalists to distinguish sensitive information and the increasingly competitive pressures to be the first to report a breaking news story makes the possibility of such breaches an increasing possibility. If such breaches occur and operations are compromised, a policy can easily be impeded, and may have to be either changed or halted.

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Marvin Kalb, "A View from the Press," in *Taken by Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and US Foreign Policy in the Gulf War*, ed. W. Lance Bennett and David L. Paletz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp.3-6. James Baker admitted the same point, stating: "The Gulf War was quite a victory. But who could not be moved by the sight of that poor demoralized rabble – outwitted, outflanked, outmanoeuvred by the U.S. military. But I think, given time, the press will bounce back." Cited in Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*, p.19.

<sup>95</sup> Livingston, "Clarifying the CNN Effect," pp.4-6.

<sup>96</sup> Barrie Dunsmore, "The Next War: Live?," (Cambridge, MA: The Joan Shorenstein Center Research on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, March 1996), pp.9-11,

[http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/presspol/Research\\_Publications/Papers/Discussion\\_Papers/D22.pdf](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/presspol/Research_Publications/Papers/Discussion_Papers/D22.pdf).

<sup>97</sup> Livingston, "Clarifying the CNN Effect," p.5.

### *The Agenda-Setting Effect*

The third way in which the CNN effect is alleged to impact foreign policy is to set the agenda.<sup>98</sup> This type of CNN effect suggests that issues that receive the greatest media coverage become the ones that receive the most foreign policy attention and resources. At its best, such an effect can reorder existing foreign policy priorities, pushing those with greater media coverage to the top of the agenda. At its worst, foreign policy formulation and prioritisation can mirror the news agenda and lose its independence. As pictures of suffering people or other forms of sensationalism reach television audiences in Western democratic states, they can generate a public demand for the government to do something to end the suffering or correct a perceived injustice. The problem with such scenarios, however, is that they are not always congruent with sustainable foreign policy goals for the following two reasons.

First, decisions on media coverage are based on a different set of incentives than those of government foreign policy. In the West, media is largely a commercial enterprise based and driven by profitability; what is covered is usually what sells best. This means that the most sensational stories generally get greatest coverage, as these generate the largest audience numbers and advertising revenues. As one event becomes less spectacular or dated, more dramatic or novel stories replace it. Foreign policy, however, does not and cannot function in this manner. For a policy to be successful, it usually must have a long-term focus that is feasible and economically sustainable. This is particularly relevant in periods such as the 1990s in which many defence and foreign aid budgets declined. If foreign policy

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., pp.6-10.

is to follow the agenda set by the media, it will increasingly be forced to engage in a variety of theatres, only to shift resources abruptly once that situation becomes less fashionable. Furthermore, if foreign policy engagements lead to military operations, it is functionally impossible to deploy troops without great risk to life and the military's credibility.

Second, and more contentiously, the CNN effect as an agenda setter is considered problematic because it provokes prioritising and action not in congruence with the national interest.<sup>99</sup> The media, as previously suggested, are drawn to events that display significant levels of human suffering. These events, however, often have no clear link to perceived threats to national security – a leading factor in what traditionally constitutes the national interest. Although in an ideal world, as critics have often suggested, all human suffering should cease, the limited military and financial resources available to Western democracies makes it impossible to intervene in all cases of suffering. Therefore, critics have argued that limited resources need prioritisation free of media influence to fit the varying levels of perceived national interest.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> This argument itself is based on the assumption that there is something that can be identified as the 'national interest.' While traditional political realism suggests that the national interest exists and is identifiable, critics suggest that it is only determined retrospectively and cannot accurately be discerned regarding present and future events and circumstances. See Justin Rosenberg, *The Empire of Civil Society* (London: Verso, 1994), chap.1.

<sup>100</sup> The perceived national interest has taken an interesting twist of fate in the United States since September 2001, as zones of human suffering such as Afghanistan, previously believed to have little link with US national security, became breeding grounds for militant anti-Americans. As a result, the George W. Bush administration that came to power on an isolationist platform, and critical of efforts by the Clinton administration at what it called "Nation Building," is now more engaged than its predecessor in efforts to shore up failed and weak states around the world in its global war on terror. See James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Neotrusteeship and the Problem of Weak States," *International Security* 28, no. 4 (2004): pp.5-43.

### ***Related Effects***

Although the CNN effect assumes that media images impact the policy making process, the anticipation of such an impact or “potential effect” can sometimes be just as important to policy making.<sup>101</sup> In consideration of the impediment effect, for example, policy makers and military planners might incorporate the media’s presence in planning in order to manage and neutralise its future impact. This can be done by a number of means such as the denial or limitation of access to journalists or pool and embedded reporting.<sup>102</sup>

Another type of media effect sometimes inaccurately associated with the CNN effect is the propaganda effect.<sup>103</sup> Propaganda is defined as “the systematic propagation of a doctrine or cause through information reflecting the views and interests of those advocating such a doctrine or cause.”<sup>104</sup> While it could be argued that any party advocating a particular policy through the media is propagandist, this dissertation limits the definition of the propaganda effect to only cases involving the promotion of official government policy.

Propaganda has played a significant role in the prelude and execution of the Twentieth century. Propaganda was institutionalised for the first time during the

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<sup>101</sup> Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, p.40.

<sup>102</sup> In an interview with an Israeli army planner, Gadi Wolfsfeld was told that the subject of the news media came up very often in planning operations, as “the media causes a great deal of problems.” The importance of the potential media effects were so critical that media clips were even incorporated into the training sessions for soldiers going into the territories. Gadi Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict: News from the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.206.

<sup>103</sup> The propaganda effect outlined here refers to the use of media to promote the government’s official policy. This is similar to Robinson “enabling effect” in which a government policy already decided upon is used by the media to promote the government’s agenda. Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, pp.40-1.

<sup>104</sup> *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*. (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000).



First World War when combating sides developed departments with the mandate of carrying out propaganda at both home and abroad.<sup>105</sup> Before a war, propaganda helps to define and vilify an enemy, making their destruction more palatable.<sup>106</sup> During a war, it plays an enormous role in maintaining morale by interpreting events in biased ways that often exaggerate the success and virtues of the home side while inflating the failures and immorality of the adversary. The salience of propaganda has led hegemonic theorists to conclude that all media-state relations can be reduced to propaganda.

### ***The Challenging Effect***

Another way in which the CNN effect appears is referred to as the challenging CNN effect in this study. This effect is most relevant in the context of third-party military interventions, often involving the involvement of Western powers in “other people’s wars” or humanitarian crisis requiring a military component. Through the emergence of unexpected and emotive images framed in a sympathetic manner to a particular party who are presented as victims, this effect makes an official policy appear ineffective or even misguided, exposing gaps between media representation and policy claims. These gaps challenge the policy’s credibility, creating the environment in which policy decision makers are pressured to alter policy in order to fill the void.<sup>107</sup> As policy is often formulated in an atmosphere where sub-systems have competing agendas and interests, media images can play an important role in favouring certain policies over others,

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<sup>105</sup> Carruthers, *Media at War*, p.29.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., pp.24-25.

<sup>107</sup> Philip Seib refers to this divide as a tension, defining the CNN effect as the “dynamic tension that exists between real-time television news and policymaking...,” Philip Seib, *The Global Journalist: News and Conscience in a World of Conflict* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), p.27.

making it difficult at times to maintain commitment to an official policy of non-intervention. With the Kurdish crisis following the 1991 Gulf War, for example, advocates have argued that media images of suffering Kurds made it impossible for Bush and Major to maintain the status-quo policy of leaving the Kurds to their fate.<sup>108</sup> The challenging CNN effect, it should be noted, is only introduced here and will be elaborated upon in the following two chapters, which develop a model that will be employed to a case study in the second section of this dissertation.

### **The CNN Effect and Globalization**

The media has always played an important role in international politics, foreign policy, and war. One of the earliest cases of war reporting involved William Howard of the *London Times*, who sent stories from the Crimean War back to the UK. During the First and Second World Wars, the media played a significant role in selling and maintaining support for the war effort in many countries.<sup>109</sup> The CNN effect, however, describes a more novel type of media role that is different in nature with media's traditional role because it is rapid in its spread of transmission, transcontinental in its reach, and qualitatively richer than past media formats. These features distinguish the CNN effect and make its political impact potentially more powerful. These characteristics also seem to place the CNN effect within the larger trend of globalization.

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<sup>108</sup> According to Nicholas Wheeler, it was widely suggested that "The Kurds were rescued because Major and Bush realized that to leave them to their fate would be unacceptable in the eyes of public opinion." Nicholas Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.165.

<sup>109</sup> Taylor, *Global Communications*, p.59.

The history of the CNN effect as an academic area of study, in many ways, mimics that of globalization. Both concepts initially came to prominence in the early 1990s, with roots dating back to the 1960s, through simplistic and overarching assertions. In the case of globalization, the work of Kenichi Ohmae is often tied to what David Held later termed the “hyperglobalization” camp.<sup>110</sup> With the CNN effect, a number of thinkers in the early 1990s assumed an unbounded CNN effect thesis including George Kennan and James Hoge Jr.<sup>111</sup> As a result, both sets of assertions drew a sceptical backlash by the mid 1990s and were labelled by critics as either myth or factors much weaker than its enthusiasts suggested. By the late 1990s, however, both concepts re-emerged in less ambitious and more complex formats and claimed change only under certain circumstances and contexts.

In the previous chapter, globalization was identified as a novel set of processes involving rapid connectivity that eliminated or significantly reduced time and space barriers in human interaction at an empirical level, promoting a global frame of reference ontologically. This frame of reference, however, did not lead to homogeneity but rather to relativised interpretations and outcomes due to strong local and cultural influences. The CNN effect is a manifestation of globalization because, like the definition outlined in the first chapter, it has an empirical basis involving a network of transcontinental interconnectedness, is novel, and facilitates a relativised globality. The following section reviews these criteria in relation to the CNN effect in more detail. The criteria of novelty and empiricism

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<sup>110</sup> See Kenichi Ohmae, *The Borderless World : Power and Strategy in the Interlinked Economy* (London: Collins, 1990), Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies* (New York: Free Press, 1995).

are reviewed together in the first part of this section, followed by an assessment of globality.

### **Novelty, Empiricism and the CNN Effect**

At the beginning of the twenty first century, millions of viewers around the world have access to transcontinental media transmission, often utilising real-time information and images as new events unfold. This level of access is novel and is alleged to create the possibility of unprecedented political impact. The following section reviews the four empirical dimensions of interconnectedness, reach, density, speed, and frequency and assesses how each relates to the CNN effect.

### ***Reach***

The reach of television networks by the first decade of the twenty-first century is more transcontinental than ever. News can be gathered from almost anywhere and transmitted to almost any place. In terms of reception, there are over 1.4 billion television sets scattered across every continent of the planet.<sup>112</sup> While the distribution of these is far from egalitarian, there are still at least 50 sets per 1,000 inhabitants in every continent covering almost every country on the planet.<sup>113</sup>

Access increased throughout the 1990s for three reasons: First, there has been a continuing decline in the cost of satellites and reception dishes, making the technology much more affordable for larger numbers of people. Second, there has

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<sup>111</sup> See George Kennan, "Somalia: Through a Glass Darkly," *New York Times*, 30 September, 1993, A25, and Hoge Jr., "Media Pervasiveness."

<sup>112</sup> United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Statistical Yearbook 1999* (Paris: UNESCO, 1999).

<sup>113</sup> Satellites further promote this reach by transmitting images and information to anywhere on the planet, as long as the right reception technology is available.

been a remarkable shrinkage in the size of the equipment, making it more feasible to install where previous size constraints existed. Third, there has been a general improvement in the legislative environment around the world favouring the spread of these technologies.<sup>114</sup> These trends have widened access in even the remotest regions of the world, and by combining technologies, a few satellite receivers can now pick up signals and distribute them widely through cable networks. This system breaks the natural monopoly of limited electromagnetic frequencies that dominated the earlier years of television.<sup>115</sup> As such, states that have desired to control television content, such as Iran and Afghanistan during the reign of the Taliban, have resorted to banning satellite receivers.<sup>116</sup>

In terms of news-gathering, three major organisations gather and distribute news throughout the world: Reuters, the Associated Press (AP), and Agence France-Press (AFP).<sup>117</sup> In the late 1990s, each of these organisations had approximately 100 foreign bureaus and produced about 100-250 international news items per day. Collectively, these agencies have almost 1,500 journalists around the world. Each of these groups is larger than CNN, which only has 20 foreign bureaus, 35 international journalists, and produces about 20 foreign news stories per day at most.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Held et al., *Global Transformations*, p.359.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p.358.

<sup>116</sup> "Iran Bans Satellite Dishes," *Wall Street Journal*, 6 April, 1994, A16.

<sup>117</sup> These organisations are called newswire services because they have sent stories by telegraph to a subscriber base of newspapers for over 100 years. Reuters and the Associated Press both date back 150 years.

<sup>118</sup> Claude Moisy, "The Foreign News Flow in the Information Age," (Cambridge, MA: The Joan Shorenstein Center Research on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 1996), pp.5-6; It should be noted, however, that CNN's news is exclusively video, while those of the news-gathering organisations are mostly text based.

There are two other important factors that have contributed to the breadth of news-gathering and made an enormous difference in terms of the reach of the media. First, many more local, national, and regional media companies throughout the world are now supplying news. This trend has been driven by the shift towards the privatisation of media companies and assets over the 1990s and the declining costs of video equipment. A good example of this trend is reflected in the emergence of the Qatar-based Arabic 24-hour satellite news station al-Jazeera. Starting from a humble beginning in 1996, this network now reaches over 35 million viewers in Arab-speaking countries, and through agreements with international networks, millions more throughout the world. Its remarkable success has been attributed to the fact that it is widely viewed as a source of independent news in the region, and the relative ease of access in the region to its signal. In fact, anyone who can spend several hundred dollars on a satellite dish can watch the network. Also, it has managed to gain exclusive footage in the region due to its special relationship with regional players that would rather get their message to the world through a local source.<sup>119</sup>

Second, the rapid growth of personal camcorder ownership in the 1990s has increased the likelihood that a camera will record an event that may not have been captured in previous decades. Many of the most important moments associated with the CNN effect, in fact, were not captured by the professional journalists, but by individuals who happened to be present with personal camcorders when important events unfolded. The infamous images of a dead US serviceman being

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<sup>119</sup> Michael Dobbs, "Qatar TV Station a Clear Channel to Middle East," *Washington Post*, 9 October, 2001, C1.

dragged around the streets of Mogadishu in October 1993 were captured on a hi-8 video camera. Many of such videos are later given or sold to news organisations that distribute them throughout global networks in combination with their own professional editing and narratives. Looking ahead, the improving bandwidth of mobile telephones, utilising third-generation (3G) networks, will make it possible to send video from any mobile phone with a camera or camera attachment. In terms of reach, this trend, in combination with the previous ones outlined, will lead to the capture of many newsworthy images that might previously have been missed.

### *Density*

There have been significant improvements both in the number of participants – both news gatherers and recipients – and the quality of transmission. In terms of recipients, the number of television sets worldwide has grown from 299 million in 1970 to 1.4 billion in 1997, according to UNESCO.<sup>120</sup> That means that for every 1,000 inhabitants, the number of sets grew from 81 to 240 over this period. Even in Africa, the continent with the least number of television sets per capita, the numbers grew dramatically from 1.6 million sets or 4.6 per thousand inhabitants in 1970, to 44 million sets or 60 per thousand inhabitants in 1997. The growth numbers are even more dramatic when one looks at countries like China, where television set numbers grew from 660,000 sets, or less than one set per thousand inhabitants in 1970, to 400 million sets, representing 321 sets per 1,000 inhabitants in 1997. Although the numbers are far from equally distributed

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<sup>120</sup> UNESCO Institute for Statistics, [Website]; available from <http://unescostat.unesco.org/en/stats/stats0.htm>.

throughout the world, it is interesting to note that the majority of growth over this period occurred in the developing world.

As this study focuses largely on the West, it is important to briefly review the data on television penetration in these areas in more detail. In the US, there were 403 television sets per 1,000 inhabitants in 1970 and 806 per 1,000 in 1997. In Western Europe, the top five countries, in terms of population (France, Italy, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom), averaged 226 sets per 1,000 in 1970 and 524 per 1,000 in 1997.<sup>121</sup>

There have been notable improvements in the freedom of the press throughout much of the world over the 1990s, caused by the end of the Cold War and the replacement of many military regimes with democratic ones. This means that there is both more access to the possibility of the CNN effect and less interference in blocking its means. The combination of growth in access and decline in legal barriers to its dissemination has been a boost to the likelihood of a CNN effect throughout the planet.

In terms of quality, today's global television networks emerged due to three trends in news delivery. The first relates to the shift in the delivery of news from the medium of the newspaper as the most popular format to television. US data shows that newspapers, which were the dominant form of news delivery for at least a century before television's arrival after the Second World War, have dropped by 50 percent, in terms of per capita subscriptions, over the period

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<sup>121</sup> Based on France, Italy, Spain and UK data only.



between 1960 and 1995.<sup>122</sup> The number of daily newspapers in the United States, which stood at 1,700 in 1980, has been declining at a rate of 15 titles per year over the last two decades of the twentieth century. Television by the 1990s was clearly the most popular form of news dissemination, especially amongst younger generations. Ted Turner, the founder of CNN, announced in the early 1980s that newspapers were on the endangered species list at an annual meeting of the American Newspaper Publishers Association.<sup>123</sup> What seemed like pure hyperbole at the time has become prophetic, as CNN and like organisations have grown rapidly while the newspaper industry has declined since that announcement. Furthermore, researchers that have compared the impact of different media have found that television news watchers find it “more personally relevant and more emotionally involving” in comparison to newspapers, giving viewers “a greater sense of attachment to the issues.”<sup>124</sup> Greater emotional reaction and attachment to issues as a result of gripping and powerful images and information are a qualitative improvement over other media in which news seems more remote.

The second trend relates to improvements in television quality. This began with a shift from black and white to colour television, which grew in the US from 10 percent of the total number in 1965 to 95 percent in the 1990s. More recently, sharper image quality, measured by the number of pixels (image elements) per square inch has significantly improved the quality of television images. Recent innovations by IBM have created monitors that provide 200 pixels per square

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<sup>122</sup> Moisy, "Foreign News Flow," p.8.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

inch, making images that are indistinguishable from the real thing to the human eye 18 inches away.<sup>125</sup> There have also been significant sound quality improvements accompanying television images. These factors have made television look and sound more lifelike, narrowing the gap between television and real life.

The third qualitative trend has been a shift in news delivery from daily, taped, and institutionally initiated formats to 24-hour news that is often events driven and presented in real-time.<sup>126</sup> Until CNN's explosive growth to prominence during the Gulf War, American networks and their European counterparts, like newspapers, worked on a daily news cycle in which all the news gathered over the previous 24 hours was prepared for the evening news. Apart from exceptional circumstances, news was taped, edited and presented as part of a daily package. The CNN format and its growing popularity, however, changed the rules by making news always available, up to date, and often events driven and live.<sup>127</sup>

While the emergence of CNN was key in shifting international coverage towards events driven news, the trend actually began with local television news in the United States. In the 1950s, when television news first began, only basic visual

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<sup>125</sup> The Economist Technology Quarterly, "Seeing Is Believing," *Economist*, 22 September, 2001, pp.7-8.

<sup>126</sup> Institutional initiated news is defined as "the actions and pronouncements of governments and sometimes supra-governmental organizations (such as the United Nations) and their spokespersons, ministers, and leaders....Diplomacy, peace negotiations, press conferences, summits, and official visits are examples of institutional initiation." Events-driven news is defined as "coverage of activities that are, at least at their initial occurrence, spontaneous and not managed by officials within institutional settings." Steven Livingston and W. Lance Bennett, "Gatekeepers, Indexing, and Live-Event News: Is Technology Altering the Construction of News?," *Political Communication* 20, no. 4 (2003): p.373.

<sup>127</sup> A study on American international news coverage on CNN demonstrated an increase in both live coverage and events driven news over the 1990s. *Ibid.*, pp.375-77.

aids such as photographs, charts and maps were presented to viewers.<sup>128</sup>

Television news, mimicking the radio and newspaper, aimed to inform citizens and largely presented institutionally initiated stories from the studio. By the 1980s, however, competition led television stations to experiment with “eyewitness” and “action” news formats, which brought viewers closer to events and added a greater sense of immediacy and drama to news.<sup>129</sup> The proliferation of this trend to international news, thus, brought viewers closer to the locations around the globe from which the stories initiated and allowed a qualitative and even emotive connection that had hitherto not been possible.

### *Speed*

The most important novel aspect of globalization is its speed. At its apex, manifestations of globalization make it possible to connect any two points on the globe instantaneously. This empirical activity, as it has been outlined earlier, promotes ontological shifts regarding the demise of time and space barriers and stimulates a global frame of reference. Without the speed to make it appear as if distant events were close, a global frame of reference would be more difficult to sustain. Likewise, the CNN effect assumes the capacity to deliver images and information from anywhere to any place in real-time. In most cases, it involves delivering news from distant locations into people’s living rooms, making the world appear as close as one’s home.

Socially, shifts towards deregulation and greater economic and political openness

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p.370.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., pp.370-71.

allow for easier movement of journalists, access to communication infrastructures such as satellite links, and diminishing costs for the use of such networks.

Technologically, the instantaneous nature of global television networks is based on the convergence of a number of technological innovations that converged in the 1980s and have since improved significantly. At the beginning of the Gulf War, several trucks were required to move portable equipment such as satellite dishes, cameras and lights to a particular location, and these could transmit live images throughout the world – a vast improvement over the technologies of two decades earlier. Barrie Dunsmore, for example, described the limitations of previous decades in an account of video sent from the Six Day War between Israel and Egypt in June 1967. According to the veteran journalist, after reaching the Suez Canal with the first group of Israeli soldiers on a Friday morning and capturing video, the film was driven back to Tel Aviv and put on a plane for Rome, where it was processed and edited; but by the time the images were finally broadcast, it was Sunday night and over 48 hours had lapsed. By that time, much of the video was already out of date as events both on the ground and politically had advanced.<sup>130</sup>

The technologies of the Six Day War, and even of the Gulf War, seem ancient by the standards of innovations at the beginning of the twenty-first century. These include digital cameras, high-bandwidth satellite videophones, and powerful laptop computers to co-ordinate transmission. Whereas it took over one ton of equipment to send live pictures from the Gulf War, at the beginning of the twenty first century, it is possible to perform the same function with a few briefcases of

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<sup>130</sup> Dunsmore, "The Next War: Live?," pp.3,7.

equipment, making access to remote locations easier, faster, and significantly cheaper.<sup>131</sup>

### ***Frequency***

Frequency refers to the number of times and the pattern by which contact is made between two points or amongst a network. Greater levels of frequency represent a greater intensity in that particular manifestation of globalization. The global television networks that facilitate the CNN effect are highly frequent and patterned, from the perspective of viewers, as they are continuously operating through a 24-hour news cycle and connecting locations around the globe.

However, because coverage is always shifting to the latest set of events deemed newsworthy, connections with any single location are always eventually dropped, and from this perspective, frequency is more random and less patterned.

Furthermore, as only images deemed pertinent by journalists and editors are shown and framed in a relativised manner, even the frequency that occurs is somewhat distorted from reality. As a result of these shortcomings, the frequency of the CNN effect may be its weakest dimension relative to the other dimensions as a manifestation of globalization.

### **Globality and the CNN effect**

In the previous chapter, globality was characterised as an ontological shift to a relativised global frame of reference. In relation to the CNN effect, the

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<sup>131</sup> CNN began using videophones in 1999. The videophone has become so prominent in the transmission of international news at the beginning of the twenty first century that one leading media theorist has referred to it as the icon of international broadcasting. Livingston and Bennett, "Gatekeepers," p.371.

transcontinental media transmissions that are necessary for a CNN effect are one of the empirical processes that reinforce a global frame of reference. This outcome, however, does not lead to homogenised perspectives around the world, as assumed by some hyperglobalization theorists. On the contrary, interpretations of news are a primary example of the diverse ways in which different cultures interpret the same events. During the 1999 Kosovo war, for example, the same images often appeared on televisions in New York, Beijing, and Belgrade, yet audiences in each location often perceived images in diverse ways. A massacre in one place was a fight against terrorists in another, and what was unavoidable collateral damage from one perspective was a war crime from a different angle.

The media is rarely objective, despite the claims of some of its proponent.<sup>132</sup> In fact, many consider the notion of the media as a check on government excesses and a promoter of democracy, in relation to international affairs, to be wholly fictional. This is because media news reports are almost always subject to framing, which is the attempt to simplify, prioritise, and structure events into interpretive frameworks. By prioritising certain facts and images over others, journalists promote particular interpretations of events over others.<sup>133</sup> The framing of political conflicts can often be identified by the words and images that stimulate support or opposition for a particular position.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> According to US Supreme Court justice Potter Stewart, the First Amendment (of the American constitution) creates "a fourth institution outside the government as an additional check on the three official branches." Cited in Mermin, *Debating War and Peace*, p.6.

<sup>133</sup> Pippa Norris, "News of the World," in *Politics and the Press*, ed. Pippa Norris (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1997), p.275.

<sup>134</sup> Robert Entman, *Projections of Power: Framing News, Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p.6.

Framing occurs due to a number of reasons including both economic and cultural factors.<sup>135</sup> In terms of its economics, a competitive business environment, combined with a limited audience attention span, means that media organisations cannot provide extensive backgrounds on the stories they present. This is particularly true for television – perhaps the most superficial news delivery medium in which complicated stories have to be contained within relatively short packages.<sup>136</sup> Framing is also influenced by culture. The media, after all, is not a monolith, but made up of a number of public and private organisations that often originate from a dominant culture that influences the way events are understood. The presence of the cultural factor in framing is most evident in cases where cultures have had significantly different historical experiences over an issue. A recent comparative framing study on the 2001/2 US war in Afghanistan between CNN and Al-Jazeera, for example, found notable differences in the way the conflict was covered. While CNN focused on strategy, technological precision and a euphemistic description of events, similar to its coverage of the 1991 Gulf War, Al-Jazeera placed greater emphasis on the human consequences of the war.<sup>137</sup> Other research from the Soviet downing of KAL flight 007 found that the framing of the incident by 19 different newspapers could be explained in part by the political orientation of their home countries.<sup>138</sup> According to Gadi Wolfsfeld, “Whatever their beliefs about the need for objectivity when it comes to internal disputes, journalists inevitably interpret the world from a national – or even a

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<sup>135</sup> Some alternative positions on framing and challenges to it are presented at the end of this chapter.

<sup>136</sup> This is exasperated by the trend towards sensationalism and infotainment formats. See Livingston and Bennett, "Gatekeepers," pp.359-60.

<sup>137</sup> Amy E. Jasperson and Mansour O. El-Kikhai, "CNN and Al Jazeera's Media Coverage of America's War in Afghanistan," in *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government and the Public*, ed. Pippa Norris, Kern, Montague and Marion Just (New York: Routledge, 2003), pp.113-32.

<sup>138</sup> Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, p.40.

nationalistic – perspective. This is especially true when they cover conflicts involving their own country...”<sup>139</sup>

At first glance, it may appear as though the CNN effect and framing are at odds. The CNN effect, after all, seems to be a sign of globalization, while framing can be viewed as a divisive factor fragmenting a potentially unifying phenomenon. Seeing framing as polarising, however, assumes a zero-sum game between the two and is based on the underlying assumptions of the competitive approach outlined in chapter two. The complementary approach, on the other hand, sees framing as an inherent part of the CNN effect and inherent in the overall process.

### **The CNN effect and Causality**

In examining the factors that caused the CNN effect, it is first necessary to understand the driving force behind the rise of global media networks, of which CNN is a primary example. In the first chapter, globalization’s rise was linked to a combination of structural and agent factors. Structural variables considered significant were the spread of rationalism as a dominating knowledge framework and capitalism as the major form of economic organisation. In terms of agency, technological innovation and favourable regulation were identified as key drivers of globalization. If one reviews the causal factors that led to the rise of global news networks such as CNN, the same structural and agency causal factors associated with globalization are central.

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.



The rise of the CNN network itself serves as a good example in this regard. In terms of the structural factors, a rationalist knowledge-based society and a capitalist system combined to create the environment for private media networks such as CNN. Rationalism stimulates a continuous demand for new sources of information and knowledge. Rationalism assumes that truth is always relative and, as such, there is a constant need to find new information and discover new knowledge. In such a structure, vehicles for information gathering and dissemination will be in great demand and a capitalist system in global markets fosters private news networks such as CNN.

In terms of agency, technological innovation and regulation both played important roles in the emergence of globalization. These same factors have been central to the rise of global news networks such as CNN. The establishment of CNN, for example, was only possible after a number of technological innovations in communications. The transformation of the regulatory framework from the early 1980s, promoting free markets and deregulation, both in the United States and internationally, was significant, allowing CNN to expand into a truly global network.

As a manifestation of globalization, the CNN effect is especially interesting because it suggests an explanatory role in its own right divorced from the factors that led to its creation. In other words, although the establishment of CNN and its worldwide network were driven by a number of factors, its alleged affect on politics cannot be explained by these original causes. It can only be explained as a function of the new factor. To clarify this point, it is important to look at an

example of the CNN effect. As mentioned earlier, the US decision to pull out of Somalia in 1993 is alleged to have been an example of the CNN effect.<sup>140</sup> If the images of the dead American servicemen were not transmitted to the US within hours and instead took months, as would have been the case in a previous era, the relatively quick decision to withdraw forces within days of the event may not have happened. The CNN effect, therefore, was an independent explanatory factor beyond the driving forces that allowed such media networks to exist in the first place.<sup>141</sup> If the CNN effect can be shown to exist as a legitimate explanatory scheme, it would not only be an important insight in its own right, but also contribute much-needed empirical support for the larger claims of globalization theory.

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<sup>140</sup> Stech, "Winning CNN Wars," p.38.

<sup>141</sup> Globalization in this regard denotes a theory in its own right. While globalization as a descriptive schema or *explanandum* is widely supported, it has been challenged on having an explanatory role or *explanans*. Justin Rosenberg, *The Follies of Globalisation Theory* (London: Verso, 2000).

### Chapter 3: Demonstrating the CNN effect

Before the decision to set up safe-havens in Northern Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War, John Major claimed to have been personally moved by television images as he was putting on his socks one morning in his flat, instigating him to begin the process of changing Western policy.<sup>142</sup> Before the 1992 Somalia intervention, George Bush claims to have been disturbed by the images of starving children while watching television at the White House with Barbara Bush. Upon seeing the images, he apparently telephoned Dick Cheney and Colin Powell, stating: "Please come over to the White House. I – we – can't watch this anymore. You've got to do something."<sup>143</sup>

While the CNN effect is believed to have been an important factor behind some important shifts in policy, most claims rely of unsubstantiated opinion or anecdotal evidence. Since the early 1990s, at least four research approaches or models have attempted to qualify the CNN effect in more sophisticated ways. These methods are referred to as interview-based approaches, media-based approaches, quantitative approaches, and the policy-media interaction model. This chapter begins by reviewing these methods. It then develops a new model for validating the CNN effect, using some of the key findings of these four approaches within the context of the challenging CNN effect, as introduced in the previous chapter. This new model is bound by a number of political factors that both shape and limit its manifestation. These include the political culture, the

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<sup>142</sup> Gowing, "Real-Time Television Coverage," p.28.

<sup>143</sup> Cited in Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, p.50.

international political context, the political cost and the level of political commitment by the government to the existing policy. Finally, the chapter concludes by examining two leading alternatives to the CNN effect thesis – the indexing hypothesis and hegemonic theory – which challenge the underlying assumption that media influences policy.

### **Research Approaches in the CNN Effect Literature**

Within the literature that claims the possibility of a CNN effect, a number of research approaches have been used to validate such a claim. This section outlines four of the leading approaches. The first of these relies primarily on interviews and the opinions of policy makers; the second is based on media reports and their relation to policy change; the third involves measuring the quantitative relationships of media coverage and policy shifts; and the fourth – the policy-media interactions model – incorporates a combination of research strategies.

#### **Interview-Based Approaches**

Interviews are often the method of choice for journalists that seek to understand the political impact of their profession in more depth and typically involve interviewing policy decision makers on the impact of the media on their decision-making. This is not surprising, of course, given the fact that an interview is the key information-gathering tool of the journalistic trade. Nik Gowing, a former diplomatic editor for the British Television station ITN, conducted perhaps the most extensive study of this kind involving over one hundred interviews with

relevant policy makers.<sup>144</sup> Based on aggregating interviewee opinions with his own analysis of events, Gowing concluded that the CNN effect is relevant only in a limited number of cases and is a far weaker phenomenon than its enthusiasts suggest.<sup>145</sup> For Gowing, the CNN effect takes place only when two conditions arise: The first is the emergence of unexpected images, and the second is when policy is unclear on a foreign policy issue. In such cases, policy makers who are confronted by surprising powerful images often do not have an adequate policy explanation and may feel forced to do something. In cases when a policy is clear, television has little impact. To support his point, Gowing quotes UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan who states, "When governments have a clear policy...television has little impact."<sup>146</sup> Martin Bell, the BBC's so-called "war zone thug," takes a similar position by explaining that television images have a jolting effect only when governments lack purpose.<sup>147</sup> This position has been repeated by other analysts, such as Warren Strobel,<sup>148</sup> Ted Koppel<sup>149</sup> and Larry Minear et al,<sup>150</sup> and has acquired the status of a neo-orthodoxy, according to Carruthers.<sup>151</sup>

Although this method provides some interesting anecdotal insights and opinions, it often struggles for intellectual clarity as authors reach contradictory conclusions

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<sup>144</sup> Gowing, "Real-Time Television Coverage," p.2.

<sup>145</sup> Nik Gowing, "Real-Time TV Coverage from War: Does It Make or Break Government Policy?," in *Bosnia by Television*, ed. James Gow, Richard Paterson, and Alison Preston (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1996), p.85.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Cited in Carruthers, *Media at War*, p.208.

<sup>148</sup> Strobel, *Late-Breaking Foreign Policy*.

<sup>149</sup> Ted Koppel, "The Perils of Info-Democracy," in *Managing Global Chaos: Sources of and Responses to International Conflict*, ed. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996).

<sup>150</sup> Larry Minear, Colin Scott, and Thomas Weiss, *The News Media, Civil Wars, and Humanitarian Action* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1997).

<sup>151</sup> Carruthers, *Media at War*, p.208.

in favour of and against the CNN effect.<sup>152</sup> This may be because different interviewees present conflicting opinions, and synthesising such a diversity of perspectives in a systematic manner is a difficult task, if not impossible. Also, the merits of this methodology are questionable in themselves on at least two grounds. First, such studies rely heavily on the opinions of policy makers. This selection, however, limits the range of perspectives and eliminates the positions of other potentially valid candidates.<sup>153</sup> Second, it is questionable whether the opinions of policy makers are reliable. In some cases, policy makers might not remember the specific events and the impact of the media on them and their colleagues. In other cases, policy makers might intentionally present events as they want them to be remembered, which may differ from what actually happened.<sup>154</sup> After all, it would not be surprising for policy makers to downplay the role of the media as policy makers are supposed to be calm, objective, and deliberate in their decision-making.<sup>155</sup> If they were truly affected by emotive elements such as media images, they might appear vulnerable and incapable of conducting their work professionally.<sup>156</sup> For this reason, it would not be surprising if policy makers assigned a nonessential role to the CNN effect.

Additionally, it is important to question the central finding of this approach: that a precondition of policy uncertainty must exist before the CNN effect can occur. If this proposition were true, then all cases of a CNN effect must involve unclear

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<sup>152</sup> Robinson, "The CNN Effect: Can the News Media Drive Foreign Policy?," pp.304-5.

<sup>153</sup> Piers Robinson, "World Politics and Media Power: Problems of Research Design," *Media, Culture & Society* 22, no. 2 (2000): p.228.

<sup>154</sup> Carruthers, *Media at War*, pp.208-10.

<sup>155</sup> Similar interview-based studies on the role of public opinion had also concluded that foreign policy makers were largely unrestrained in their decision-making by such influences. Bernard C. Cohen, *The Public's Impact on Foreign Policy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973).

<sup>156</sup> Robinson, "World Politics," p.228.

policy. But what is unclear policy? When and how is it determined that one policy is clear and another unclear? When a politician has trouble explaining a policy, is it because there is policy uncertainty, or is it because the existing policy has become inappropriate and unjustifiable under new circumstances that have emerged from the images of unexpected events? Is it really a case of unclear or uncertain policy or simply a policy that has become out of date in relation to a shifting political landscape? It is interesting to note that in cases when policy uncertainty is evoked, such a conclusion is reached in retrospect after unexpected events surfaced. Before such evidence came to light, these same policy makers often espoused the official policy very eloquently and clearly. For Gowing, for example, the massacre at Srebrenica is a clear case of cause and effect between television images, a demand to do something and policy response.<sup>157</sup> But was Bosnia policy unclear before the images and story of Srebrenica and the massacre reached the West? Or was it the case that policy became unsustainable in light of the massacre, which opened the way for a tougher policy against the Bosnian Serbs to be pushed through.<sup>158</sup> The issue of policy certainty will be reviewed in more detail later in this chapter when Piers Robinson's policy-media interaction model is examined.

Despite the questionable conclusions regarding policy uncertainty from this research approach, there is consensus that the CNN effect, although rare, occurs after certain unexpected and emotive events. The possibility and increasing prevalence of such events is a result of the growing importance of events-driven

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<sup>157</sup> Gowing, "Real-Time TV Coverage from War," p.85.

<sup>158</sup> Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, p.83.

news stories that are “spontaneous and not managed within institutional settings.”<sup>159</sup> Such events not only catch officials off guard, but can also take on an emotive element, as viewers are taken close to the incident and individuals affected by them, based on a new mediated proximity.

### **Media-Based Approaches**

The second method in the literature focuses on how journalists’ framing of events can play a role in pressuring governments to pursue a particular foreign policy option on an issue. Martin Shaw uses this approach when he reviews media coverage in relation to government policy during the Iraqi rebellions and humanitarian crises after the 1991 Gulf War.<sup>160</sup> In his study, Shaw conducts a comprehensive assessment of British media reports as the crisis develops, particularly focusing on media criticism of Western governments and their inaction. According to Shaw, “Television was putting the world leaders on the spot, linking them directly to the visible plight of the miserable refugees.”<sup>161</sup> The crisis garnered the greatest media coverage in early April, when framing began to change from one of insurgency against the Iraqi regime to one of victimhood.<sup>162</sup> The media was particularly effective on this issue and successfully framed the West as responsible for inciting the Kurdish rebellion and then abandoning it at its hour of greatest need. In one example, he cites an ITN report that states:

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<sup>159</sup> Livingston and Bennett, "Gatekeepers," p.373.

<sup>160</sup> Shaw, *Civil Society and Media in Global Crisis*, pp.79-95.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p.87.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p.86.



Relief workers say that the situation is catastrophic. A quarter of a million people were trudging to the Turkish border – it was ‘an exodus of fear’. There is also anger and bitterness at President Bush’s refusal to intervene. Fleeing journalists were interviewed: ‘It’s a problem that we really must...we have an obligation to do something about.’ They’ve been let down very, very badly.<sup>163</sup>

This framing was then successfully juxtaposed with the diplomatic evasions of Western leaders that demonstrated inhumanity and irresponsibility, such as those of George Bush on a fishing trip, and John Major’s stating that this was a civil war. According to Shaw, this barrage of media coverage finally compelled Western governments to do something about the crisis, leading to the creation of the safe havens. According to Shaw, “These reports had the essential ingredients of what was, effectively, a campaign which lasted several weeks, although within a single week it was to achieve a major change in Western policy.”<sup>164</sup>

But just as importantly, Shaw points out that the Shi’ite rebellion in Southern Iraq, which led to far more deaths, did not receive the same attention as that of Kurdistan and did not evoke framing that called for action. There were two main reasons for the difference. The first was a lack of media access to the south. According to John Simpson, “By comparison with the Kurds, the predicament of the Shi’ite people has had very little attention in the outside world. That’s not surprising; there have been no pictures of the suffering Shi’ite refugees; the Iraqi government has seen to that.”<sup>165</sup> Similar comparisons would be made regarding

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p.88.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Cited in Ibid., p.95.

Sudan in the following years. Dubbed “Somalia without CNN,” the famine in Sudan, exasperated by civil war, also failed to attain a global audience due to media inaccessibility.<sup>166</sup> Likewise, carnage in Afghanistan, Nagorno-Karabakh, Kashmir, and Angola, received limited media attention in similar regard.<sup>167</sup>

The second reason for non-intervention was due to the fact that coverage of the southern Shi’ite rebellion was framed in distancing terminology that did not link it to Western responsibility and largely described the conflict as an internal one. This was markedly different from the framing of the Kurdish uprising, which was sympathetic and challenged the official government policy. For example, in one television report in the early days of the Shi’ite rebellion, the media report stated that: “Islamic fundamentalists say they control Iraq’s second biggest city, Basra.”<sup>168</sup> At the same time, a film was shown of a ‘fundamentalist’ ayatollah speaking in Iran, and in another piece of coverage, viewers are reminded that: “A major Western concern is that Iraq could literally split apart.”<sup>169</sup> The lack of access and emotive images, in combination with distancing framing, meant that the Shi’ite rebellion received limited coverage, and framing discouraged intervention.

Similar patterns of coverage were prevalent in other cases of mass human suffering in the 1990s, with the most notable being the 1994 Rwandan genocide, where an estimated 800,000 civilians perished. In studies by Livingston and

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<sup>166</sup> Gowing, “Real-Time Television Coverage,” p.16.

<sup>167</sup> Steven Livingston, “Suffering in Silence: Media Coverage of War and Famine in the Sudan,” in *From Massacres to Genocide: The Media, Public Policy, and Humanitarian Crisis*, ed. Robert Rotberg and Thomas Weiss (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 1996), pp.68-89.

<sup>168</sup> Cited in Shaw, *Civil Society and Media in Global Crisis*, p.81.

<sup>169</sup> Cited in Ibid.

Eachus<sup>170</sup> and Robinson<sup>171</sup> that assessed media coverage and framing, it was demonstrated that while some notable coverage did exist, the violence was framed in a distancing manner that presented it as part of an ongoing cycle of bloodletting. In one story typical of coverage at the time, Rwanda was described as “over-populated, over-farmed, underfed and wracked by tribal hatreds, 400 years in the making. The history of Rwanda is full of massacres like this – killing followed by counter killings.”<sup>172</sup>

Although Shaw’s case study on the Kurdish crisis following the Gulf War is well documented, critics have suggested that it overplays its hand and fails to take into account the role of other forces besides the media that also pushed for intervention. While the media was an important factor, it was at least complemented by a number of other factors, such as geopolitical concerns from Turkey, a key American NATO ally, over the implications of refugee flows into its territory. Furthermore, little attention was given to the actual decision-making process, which other analyses of the same crisis demonstrated to have been far more complex.<sup>173</sup> Despite these shortcomings, this study and others like it highlight the importance of two additional ingredients as prerequisite to a CNN effect: media access and sympathetic media framing presenting a particular party as victims. For a CNN effect, journalists must have access to sites of human suffering, and the framing must be one that is sympathetic towards those who are suffering in a manner that challenges official governments policy.

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<sup>170</sup> Steve Livingston and Todd Eachus, "Rwanda: U.S. Policy and Television Coverage," in *The Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, ed. Howard Adelman and Astri Suhrke (London: Transaction Publishers, 1999), pp.210-46.

<sup>171</sup> Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, pp.110-16.

<sup>172</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, p.114.

<sup>173</sup> Robinson, "World Politics," p.229.

## Quantitative Approaches

Livingston and Eachus use a more rigorous approach in qualifying the CNN effect, comparing the quantity of media coverage on a particular issue with the timing of policy decisions on that issue in order to identify a potential media impact. This approach is used to assess the 1992 decision by the US to intervene in Somalia.<sup>174</sup> Livingston later uses a similar approach in a case study on Kosovo.<sup>175</sup> Under this method, it is assumed that there is a CNN effect if the majority of media coverage precedes policy change. If the majority of coverage follows policy change, however, then there is no effect, as the media is taking its cues from the government. In the Somalia case, the vast majority of media coverage followed the government's decision to intervene. If there were a CNN effect, significant media coverage should have emerged before. Furthermore, what media coverage did exist, according to the authors, originated from government officials who used the media to draw attention to the Somalia issue.<sup>176</sup> In the Kosovo case, Livingston believed that two different CNN effects challenged and, in some ways, negated each other, limiting the overall effect. While NATO bombing mistakes reducing support (the impediment effect) for the campaign, images of suffering Albanian refugees buttressed support.<sup>177</sup>

While this approach is more rigorous than the interview and media-based methods, some of its assumptions are questionable. In the Somalia case, for example, while it may be true that the desire for intervention originated from one

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<sup>174</sup> Steve Livingston and Todd Eachus, "Humanitarian Crises and U.S. Foreign Policy: Somalia and the CNN Effect Reconsidered," *Political Communication* 12, no. 4 (1995).

<sup>175</sup> Livingston, "Media Coverage of the War."

<sup>176</sup> Livingston and Eachus, "Humanitarian Crises," p.426.

<sup>177</sup> Livingston, "Media Coverage of the War," pp.379-81.

group in the government that promoted an agenda with the help of media images, it is not clear why this invalidates the CNN effect. The position of those desiring intervention, after all, was still at odds with official policy and required media image and framing to influence official policy. Given the complex and contentious nature of foreign policy making, often involving a struggle for influence amongst a number of interests, departments and individuals, it would not be surprising that certain groups within a government would favour a policy of intervention when it is a viable option. This does not mean that their calls for an intervention when it is not official policy negate the impact of media images that may emerge to strengthen their case at a future time. Without such images and accompanying framing, their original case would still have been too weak to push forward.

Livingston also discounts the CNN effect because the majority of the media coverage followed official action instead of preceding it.<sup>178</sup> While Livingston's scenario is one way in which the CNN effect can unfold, there are other ways that may be just as legitimate that his assumption omits. For example, in another scenario, only one powerful image may generate public outrage and government response, which can then trigger additional media coverage.<sup>179</sup> Although the coverage might be greater after the official response, the basis of that reaction was still the original media report. Also, given the fact that nothing sells in the media better than war, it is obvious that any government decision to engage in a military intervention is going to lead to a dramatic increase of media coverage, as has been

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<sup>178</sup> Livingston, "Clarifying the CNN Effect," p.8.

<sup>179</sup> Robinson calls such incidents "one-off shocking" events, and cites Srebrenica and the US marine dragged in Mogadishu as examples. Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, pp.38-9.

the case in all past military campaigns. The market realities of military engagements, in such cases, skew any attempt to conduct unprejudiced quantitative analysis. The more important questions to ask when validating the CNN effect are whether initial media reports, and especially those framed in a challenging manner to official policy, came before official actions or after, and whether these reports were an important contributor to the policy change?

### **The Policy-Media Interaction Model**

In the late 1990s, Piers Robinson introduced the policy-media interaction model, which he derived from a number of theoretical insights in the existing literature.<sup>180</sup> This model represents one of the most sophisticated attempts to create a measurement that might confirm or reject instances of the CNN effect. The model initially assumes a CNN effect is possible when two factors are in place: policy uncertainty and sympathetic media framing.<sup>181</sup>

For Robinson, policy uncertainty is defined as a function of the degree of consensus and co-ordination between governmental executive sub-systems (such as the U.S. State Department, Department of Defense, and White House) with respect to an issue. When there is no policy, an inconsistent/undecided policy or a wavering policy between these sub-systems on an issue, then it is assumed that policy uncertainty exists. If there is agreement and co-operation between the executive's sub-systems, then there is policy certainty. In seeking to identify the degree of policy certainty between sub-systems on an issue, Robinson reviews

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid., p.136.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., pp.25-45.

press statements and releases, a variety of secondary sources and conducts primary interviews with decision-makers from different government departments.<sup>182</sup>

The second important element necessary in the policy-media interaction model for a CNN effect is sympathetic framing that creates emotional proximity, focusing on the victims of a crisis in need of outside help. This type of framing can be accompanied by strong criticism of policy and policy makers, if they have not committed to a policy of intervention. Sympathetic framing is contrasted with distance framing, which is a style of coverage that creates emotional distance between the audience and the suffering, often referring to “ancient ethnic hatreds” with no clear victims, and giving an impression that the situation is beyond repair.<sup>183</sup> In identifying media framing, Robinson uses both interpretive and keyword analysis. Keyword analysis involves reviewing and quantifying empathy vs. distance and critical vs. supportive framing from key media sources.<sup>184</sup> If media framing is empathetic and critical (and there is policy uncertainty regarding military intervention), then a CNN effect is possible; if framing is distancing and supportive of a government set on a policy of non-intervention, then there is no possibility for a CNN effect.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., pp.26, 133-6.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., pp.27-9.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., p.30. Keywords such as women, children, elderly, people and refugee were considered empathic; keywords such as fighter, men and soldier were associated with distance framing; negative descriptions of policy such as failing were considered critical; positive descriptions of policy such as succeeding were considered supportive.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., pp.30-1.

Robinson's model, in line with the indexing hypothesis, also places emphasis on the role of elite consensus, suggesting that media criticism is unlikely when the elite are united on an issue.<sup>186</sup> By bringing this factor into the equation, a third condition on the possibility of the CNN effect besides policy uncertainty and sympathetic media framing is introduced. This condition also has the additional benefit of creating a synthesis between indexing and manufacturing consent theories, on the one hand, and theories advocating independent media power, on the other, allowing "us to make sense of both arguments."<sup>187</sup>

Amongst the number of CNN and other media effects that are alleged to exist, the policy-media interaction model is primarily designed to identify the strong CNN effect, which can be claimed when "media reports help drive or push policy-makers down a particular path...[becoming] a significant factor in influencing policy-makers' decisions to act."<sup>188</sup> The strong CNN effect also assumes that a substantial degree of media coverage is needed before a policy can shift in support of intervention due to media pressure on policy decision makers.<sup>189</sup> This requirement, in effect, places a fourth condition on Robinson's strong CNN effect. If smaller quantities of media coverage incline policy-makers to act, rather than create a political imperative to do so, then a weak CNN effect comes into play.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p.35.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., p.37.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p.38. Robinson identifies the minimum quantity of coverage required as at least one front-page newspaper story per day and a major segment within the first ten minutes of television evening news, sustained over at least three days. Alternatively, one-off shocking events such as the fall of the Srebrenica 'safe area' in Bosnia or images of the dead US marine dragged in Mogadishu also belong to the strong CNN effect.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., pp.38-9.



The policy-media interaction model is a more systematic account of the CNN effect than previous efforts, and incorporates a number of variables as prerequisites for such a classification. Its reliance on policy uncertainty, its use of case studies over relatively short periods, and its failure to systematically account for policy change (or the “effect” of the CNN effect) within the model, however, are all areas for potential improvement.

Regarding policy certainty, Robinson’s goal of applying a systematic approach through a sub-system analysis of policy is a significant improvement over past attempts that relied heavily on policy decision-maker recollection and opinion. But this method is often not fully applied in Robinson’s case studies. Instead, Robinson relies on opinions from secondary sources and interviews with policy decision makers. These sources, however, as Robinson himself pointed out in his critique of interview-based approach, are not systematic and often rely on subjective judgement calls that are not consistently applied across case studies. According to Robinson, “policy maker’s assessments of what is, and what is not, important with regard to any given decision is largely a matter of interpretation and perspective.”<sup>191</sup>

In Operation Restore Hope involving US intervention in Somalia, for example, Robinson argues that there was policy uncertainty because there was no policy of intervention.<sup>192</sup> But the lack of a policy of military intervention does not mean

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid., p.18.

<sup>192</sup> According to Robinson, “the absence of any mention of humanitarian intervention in the press briefings indicates that no decision had yet been made. This inference is consistent with other accounts of the policy process that indicate no decision regarding intervention was made during this period. According to the typology outlined in the methodology section, the existence of no policy with regard to an intervention indicates policy uncertainty during the period.” Ibid., p.54.

that there was no policy – it just means that there was a different policy in place.<sup>193</sup> The policy before the decision to intervene militarily with 28,000 troops was one of non-military intervention using aid flights. As Robinson himself attests, “in August 1992, Bush ordered a major airlift of relief supplies, an operation that was still going on come November.”<sup>194</sup> This was clearly a policy. While uncertainty over the US policy before November 1992, according to Robinson’s model, could have been determined through a sub-system analysis, such an analysis was never presented in the case study.<sup>195</sup>

There is also no sub-system analysis in the case study on Operation Provide Comfort involving US intervention in Northern Iraq.<sup>196</sup> Instead, Robinson states that there was policy certainty in the Bush administration before the intervention, relying largely on quotes from Bush, public statements from the Bush administration and secondary sources.<sup>197</sup> But there is no substantiation of agreement and co-operation between the executive’s sub-systems – the evidence identified as the basis for determining policy certainty.

Regarding US Bosnia policy after the Srebrenica massacre and before the decision to defend Gorazde (Robinson’s first Bosnia case study), Robinson again equates a

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<sup>193</sup> Robinson has stated that he is assessing policy uncertainty only in relation to armed intervention in order to keep the dependent variable (intervention) consistent across all cases. Correspondence with Robinson, 2 July 2004. This argument, however, suggests that all foreign policies that do not support armed intervention during a humanitarian crisis equal no policy and therefore equal policy uncertainty, even if the policy of non-intervention is certain, based on Robinson's own criteria.

<sup>194</sup> Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, p.60.

<sup>195</sup> According to Robinson, this was not needed as the limited media coverage before the decision to intervene militarily has already negated the possibility of a strong CNN effect. Correspondence with Robinson, 2 July 2004.

<sup>196</sup> According to Robinson, this was because it was a secondary case study. Correspondence with Robinson, 2 July 2004.

<sup>197</sup> Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, pp.64-5.

policy of non-military intervention to no policy. But once more, there was a policy in place. It just happened to be a policy of non-intervention that became inadequate in the light of the Srebrenica incident. Robinson refers to the US policy by quoting Bill Clinton during a 17 July 1995 meeting, where the US President states, “I don’t like where we are now...This policy is doing enormous damage to the United States and to our standing in the world. We look weak...[it] can only get worse down the road.”<sup>198</sup> Likewise, over a year earlier in the aftermath of the Sarajevo market-place massacre of 5 February 1994 (Robinson’s second Bosnia case study), Robinson again claims policy uncertainty, as no policy existed regarding a military response to the massacre.<sup>199</sup> Again, a policy did exist, but it became unsustainable in light of the latest events, which made the policy appear weak and unacceptable. Whereas Robinson assumes that policy uncertainty precedes the CNN effect, the evidence from the Bosnia case studies actually demonstrate the opposite – that it is the unexpected and emotive media images of events, such as those of a massacre’s aftermath, that create policy uncertainty. In short, policy uncertainty is not a precondition for the CNN effect – it is a consequence of it in cases when an official policy becomes untenable under the weight of new circumstances that have come to light due to recent shocking media images.

The policy-media interaction model is also limited methodologically by its reliance on relatively short case studies. In Somalia, for example, during the period before policy change when a CNN effect was a possibility, only twenty

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p.83.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., p.89.

days of media coverage were reviewed. The Bush policy of aid delivery before November, however, was active for four months. Furthermore, according to Robinson, the Somalia crisis was on the US government's radar for one and a half years before the military intervention.<sup>200</sup> Perhaps a review of both media and policy over this longer period may have yielded different results or at least provided a better explanation on the influence of media in the Somali intervention. The same was true of Bosnia, where Robinson only conducted a detailed review of media content for one week (11-18 July 1995), while, as Robinson stated, "US involvement did not occur all at once, but rather developed over a course of several months."<sup>201</sup> In his second case study on the aftermath of the Sarajevo market-place massacre, media analysis is even shorter at five days (5-9 February 1994).<sup>202</sup> But Bosnian policy, as Robinson suggested by quoting Anthony Lake, actually took three years of compounding negative media images to move towards armed intervention.<sup>203</sup> Assessing the relationship between media and policy over short periods can miss much of the subtlety of the policy-media dynamic that might be discerned from a longer period of analysis. While a policy with a high degree of political commitment may not change with one unexpected and emotive event, repeated episodes may weaken resolve, making the policy vulnerable to change with time.<sup>204</sup> Also, reviewing any single event by itself can be misleading, as the dynamic between that policy and media coverage is often based on a larger context, especially when consideration of intervention and war are a possibility. According to Anthony Lake, policy change in Bosnia was a function of an

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p.60.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., pp.73-4, 78-80.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., pp.90-1.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., p.83.

<sup>204</sup> The issue of political commitment is examined in more detail later in this chapter.

“accumulating effect” involving many repeated episodes of damaging media incidents that changed policy over time.<sup>205</sup>

Finally, the policy-media interaction model is limited by the fact that it does not account for the “effect” part of the CNN effect. In other words, while the model assumes that policy uncertainty, sympathetic framing, elite dissensus, and a significant degree of media coverage before a policy change leads to a strong CNN effect, the model does not provide a systematic mechanism to confirm whether policy actually did change and whether it shifted due to media coverage. If the model had a means by which to measure for changes in government policy, it could provide a more complete account of the CNN effect.

### **The Challenging CNN Effect Model – A New Research Approach**

The research methods employed in the literature provide many important theoretical insights on the CNN effect. The interview-based approach places emphasis on policy decision makers and the degree to which they attribute their decision-making to media influence. The findings from this approach argue that the CNN effect is limited, in general, but can occur when images from unexpected and emotive events emerge. The media-based method highlights the importance of media access and framing that challenges official policy. The quantitative approach points to the importance of sequence, suggesting that media coverage should precede government activity for a CNN effect. The policy-media interaction model reinforces the importance of challenging framing and the

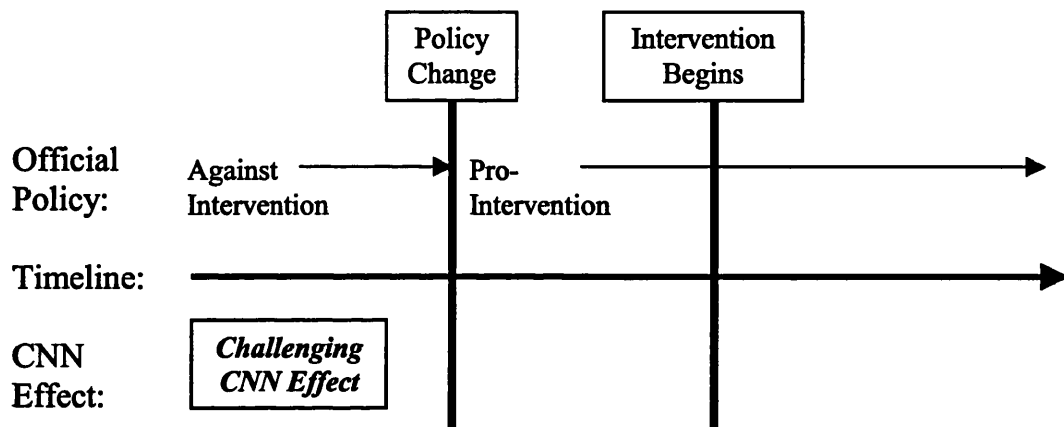
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<sup>205</sup> Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, p.83.

assumption that media coverage must precede policy change. It also points to the need for a multi-variable approach in qualifying the CNN effect. The approach that will be employed in the case study of this dissertation incorporates some of the key findings from each of these methods within the challenging CNN effect model.<sup>206</sup> Going forward, all references to the CNN effect, unless explicitly referred to as another type of CNN effect, relate to the challenging CNN effect. To begin, it is important to highlight the period when this type of CNN effect may occur in an idealised timeline involving a third-party military intervention, as presented in Graph 3-1:

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<sup>206</sup> It should be noted that the model itself is not under test here. To test this model, a number of proven cases of the CNN effect must first be available from which this model can be validated. As such cases are not available, it is not possible to test the model. Robinson presents a similar rationale for the inability to test the policy-media interaction model in *Ibid.*, pp.139-40.

**Graph 3-1: The Challenging CNN Effect Timeline**

As graph 3-1 illustrates, in an idealised setting, a timeline involving a military intervention will usually have three phases. Phase one is the period when official policy on a particular issue is against military intervention. Phase two is the period when policy has changed in favour of an intervention but before the intervention has begun. Phase three is the period after the intervention has commenced. In this timeline, the challenging CNN effect is at play during the period when official policy is against intervention right to up to the period when policy has officially changed, but is not relevant after an official policy changes to support intervention.

For the CNN effect to occur, requirements from both the media and government are essential. In terms of the media, the key finding in the literature highlighted three factors that are important in validating occurrences of the CNN effect. The first is access to the territory where images need to be captured – without access, as evidenced by case studies of Southern Iraq and the Sudan, there are no images and therefore no CNN effect. The issue of access, of course, is not only a logistical one, but also part of the larger political struggle over what is newsworthy.<sup>207</sup> In this struggle, Gadi Wolfsfeld provides an informative model, depicting access as a conflict between those with political power (authorities) and those without (challengers). According to the model, while political power brings important advantages, it does not guarantee full control over access. Other variables such as the challengers' political and social status, organisation and resources, and behaviour, all play important roles in gaining control of the

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<sup>207</sup> Logistics, of course, is critical. For example, the British were greatly aided in their desire to control the media during the Falklands campaign due to the remoteness of the conflict location.



political environment and ultimately access.<sup>208</sup> When challengers have limited status, organisation and resources, they must employ exceptional behaviour to gain media access and such behaviour must constantly be reproduced and even escalated to remain newsworthy.<sup>209</sup>

The second media requirement for a CNN effect is unexpected and emotive images of events from the territory accessed. Such events can be intentionally generated by the exceptional behaviour of challengers, or unintentional, as seen by the substantial media coverage surrounding natural disasters with high casualties.

The growing prevalence of images from such unexpected events has been facilitated in the late 1990s and early twentieth century by advancements in technology and news delivery format, as manifested by the growth of events-driven news that can evade the control mechanisms of traditional institutional-based news.<sup>210</sup> The possibility of avoiding such controls means that governments, which cannot anticipate such events, are instead forced to react to them.<sup>211</sup> Under such scenarios, opportunities arise for challengers to the government's official position to promote an alternative explanation of unexpected events, and the media has greater leverage to formulate framing independent of official policy.

The third media variable that is essential for a CNN effect is framing that challenges official policy, making it appear misguided or ineffective. Such framing, in the context of a potential intervention, is often sympathetic to a particular party, presenting them as innocent victims in need of outside help.

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<sup>208</sup> Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, pp.13-30.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., pp.20-1.

<sup>210</sup> Livingston and Bennett, "Gatekeepers," p.373.

<sup>211</sup> Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, p.25.

Images of victims are amongst the most powerful means of delivering a frame, as they provide human interest, drama, as well as moral lessons about good and evil.<sup>212</sup> The most effective frames employ images and accompanying narratives that are highly salient to the culture that they are targeting, meaning they are noticeable, understandable, memorable and emotionally charged.<sup>213</sup> Effective frames can tap into clusters of connected ideas and feelings stored in the long-term memory of most the members of a particular culture and evoke a particular interpretive process in the human mind.<sup>214</sup>

In the context of third-party interventions, for example, references to ethnic cleansing and massacred victims might evoke negative thoughts about the Holocaust and other recent human tragedies to Westerners, on the one hand, followed by a desire to act in order to stop such scenarios from reoccurring. According the Robert Entman, “words and images for which the culture’s common schemas evoke strong emotional responses have a greater probability of influencing more people than other words and images, if only because emotional stimuli typically receive more attention from otherwise distracted, apolitical citizens.”<sup>215</sup> While governments have significant resources to effectively communicate and exploit cultural preferences in promoting their policy, alternative frames that challenge official policy can at times have greater cultural

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid., pp.38-9.

<sup>213</sup> Entman, *Projections of Power*, p.6.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., pp.6-7. For example, media reports referring to Osama bin Laden would likely trigger a combination of negative and positive feelings for Americans, involving negativity and anger towards the burning buildings, hijackers and terrorism, while generating positive feelings towards the New York fire department and New York Mayor Giuliani. Robert Entman's insights are based on recent research in the fields of psychology and physiology, the latter involving recent advances in neurological research using brain imaging technology. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to review this subject in more detail.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., p.170.

salience, particularly if challenging narratives are a better fit with recent events and images.

Access, unexpected events and challenging framing constitute the media criteria for a possible CNN effect. These variables, however, are only the first part of the model and by themselves do not demonstrate influence. To demonstrate impact, changes in government policy after events meeting these media criteria are also necessary. Therefore, the second part of this model attempts to provide evidence of changing government policy as well as links between such shifts and their media coverage. This is done through the use of four research methods, which will be employed in a case study in the second section of this dissertation. These research methods are referred to as tests and in this dissertation are referred to as the quantitative, coding, policy substance, and linkage tests, respectively. Each of these tests provides means by which evidence can be gathered in support of the second part of the CNN effect. The follow section reviews these in more detail:

### *The Quantitative Test*

The quantitative test, in line with the quantitative approaches outlined earlier, attempts to determine if media coverage preceded or followed government activity in relation to the events outlined earlier. For a CNN effect, media coverage, in relation to the events meeting the media criteria, should precede government activity. If media coverage follows government actions, then an argument in support of the CNN effect becomes more difficult to sustain.

### *The Coding Test*

The second test involves coding the content of relevant government documents to assess if discernable shifts can be detected over time on particular issues, especially in periods immediately after events meeting the media criteria for a CNN effect. It is assumed, in this regard, that changes in the content of government documents over time are one proxy for changing policy. In the context of third-party military interventions, three factors that are indicative of such change are blame, framing and the propensity for military intervention. If, for example, potential interveners increasingly blame one party, adopt the frame of the other and mention the possibility of a military solution more frequently and aggressively over time, it can be argued that the policy is shifting towards military intervention.

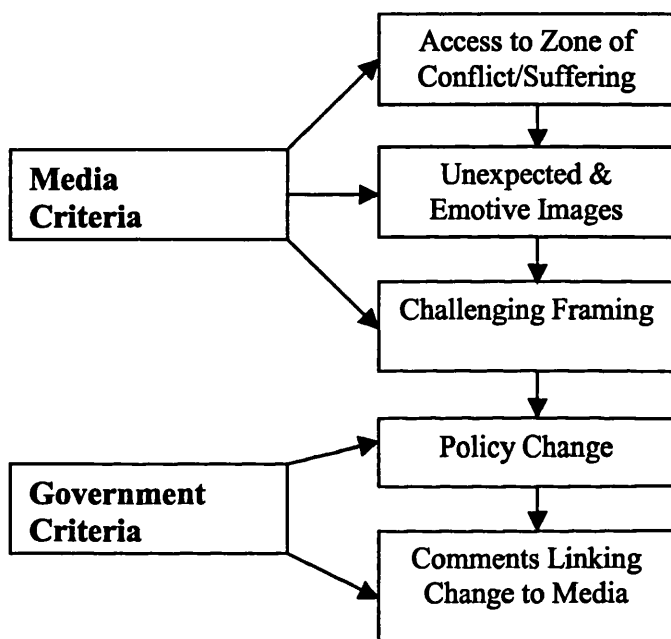
### *The Policy Substance Test*

The third test reviews government policy before and immediately after incidents meeting the media criteria for a CNN effect. If the substance of policy has changed in the immediate aftermath of the incident, and no other significant event has occurred in this time period, then the timing of such a change suggests that it was a reaction to the event, adding further evidence for the CNN effect. In the following chapter, the issue of policy substance is assessed in more detail, distinguishing different aspects of a policy that will be important in the dissertation's case study, where the policy substance test is applied.

*The Linkage Test*

Finally, if there is evidence of policy substance change after events meeting the media criteria for the CNN effect, comments of key decision makers are reviewed to assess whether the media's portrayal of the incidents are cited as a factor in the decision to change policy. Such a connection is critical for the CNN effect, because it is not only important to demonstrate that policy changed after such events, but to link the policy change to the media images and framing of the events.

While none of these four research strategies on their own provide a sufficient case supporting the CNN effect, they generate substantial evidence for such an outcome in combination. Graph 3-2 outlines the five criteria (or steps) of the challenging CNN effect model in graphical format:

**Graph 3-2: The Challenging CNN Effect Model**

When substantial evidence from the challenging CNN effect model exists, it is important to clarify the nature of the effect. First, the CNN effect, using Nick Wheeler's distinction, does not necessarily need to be "determining," but can often be "enabling," creating a short-term environment or window of opportunity in which policy can move forward.<sup>216</sup> It is assumed that such opportunities emerge within a competitive policy-making framework, in which different sub-systems and agents struggle to promote different policy outcomes. Policy making, as such, is not a unitary or necessarily rational affair, but subject to bargaining and negotiation amongst competing interests within the government.<sup>217</sup> In the context of a third-party military intervention, when unexpected and emotive media images and framing of events emerge that challenge official policy, agents within the government decision-making apparatus in favour of an interventionist policy gain leverage over those opposed. In most cases, such leverage gains weaken the hand of those sub-systems and agents supporting the official policy of non-intervention, and repeated episodes of challenging, unexpected and emotive images, as mentioned, can have an accumulating effect, deteriorating the defenders of the official policy to the point of making their position untenable.

Second, the nature of the CNN effect, as outlined here, can more accurately be described as one of influence on policy rather than dictate. This is because the media, or any other single factor, can almost never fully account for a policy shift,

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<sup>216</sup> It should be noted that the interpretation of the enabling effect here is different than that of Piers Robinson, who sees it as a means by which policy makers pursue an agenda already decided upon by using the media to build public support. This interpretation of the enabling effect falls within the definition of the propaganda effect in this dissertation. Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, pp.40-1.

<sup>217</sup> This is the inherent assumption within the bureaucratic model of policy decision making, and is elaborated upon in chapter four.

given the complexities and multiple variables that influence policy. In addition, in conducting this study, the goal is not to prove a CNN effect, but merely to collect corroborating evidence from multiple methods in order to structure a convincing argument for one.<sup>218</sup> The CNN effect model presented here will serve as a tool in this regard.

Finally, there is one more important issue that must be addressed in validating the CNN effect relating to whether policy change, in cases where the criteria for the CNN effect are met, occurs due to the media coverage of the event or the event itself.<sup>219</sup> To argue a CNN effect, it is important to show that the event itself was not the basis for policy change, but rather that the media coverage of the event was instrumental to the outcome. One way to argue the salience of media coverage is to show that the event itself was not significant but was made so by media coverage. In the context of a third-party military intervention, for example, if it can be shown that a particular incident was relatively insignificant in the larger scheme of suffering, but that media focus on that event made it stand out as a focus of policy debate, then it can be argued that it was the media's role that was key in policy change, not the event itself. When applying the model to the case study in the second section of this dissertation, such an analysis will be incorporated to further validate or invalidate the CNN effect.

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<sup>218</sup> According to Gadi Wolfsfeld, "One can never prove that the news media played a central role in a political conflict. The goal is to collect as much evidence as possible, from as many sources as possible, in order to make an informed assessment about the extent of media influence." Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, p.73.

<sup>219</sup> I thank Piers Robinson for this point. Correspondence from Robinson, 13 June 2004.



### **The CNN Effect and Macro Influences**

While the CNN effect, based on this dissertation's model, occurs if the criteria outlined above are met, such an outcome is not purely instrumental and does not operate in a vacuum. Rather, it is bound by the political culture, context and cost that heavily influence the possibility of its emergence. These political factors all relate to and influence each other and determine the degree of political commitment a government has to the status quo policy. The following section reviews these factors:

#### *Political Culture*

Political culture is defined as the collective historical experience of a political community and is generally associated with a set of commonly held traditions, practices and beliefs within the community.<sup>220</sup> Political culture informs first principles and common positions on issues of power distribution and their interpretation or framing. For example, it may be claimed that democracy is an integral part of America's political culture. While core beliefs and principles operate at a deeper level of political culture and are generally stable, their application in international politics can be fluid and subject to change, based on the experience of a political community in relation to different communities and circumstances. Political culture can either change gradually through incremental events and the actions of agents such as social movements, or more rapidly through catastrophic experiences and crises. The 1941 Pearl Harbour and the 9/11

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<sup>220</sup> This same factor has also been referred to as "societal culture," which is "understood to operate at the broadest level, meaning the predominant norms, values, and beliefs of a community." See Pippa Norris, Kern, Montague and Marion Just, "Framing Terrorism," in *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government and the Public*, ed. Pippa Norris, Kern, Montague and Marion Just (New York: Routledge, 2003), p.12.

attacks on the United States, it can be argued, played a significant role in shifting America's political culture in relations to the international community away from isolationism and towards engagement in a relatively short period.

Political culture is dialectical at times and subject to competing values that can tug a political community in different directions. In relation to a third-party intervention, the struggle between the values of order and justice serve as a good example, in this regard. Whereas a conflict between one group of insurgents and their government might be viewed by one third-party as an illegitimate set of terrorist acts, another could see it as a legitimate fight for justice against repression. What makes one insurgent a terrorist and another a freedom fighter certainly has to do with their tactics and the circumstances of their particular conflict, but cannot be divorced from the relationship of different cultures and their historic bonds and common experiences. More often than not, political communities will support other political communities with similar values and historical experiences. While Hamas might be more indiscriminate and brutal in its killings than the KLA, the reasons why the United States supports Israel and bombed Serbia (in tacit alliance with the KLA) go much deeper than the tactics employed by the two groups.

As mentioned earlier, when media images and accompanying framing expose an official policy at odds with political culture, journalists have opportunities to interpret issues in ways that challenge official policy, creating pressure on decision makers to change policy. If political culture is at odds with official policy, it will also likely create elite political dissensus, which will provide

additional fodder to media critique. Culture, however, is more often a limiting factor on the possibility of a CNN effect, setting boundaries on what constitutes legitimate challenge to official policy. According to Entman, government framing can either be congruent, ambiguous or incongruent with political culture.<sup>221</sup> The more congruent the government framing is with its political culture, the better its chances of selling its policy: "The most inherently powerful frames are those fully congruent with schemas habitually used by most members of society."<sup>222</sup> When government policy is culturally congruent, media will be severely limited in reporting challenging framing, and risks reprimand and intense public pressure for stepping outside the boundaries of legitimate critique. After 11 September 2001 and during the 2003 Iraq War, a number of journalists that challenged the dominant framework, for example, were dismissed from their posts.<sup>223</sup>

While there is no ideal way to identify when official policy is at odds with political culture, public opinion polling and rising elite dissensus are good indicators of such fissures.<sup>224</sup> Public opinion polling, despite its limitations, has become increasingly accurate in this regard since the end of the Cold War.<sup>225</sup>

Public opinion polling is particularly useful as an indicator of majority preferences

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<sup>221</sup> Entman, *Projections of Power*, pp.14-15, 174. Entman compares his classification with Hallin's three spheres of political discourse: consensus, legitimate controversy, and deviance.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., p.14.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., pp.15-16, 174.

<sup>224</sup> Kenneth F. Warren, *In Defense of Public Opinion Polling* (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 2001), p.69. According to Warren, polling over several decades on a number of issues has been a valuable means to gain historical information on changing elements of American culture.

<sup>225</sup> In the United States, all interventions/wars since at least the end of the Cold War were backed by majority support in opinion polls. Regarding Bosnia, for example, a detailed review of opinion polls demonstrated that most Americans were in favour of air strikes by late 1993. See R. Sobel, "To Intervene or Not to in Bosnia: That Was the Question for the United States and Europe," in *Decisionmaking in a Glass House: Mass Media, Public Opinion, and American and European Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, ed. Brigitte Nacos, Robert Shapiro, and Pierangelo Isernia (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2000), p.114; In Kosovo, a slight majority of American supported the air campaign throughout the 78 days of bombing. Livingston, "Media Coverage of the War," p.377.

when poll results are accumulated over significant periods of time.<sup>226</sup> While incongruence between political culture and official policy is an essential step towards a CNN effect, it by no means guarantees one. The political context, cost and commitment to existing policy also act to temper such a potential outcome.

### *Political Context*

Another important limitation on the CNN effect relates to the political context, as determined by the perceived geopolitical security threats of the time. In general, the more likely that a nation's survival is believed to be at risk, the less likely it will be for the CNN effect to emerge. A useful model, in this regard, is put forward by William Perry and Ashton Carter, who suggest that there are primarily three types of security risk environments that determine the levels of strategic interest—A, B and C list threats.<sup>227</sup> “A list” security threats are those that relate to state survival. The First and Second World War and the Soviet threat during the Cold War represented such a threat to the West. Under such conditions, the CNN effect is highly improbable, as concern for state survival will take precedence over concern for others. When survival is believed to be at stake, all foreign policy thinking is organised, and all issues are associated with, this dominant paradigm, leaving little room for alternative interpretations to emerge.<sup>228</sup> “B list” security threats do not impact survival but are imminent threats to Western interests and could have dire consequences for the accustomed way of life, such as the standard of living. The 1991 Gulf War and the threat to affordable Middle East energy supplies represented such a threat. The last type of threat comes from the “C list”

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<sup>226</sup> Entman, *Projections of Power*, p.127.

<sup>227</sup> Cited in Nye Jr., “Redefining NATO's Mission,” pp.12-15.

<sup>228</sup> Entman, *Projections of Power*, p.95.

which are threats that do not directly affect Western interest, but are nonetheless important contingencies that have indirect consequences for these interests. In this list, human rights and their violation often play an important role. According to Joseph Nye, the “C list” dominated US foreign policy engagement for most of the 1990s largely due to the perceived absence of “A list” threats.<sup>229</sup> It is in such a context, often involving intervention in “other people’s wars” or humanitarian crises, in which the CNN effect is most likely to emerge. For Robert Entman, the end of the Cold War provided media with a chance to be “unmoored” from the Cold War paradigm and gain a new level of independence from the government: “With the disappearance of the Red Menace, invoking patriotism to block opposition becomes more difficult, opening space for more independent influence by the media in defining problems and suggesting remedies.”<sup>230</sup>

### *Political Cost*

Political cost refers to the detrimental impact to the maintenance of power domestically and influence internationally. In a military intervention, troop and civilian casualties, the financial burden of fighting, and the impact on prestige, amongst other factors, all add to the political cost. Political cost is another important factor that limits the potential for a CNN effect. In general, the greater the price that needs to be paid to successfully intervene, the less likely that media will influence policy. According to Steven Livingston, there are at least eight different types of interventions that use the military.<sup>231</sup> These are consensual

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<sup>229</sup> Nye Jr., “Redefining NATO’s Mission,” pp.12-15.

<sup>230</sup> Entman, *Projections of Power*, p.96.

<sup>231</sup> Livingston, “Clarifying the CNN Effect,” Livingston’s intervention types were adapted from Richard Haas, *Intervention: The Use of American Military Force in the Post-Cold War World* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment Book, 1994).

humanitarian interventions, imposed humanitarian interventions, peacekeeping, peacemaking, special operations and low-intensity conflict (SOLIC), tactical deterrence, strategic deterrence, and conventional warfare.<sup>232</sup> Each type of intervention in this sequence requires greater cost, with conventional war usually incurring the greatest burden. But even in a conventional war, costs vary based on the nature of the engagement and the relative strength of the adversary. As such, a war by the US against a medium power such as Serbia would be far less costly than one against a great power such as China, making the likelihood of the CNN effect much greater in the former case. Of course, the political cost is intricately intertwined with the political context and culture. When survival is believed to be at stake, political culture would likely dictate the willingness to pay a higher price than in cases involving the saving of strangers. As such, John F. Kennedy could confidently ask Americans during the Cold War to “pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, [and] oppose any foe.”<sup>233</sup> This can be contrasted to the 1999 NATO war against Serbia, where Clinton, fearing a public backlash over potential casualties, publicly ruled out the option of ground

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<sup>232</sup> Consensual humanitarian interventions involve the use of the military to aid a distressed population solely to save lives, not to change political circumstances. Examples include US assistance to refugees in Goma, Zaire in 1994 after the Rwandan genocide, and US assistance to Bangladesh in 1991 after a devastating cyclone. Imposed humanitarian interventions involve missions using the military to create a secure environment for sustaining distressed populations. Examples include the 1992 intervention in Somalia up to the summer of 1993 and Kurdish safe havens in northern Iraq since April 1991. Peacekeeping involves the deployment of lightly armed forces in a consensual environment, with only small-scale breakdowns in peace. US peacekeeping forces in Macedonia are an example. Peacemaking involves missions in which not all disputing parties agree to the presence of outside peacekeepers. Though peacekeepers will likely be heavily armed, it is distinct from conventional war as the goal is not to inflict destruction on a party, but rather to create conditions through the implementation of an accord for peacekeeping. SOLIC involves the deployment of Special Forces for specific missions such as counter-terrorism and hostage rescue and infiltration into enemy territory. During the Gulf War, America's Delta Force was allegedly involved in destroying Iraqi Scud missile batteries in Iraq. Tactical and strategic deterrence involves persuading an opponent that the costs of a particular action outweigh the benefits. Tactical deterrence may involve a one-time or short-term deployment to send a message, whereas as strategic deterrence is aimed for the longer term, such as presence of US troops in South Korea to deter the North from invasion. See Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Quoted in Entman, *Projections of Power*, p.95.

forces at the start of the campaign, and flew fighter jets at 15,000 feet and did not authorise the use of Apache helicopters, due to their high risk of being shot down.

### *Political Commitment*

While culture, context and cost strongly influence the possibility of a CNN effect, they also each play an important role in influencing the political commitment a government has, or at least agents within the government supporting the official policy have, to a policy under challenge. The level of political commitment to a policy plays a significant role in determining the possibility of the CNN effect.

As outlined earlier, much of the CNN effect literature places a premium on the degree of policy clarity in determining the possibility of the CNN effect.

However, as Robin Brown has pointed out, the key issue regarding policy change is not clarity but the degree of commitment. Using Keohane and Nye's distinction between sensitivity and vulnerability, Brown differentiates policy that is sensitive – concerned with media coverage to the point of being monitored, managed and responded to – from policy that is vulnerable – concerned that media coverage might change policy either directly or indirectly.<sup>234</sup> The CNN effect, as defined in this dissertation, only comes into play when policy is already vulnerable.

However, it should be noted that media influence can also play a role in turning a policy with a high degree of commitment into one that becomes sensitive, or turning a sensitive policy into a vulnerable one. This is because the influence of media on policy over an issue, as noted earlier, can take months or even years to unfold due to an accumulative effect.

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<sup>234</sup> Robin Brown, "Clausewitz in the Age of CNN: Rethinking the Military-Media Relationship," in *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government and the Public*, ed. Pippa Norris, Kern, Montague and Marion Just (New York: Routledge, 2003), p.51.

## Alternatives to the CNN Effect

Two alternative theories that suggest strong government and elite influence over media output and also challenge the validity of the CNN effect are indexing (or the “indexing hypothesis”) and hegemony (or “manufacturing consent”).

Indexing suggests that journalists largely source and limit the slant of their coverage to reflect the range of opinions within their government, often within elite forums such as Congressional debates in the United States. Indexing political elites has practical benefits for journalists and editors, who have an easy and defensible source when questioned by corporate managers and concerned citizens.<sup>235</sup> Based on empirical studies of foreign policy crises, indexing shows that the scope of criticism narrows when national interests are clearer to elites and when significant risks to troops exist. As a result, journalists rarely question government policy in times of crisis or war and often tend to rally around the flag.<sup>236</sup> Daniel Hallin pioneered and conducted one of the most widely cited studies in support of indexing in *The Uncensored War*. In this landmark survey on the role of media during the Vietnam War, Hallin challenged the widely held conviction that television turned opinion against the war, and instead argued that television largely followed elite opinion from a position of consensus at the beginning of the war to one of increasing division after 1968.<sup>237</sup> Other notable studies by Lance Bennett and Jonathan Mermin, amongst others, backed up Hallin’s conclusions, while providing additional clarifications. Bennet’s key

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<sup>235</sup> W. Lance Bennett, "Towards a Theory of Press-State Relations in the United States," *Journal of Communication* 40, no. 2 (1990): p.125.

<sup>236</sup> John Zaller and Dennis Chiu, "Government's Little Helper: US Press Coverage of Foreign Policy Crisis, 1946-1999," in *Decisionmaking in a Glass House: Mass Media, Public Opinion, and American and European Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, ed. Brigitte Nacos, Robert Shapiro, and Pierangelo Isernia (Lanhan, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2000), pp.61-3.

<sup>237</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*.



study demonstrated that debates in the *New York Times* closely followed those in the US Congress in the 1980s over the Nicaragua conflict.<sup>238</sup> Mermin's study found not only a correlation version of the indexing hypothesis, demonstrating that media coverage followed elite policy debate, but also a marginalisation version, suggesting that critical viewpoints not articulated in the government were either ignored or relegated to the margins of the news.<sup>239</sup>

Despite its dominance amongst political communications scholars, indexing has been challenged on a number of alleged shortcomings. These include methodological critiques, such as the omission of non-American sources cited in American television news broadcasts;<sup>240</sup> the failure to distinguish criticism of the means, context and ends; and the use of proxy data instead of full text sources that might under-represented criticism. In a study of the 1990-1991 Gulf War using a more rigorous indexing research design, Althaus found much greater journalistic independence than suggested by previous studies.<sup>241</sup> Findings included the discovery of extensive criticism sourced in the news from sources outside the US government including journalists themselves, challenging the notion that official debate regulates media criticism. He also found significant disagreement over

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<sup>238</sup> Bennett, "Towards a Theory of Press-State Relations in the United States," pp.103-25.

<sup>239</sup> Mermin, *Debating War and Peace*, p.143.

<sup>240</sup> Mermin, for example, omits non-American sources from his analysis, arguing that such sources have no credibility with American audiences. To support his case, he cites Iraqi rhetoric on holy war during the prelude to the 1991 Gulf War, which held no sway with Americans. While Mermin may be correct in this extreme example, there may be other cases in which foreign sources could, in fact, influence American opinion. Following the 2003 Iraq War, for example, television images of Iraqis not welcoming the Americans as liberators, as many had assumed, could certainly influence American opinion on the War, as could the comments of UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, who was extremely popular in the United States at the time. By not including foreign sources in an analysis of media-policy relations on a particular international issue, Mermin is likely biasing his research results. Ibid, p.13.

<sup>241</sup> Scott L. Althaus, "When News Norms Collide, Follow the Lead: New Evidence of Press Independence," *Political Communication* 20, no. 4 (2003): pp.381-414.

tactical matters while concurring consensus on first principles and strategic dimensions as might be traditionally suggested by the indexing hypothesis.

According to Althaus,

The 1990-1991 Persian Gulf crisis had all the elements that should have undermined press independence: a unified executive, a deferential Congress, a military buildup signalling American intentions for war, and an easy villain in Saddam Hussein. Yet, by closely examining the pathways and processes by which critical voices entered the news about the Gulf crisis, this study reveals that television news did not merely shadow the debate occurring among U.S. officials. Journalists frequently presented competing perspectives and were often the instigators rather than merely gatekeepers of critical viewpoints. These findings suggest that the press was much more independent in reporting the Persian Gulf crisis than scholars of political communication usually presume it to be.<sup>242</sup>

Furthermore, the indexing hypothesis does not necessarily contradict the claims of the CNN effect model outlined in this chapter, because the same studies that have supported indexing have failed to disprove its antithesis – that government elites develop their positions based on the media. The inability to conclude decisively who leads whom opens up a third plausible explanation: that both journalists and elites in a given society take similar positions because they come from the same culture and are inclined towards similar culturally conditioned responses. This is an explanation that Zaller and Chiu cannot rule out based on an extensive study of

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<sup>242</sup> Ibid., p.402.

42 foreign policy crises between 1945 and 1999.<sup>243</sup> Commenting on the work of Lance Bennett, Zaller and Chiu conclude, “The empirical results are equally consistent with the thesis of press dependence on Congress, with a thesis of congressional dependence on the press, and with a thesis that some “third factor” causes both press slant and congressional opinion, thereby inducing a spurious correlation between them.”<sup>244</sup> Reference to a “third factor” leads to one of the key assumptions of this dissertation – that media and political elites are both ultimately bound by their political culture. Some advocates of indexing seem to have perhaps inadvertently already assumed this in their research. In his assessment of the 1991 Gulf War, for example, Mermin refers to the public while looking at the anti-war movement, stating: “one does not expect mass demonstrations against American foreign policy to have much influence on elite commentators, unless there is evidence of a general deterioration in public support.”<sup>245</sup> Separately, research on British media coverage of the 2003 Iraq War also demonstrates indexing based on perceived public opinion rather than elite opinion, providing additional evidence of deeper influences at work.<sup>246</sup>

While the indexing hypothesis effectively demonstrates a link between media criticism and elite dissensus under some research designs, it does not address the more important question of why elite political dissent emerges in the first place. As such, the indexing hypothesis is largely instrumentalist in nature. The CNN

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<sup>243</sup> A foreign policy crisis is defined by the authors as “an emergency situation in which the United States uses, threatens to use, or considers using military force or aid as a means to pursue foreign policy objectives. Major escalations of force within an ongoing crisis are also considered foreign policy crises.” Zaller and Chiu, “Government’s Little Helper,” pp.63-64.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., p.68.

<sup>245</sup> Mermin, *Debating War and Peace*, p.108.

<sup>246</sup> Robin Brown, “Covering the War: The Media Management Paradox and the Gulf War” (paper presented at the International Studies Association 2004 Conference, Montreal, Canada, 17 March 2004), p.11.

effect model presented earlier argues that dissent (or challenge) to official policy emerges when there are incongruencies between political culture and the official policy. When such gaps emerge, it is assumed that criticism from both the media and government elite is likely to follow.

Another challenge to the CNN effect is hegemonic theory that claims a more dominant role for elites and the government. Although variations of this theme exist, it is most commonly linked to the work of Chomsky and Herman and their legendary book, *Manufacturing Consent*, in which the authors claim that media news is selected and presented in ways that promote the interests of powerful elite in government and business.<sup>247</sup> This selection is the outcome of a five-part filtering process involving corporate, advertising, sourcing, flak and ideological (anti-communism during Cold War and anti-terrorism post 9/11) filters.<sup>248</sup> Far from being autonomous, Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model claims that journalists and the media are propaganda tools that the elite use to manufacture consent of the masses for the purpose of forwarding their own interests, often under the guise of collective interests. In foreign policy, for example, what are presented as the interests of a nation, in fact, might be the true interests of only the elite within that state and detrimental to the poor and working classes. In brief, hegemonic models argue that media systems reflect the distribution of economic,

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<sup>247</sup> Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988).

<sup>248</sup> Eric Herring and Piers Robinson, "Too Polemical or Too Critical? Chomsky on the Study of the News Media and US Foreign Policy," *Review of International Studies* 29, no. 4 (2003): pp.555-56.

political and symbolic power in society.<sup>249</sup>

Although the manufacturing consent thesis puts forward an attractive and convincing case at times, its critics point to methodological problems in its selective use of evidence, ideologically driven political activism, polemical style, and conspiratorial and deterministic conclusions.<sup>250</sup> Critics also point to examples of media coverage that should not have made it through the propaganda model, but nonetheless did, such as the US media's coverage of the 1988 gassing of Kurds at Halabja by Saddam Hussein – at the time enjoying American support in his war against Iran.<sup>251</sup> There is also evidence that media coverage of political leaders has become increasingly cynical over the last decades of the twentieth century, with negative coverage outnumbering positive by the 1990s.<sup>252</sup> Furthermore, there are prizes, promotion and prestige for journalists who uncover shocking and disturbing aspects of the social and political world, and these findings do not usually benefit authorities. The growing trend towards investigative reporting, if fact, thrives on demonstrating the corrupting influence of power.<sup>253</sup> According to Wolfsfeld, "There is a long tradition in the Western news media that sets a high value on stories that show how those in power are

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<sup>249</sup> Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang, "Noam Chomsky and the Manufacture of Consent for American Foreign Policy," *Political Communication* 21, no. 1 (2004): p.94.

<sup>250</sup> For a critique of Herman and Chomsky, see *Ibid.*, and Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang, "Response to Herman and Chomsky," *Political Communication* 21, no. 1 (2004). Although Herman and Chomsky have strongly countered these accusations in Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, "Reply to Kurt and Gladys Engel Lang," *Political Communication* 21, no. 1 (2004), and Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman, "Further Reply to the Langs," *Political Communication* 21, no. 1 (2004); Herring and Robinson, "Too Polemical," pp.553,60-61.

<sup>251</sup> Lang and Lang, "Noam Chomsky," p.110.

<sup>252</sup> A study of political election coverage by Patterson found a growing trend of negative coverage of US Presidential elections between 1960 and 1992. Cited in Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, p.37.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.37-8.

corrupt, cruel, and incompetent.”<sup>254</sup> Herman and Chomsky, of course, admit the limitations in their model, suggesting that factors such as the limited autonomy of media organisations, individual and professional values, and the imperfect enforcement of media policy, lead to “some measure of dissent and reporting that calls into question the accepted viewpoint.”<sup>255</sup>

Further limitations to hegemonic theory are evident in accounts of the NATO intervention and peacekeeping mission in Kosovo, where hegemonic theorists have suggested that the United States bombed Serbia to show its dominance over Europe and to maintain its global hegemony.<sup>256</sup> However, the suggestion that the United States intervened in Kosovo to justify additional troops in the Balkans flies in the face of evidence suggesting the opposite. In fact, it was the Europeans who insisted the United States commit peacekeeping troops in Kosovo as a precondition for their participation in the NATO bombing, and European pressure that prevented the United States from pulling its troops out against strong domestic pressure to do so.<sup>257</sup>

As with indexing, the CNN effect has certain congruencies with hegemonic theory. As mentioned earlier, for the CNN effect to be possible, framing that challenges official policy is necessary. This dissent is only possible, however, if it

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid., p.37.

<sup>255</sup> Chomsky and Herman, "Further Reply," p.113.

<sup>256</sup> Diana Johnstone, "NATO and the New World Order: Ideals and Self-Interest," in *Degraded Capability: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis*, ed. Philip Hammond and Edward S. Herman (London: Pluto Press, 2000), pp.16-17.

<sup>257</sup> Many Americans, particularly from the Republican Party, were highly suspicious of Clinton's interventions, seeing them as naive idealism outside national security interests. See Fearon and Laitin, "Neotrusteeship and the Problem of Weak States," pp.5-6; Michael Cooper, "The 2000 Campaign: The Republican Running Mate; Cheney Urges Rethinking Use of U.S. Ground Forces in Bosnia and Kosovo," *New York Times*, 1 September, 2000, p.A22.

is congruent with the culture of the state from which the media emerges. Political culture as a limiting variable on media coverage has similarities to the filters of the propaganda model, which also act to limit what is presented and the way it is framed. Of the five filters, the ideological filter is closest to the notion of culture as a limiter, especially when a dominant ideology presides within the culture. However, whereas the ideological filter of the propaganda model assumes ideology to originate from the elite, whose interests it serves, the cultural argument suggests that the foundation of a dominant ideology, if there is indeed one present within a culture, originates from the common historical experiences of a political community. Ideology in the propaganda model is artificial to the people and imposed from above. The cultural argument, on the other hand, assumes such ideology to be genuinely embedded amongst the masses.

This distinction, and the limits of the propaganda model, can be illustrated in a comparison of Al-Iraqiya and Al-Jazeera satellite television news during the 2003/04 US-led occupation of Iraq. As the US-backed and financed Al-Iraqiya presents the framework of those in power (the United States and its domestic partners), it should have successfully manufactured consent amongst the Iraqi population to its positions, according to the propaganda model. Yet it has not achieved its ends, as its frames, at least near the time of its inception, have clashed with the culture it has attempted to win over. Al-Jazeera, on the other hand, presents positions closer to the culture of the Iraqi and Arab world, which have been cultivated over decades of common experience in relation to the West. As

such, its framework is viewed as legitimate and accurate and its audience, amongst those who can afford satellite, is significantly greater than Al-Iraqiya.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> In one study amongst Iraqis who could afford satellite, 69 percent got their news from Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabiya, while only 12 percent accessed Al-Iraqiya. CNN News, "U.S.-Funded Iraqi Network Challenges Arab Stations," *CNN.com*, 28 November, 2003, <http://www.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/meast/11/28/tv.war.ap/>. This trend is also common in many other Arab countries, where Al-Jazeera has proven to be far more popular than local government-backed media. Mohammed El-Mawawy and Adel Iskandar, *Al-Jazeera: How the Free Arab News Network Scooped the World and Changed the Middle East* (Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2002), pp.45-51.



## Chapter 4 – The CNN Effect and War

Prussian military thinker Carl Von Clausewitz is considered the father of modern strategy, based on his 1832 posthumous publication, *On War (Vom Kriege)*. In this classic text, he described war as a remarkable and paradoxical trinity based on three components: popular passions, operational instruments, and political objectives. The first of these relates primarily to the people, the second to the military, and the third to the government. There is debate in the strategy literature on the interpretation of the trinity and the relationship of these three elements. Although some thinkers, like Villacres and Bassford,<sup>259</sup> suggest that the trinity refers to the different forces within a military campaign, others such as Summers<sup>260</sup> and Van Creveld<sup>261</sup> claim that it describes the actors that constitute the social structure of war. This dissertation adopts the latter interpretation of the Clausewitzian trinity.<sup>262</sup> In war, all three domains – the people, the military, and the government – are critical to the success of a campaign and the outcome of each area will have profound implications for the others.

In the context of war, the CNN effect can allegedly influence all three domains of the trinity. Regarding the people, change from media would appear in public opinion; in the military sector, impact should be seen in the tactics and strategy

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<sup>259</sup> According to this perspective, the trinity is “Clausewitz’s description of the psychological environment of politics” of which “war is a continuation.” Edward J. Villacres and Christopher Bassford, “Reclaiming the Clausewitzian Trinity,” *Parameters* 25, no. 3 (1995).

<sup>260</sup> Harry G. Summers Jr., *On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War* (New York: Dell, 1992), p.11.

<sup>261</sup> Van Creveld, *On Future War*, p.35.

<sup>262</sup> The exact meaning of the Clausewitzian trinity has been a subject of much debate over the past two centuries. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to indulge in this debate. Therefore, a leading interpretation of the trinity is adopted.

employed in a war; with the government, influence might occur in diplomacy and foreign policy. The following chapter, in turn, reviews the relationship between the CNN effect and each of these factors in the context of war. The government and its foreign policy, however, are reviewed last and in the greatest detail because this is the area of most importance for this dissertation. Its salience, in this regard is based on three reasons. First, the vast majority of the CNN-effect literature focuses on the domain of foreign policy. By revisiting this sphere, it is possible to re-examine the literature and potentially add theoretical insights to it. Second, the questions that this dissertation sets out in the introduction can be addressed most effectively through a detailed review of foreign policy, in comparison to the other pillars of the trinity. Third, the case study to be employed in this dissertation on the period of civil war before NATO's intervention in Kosovo lends itself best to an assessment of foreign policy, as opposed to the other two areas, as there is significantly more evidence to review. Over this period, there was no consistent monitoring of Western public opinion regarding the Kosovo crisis.<sup>263</sup> There was also no Western military activity to screen before the actual intervention.

### **The People and the CNN effect**

The importance of public opinion in politics and especially foreign policy is a subject of great debate. Much of the literature on the subject is sceptical of public opinion's independence; indeed, the classic realist arguments against the power of

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<sup>263</sup> Although the majority of the public in the US and Western Europe did support the NATO-led war just before and during the actual intervention. The Pew Research Center for The People & the Press, "Collateral Damage Takes its Toll." Cited in Livingston, "Media Coverage of the War," p.377.

world public opinion claim that such power is both fictional and impotent. Hans J. Morgenthau, for example, argued that there is no world public opinion, and that even if there was, it would exercise no restraining force on the policies of nations it might oppose.<sup>264</sup> More recent arguments have been just as critical, but for different reasons, suggesting that the elusive and malleable nature of public opinion makes it too susceptible to political manipulation and difficult to divorce from the political masters that summon it for their own ends.<sup>265</sup>

Furthermore, because the majority of the public in the West follow international affairs only in times of crisis and are often unfamiliar with the context of such events, many have questioned the merits of public opinion. According to John Zaller: "The consequence of asking uninformed people to state opinions on topics which they have given very little if any previous thought are quite predictable: Their opinion statements give every indication of being rough and superficial."<sup>266</sup> Some have feared that public opinion, given such shortcomings, could have dire consequences for foreign policy if allowed to go unchecked. As Walter Lippman, one of the first thinkers to devote substantial effort to the subject wrote, "The

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<sup>264</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Amongst Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace, Sixth Edition* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1986), pp.279-81. This argument, of course, was different than arguing that domestic public opinion is impotent within a democratic state.

<sup>265</sup> According to Entman:

Individuals may have real preferences, but obtaining truly comprehensive data on the preferences of a majority of individuals toward any specific government decision at a given moment of time becomes, in practice, difficult if not impossible, especially for journalists who lack the scholarly luxuries of space, qualification, and abstraction necessary to make credible claims about public opinion. Making claims in wider public discussion about the status of public opinion thus requires selecting some data on some sentiments and ignoring the rest – or framing.

See Robert Entman, "Declarations of Independence: The Growth of Media Power after the Cold War," in *Decisionmaking in a Glass House: Mass Media, Public Opinion, and American and European Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, ed. Brigitte Nacos, Robert Shapiro, and Pierangelo Isernia (Lanhan, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2000), p.20.

<sup>266</sup> John R. Zaller, *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.28.

unhappy truth is that the prevailing public opinion has been destructively wrong at the critical junctures...It has shown itself to be a dangerous master of decision when the stakes are life and death.”<sup>267</sup>

In dealing with public opinion, it is important to differentiate between public opinion as manifested in polling data and perceived public opinion, as presented in forums such as the editorial pages of elite newspapers. The former notion of public opinion has been defined as “the comprehensive preferences of the majority of individuals on an issue.”<sup>268</sup> Perceived public opinion reflects what media, politicians, and the public believe or present to be the public’s opinion, which can differ from polling results at times.<sup>269</sup> Indeed, recent research has shown that perceived public opinion is more important to politicians than actual polling results.<sup>270</sup>

Despite these limitations, it is still difficult in practice to visualise Western democratic states beginning and sustaining a war in which the majority of their people do not share the conviction of the government to fight, especially in cases

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<sup>267</sup> Cited in Ole R. Holsti, “Public Opinion and Foreign Policy Analysis: Where We Were, Are, and Should Strive to Be,” in *Millennial Reflections on International Studies*, ed. Michael Brecher and Frank P. Harvey (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), p.515.

<sup>268</sup> Entman, “Declarations of Independence,” p.19.

<sup>269</sup> Entman points to research that showed such a divergence in the late 1970s where media claims of public opinion shifts to the right were not borne out in actual polling data at the time that showed no such movement. See *Ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>270</sup> Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, “*Public Appetite for Government Misjudged: Washington Leaders Wary of Public Opinion*” (17 April, 1998); available from <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?PageID=581>. Cited in Entman, “Declarations of Independence,” pp.22-23. Also, most politicians do not have the resources to sustain ongoing polling operations. As such they consult other leaders and news coverage. Entman, *Projections of Power*, pp.125-6. Furthermore, as an anecdotal piece of evidence to support this case, according to Presidential Special Advisor George Stephanopoulos, the Clinton White House (at least in its first term) did not conduct polls on foreign policy, but Clinton did “pay real attention to the op-eds to see what people are saying.” See Gowing, “Real-Time Television Coverage,” pp.19-20.

of humanitarian war.<sup>271</sup> As Clausewitz pointed out, “The passions that are to be kindled in war must already be inherent in the people.”<sup>272</sup>

### ***The Rise of Public Opinion***

The growing importance of public opinion in war is invariably linked to growth in liberal democratic values and governance. Jeremy Bentham and James Mill advocated what E.H. Carr termed “the doctrine of salvation by public opinion,” believing that public opinion, if allowed to flourish, could always be counted on as a rational force for good. Rousseau and Kant argued that wars could be prevented if decisions on their engagement were left to the people instead of princes.<sup>273</sup> The Napoleonic wars that followed the French Revolution marked an important break from the age of absolutism, when limited wars fought by dispassionate professionals were common throughout Europe. The French Revolution was a pivotal event for the public in the affairs of state and military, as it increased popular participation in government through the growth of democracy and bureaucracy. It also led to more popular participation of foreign policy and military issues, as Napoleon introduced national conscription and assembled the first mass-standing armies in the world. This meant that the management of and compliance with public concerns and opinion had to be taken into greater account for the conduct and success of war.<sup>274</sup> The First World War and its aftermath was another important watershed for public opinion, as many thinkers blamed the secret diplomacy of leaders and lack of public consultation as root causes of the

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<sup>271</sup> Christopher Coker, *Humane Warfare* (London: Routledge, 2001), p.148.

<sup>272</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, p.101.

<sup>273</sup> Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis*, pp.33-34.

<sup>274</sup> Michael Howard, “The Dimensions of Strategy,” in *War (Oxford Readers)*, ed. Lawrence Freedman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.199.

war.<sup>275</sup> Much of this belief, as mentioned before, was based on perceived public opinion and not polling-based opinion. It was only in the 1930s that the science of public opinion polling, as understood today, emerged.<sup>276</sup>

In the post-Cold War era, public opinion, whether polled or perceived, continues to ascend in relevance as a factor in foreign policy decision making for a number of reasons. First, notwithstanding the earlier critiques, Westerners are more educated than in previous generations with high literacy rates and levels of university education, creating a population that critically assess issues. Although they might continue, in general, to be ill informed on foreign policy, research increasingly shows public opinion polling to be both rational and stable.<sup>277</sup>

Furthermore, polling results have continued to improve in accuracy over the last decades of the twentieth century, as techniques have improved and become less susceptible to manipulation.<sup>278</sup> Second, far more information is available to the public in the West than in previous eras, and governments increasingly find it difficult to hide information from the public without scrutiny, scandal, and disgrace. Third, Westerners are more suspicious of governments and not as willing to grant unconditional trust in ways common to previous generations. This is partially due to incidents in which governments were thought to have betrayed the people's trust. In the United States, the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal are often considered landmark events in breaking public

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<sup>275</sup> Taylor, *Global Communications*, p.59.

<sup>276</sup> Holsti, "Public Opinion," pp.514-15.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., p.517.

<sup>278</sup> According to Kenneth Warren, it is important to distinguish between reputable polling firms that following scientific and ethical standards and those that use polling for political ends. The former have proven to provide accurate data. For example, the average combined error in all major polls for US Presidential elections between 1956 and 1996 was under 2%. See Warren, *In Defense of Public Opinion Polling*, pp.45-80.

trust.<sup>279</sup> Fourth, the end of the Cold War led to a period when Westerners felt safe from external security threats, creating opportunities for alternative viewpoints from that of the government to emerge.<sup>280</sup> During earlier periods, such as the World Wars and the Cold War, governments could, with some justification, ignore public opinion if it was at odds with perceived national interests for the sake of national survival.<sup>281</sup> Looking beyond public opinion, in fact, was deemed a sign of leadership. The merits of this trait, however, diminished over time as politicians increasingly began relying on polling data as an important factor in their decision-making.

### ***The CNN effect and Public Opinion***

In most interpretations of the CNN effect, public opinion is believed to be the key intermediary between the media and politics. In its idealised scenario, media images are believed to lead to public demand for action, which then pressures politicians to respond with the hope of garnering future electoral success.<sup>282</sup>

Global news networks such as CNN provide the means for such a chain of reactions to unfold in an unprecedented scale. In past generations, the lack of media pervasiveness and public access to media meant that many atrocities were simply not known, especially for distant conflicts between other parties or “other people’s wars.” The genocide of Armenians in Turkey between 1915 and 1922, the mass starvations in the Ukraine in 1932-33, and even The Holocaust during

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<sup>279</sup> Taylor, *Global Communications*, p.64. Also see Daniel Yankelovich, "Farewell to 'the President Knows Best'," *Foreign Affairs* 57, no. 3 (1979).

<sup>280</sup> Although it could be argued that the post 9/11 era has reversed much of this sense of security, at least in the United States, and led to greater trust once again in the federal government.

<sup>281</sup> Entman, "Declarations of Independence," pp.14-15.

<sup>282</sup> There is much debate regarding the importance of foreign policy in democratic elections.

While some see a limited role for foreign policy, Aldrich, Sullivan and Borgida found that it had “large effects” in five of nine US Presidential Elections between 1952 and 1984. Cited in Holsti, "Public Opinion," p.521.

the Second World War were hardly known to the outside world until after the events had passed. In some cases, it was decades later that the full scale of the atrocity became apparent. Even in familiar wars such as the First World War, limited breadth, slowness of delivery, and limited public access meant that many details were unknown or unclear as events unfolded. Some have questioned whether greater media access in past conflicts could have helped those wars end sooner. According to US Senator John McCain, "I still believe that World War I wouldn't have lasted three months if people had known what was going on in that conflict."<sup>283</sup>

In the context of war, public opinion can either buttress support for a war or diminish it. As an intermediary within CNN and other media effects, public opinion can strengthen the hand of those in favour of a war or the government if a war is already occurring (through the propaganda effect). On the other hand, through the impediment effect, public opinion can turn against an existing military campaign and potentially damage troop morale. Vietnam is the classic example of this scenario, which is why it is often referred to as the Vietnam syndrome. When the US entered the Vietnam War in 1963, the government had strong public support, which remained intact for the next five years. After the 1968 Tet Offensive, however, the public began to question the war in the light of mounting American troop casualties, images of US-inflicted destruction and misleading government claims. This trend is widely believed to have lowered US military morale and contributed to the eventual decision to withdraw.<sup>284</sup> The importance

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<sup>283</sup> Dunsmore, "The Next War: Live?," p.17.

<sup>284</sup> Hallin, *The Uncensored War*, p.4.



attributed to public support in modern democracies has meant that such nations rarely enter war without public support. During the Second World War, for example, Franklin Roosevelt is widely understood to have restrained his own personal desire to enter the war until the Pearl Harbour attack, which shifted US public sentiment that had hitherto been isolationist and against US involvement.<sup>285</sup> In more recent times, public opinion, as measured by polling results, showed majority support for the engagement in all five major US engagements since the end of the Cold War – The Gulf War in 1991, Bosnia in 1995, Kosovo in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001/2, and Iraq in 2003. According to Entman, “conventional wisdom amongst officials holds that leaders should avoid perceptions that the public opposes their policy.”<sup>286</sup>

### **The Military and the CNN effect**

The second pillar of the Clausewitzian trinity intrinsic to war is the military. The military executes war through its strategy, which Clausewitz defines as “the use of engagements for the object of the war.”<sup>287</sup> Michael Howard has described Clausewitz’s definition as operational strategy and has expanded on the concept by adding three other dimensions: logistical, social, and technological.<sup>288</sup> If the CNN effect has an impact on this pillar of the trinity, then evidence is most likely to be found in operational strategy and tactics.

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<sup>285</sup> John A. Vasquez, “Foreign Policy, Learning and War,” in *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy*, ed. Charles F. Hermann, Charles W. Kegley Jr, and James N. Rosenau (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987), p.367.

<sup>286</sup> Entman, *Projections of Power*, p.125.

<sup>287</sup> Cited in Howard, “Dimensions of Strategy,” pp.197-203.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

There are at least two ways in which the CNN effect is alleged to impact strategy. These have been described briefly under the impediment effect previously, but will be reviewed in more detail in the context of the execution of military strategy in this section. The first way in which the CNN effect can endanger operations is through the disclosure of sensitive information. As mentioned before, the information disclosed by media networks reaches an international audience that includes adversaries. Therefore, if sensitive information is divulged, military operations and personnel are put at risk. Even rudimentary pieces of information such as a battlefield unit's type, size, equipment, capabilities and location can provide invaluable intelligence to the experienced commander about the adversary's likely plan of action. Such information may appear mundane to an inexperienced journalist who may inadvertently present it, not knowing the full consequences. Furthermore, given the increasing multi-national character of the media, the reporter may not be from a country fighting the war, may be under intense competitive pressure to be the first to break a story, or may simply not care about the consequences of transmitting sensitive information.

General Schwarzkopf described an account from the Gulf War where sensitive information was inadvertently disclosed by the media. According to the Allied Commander, during the ground operation, the US Seventh Army Corps started from the west of Kuwait, went north into Iraq, and then curved around to the east behind the Iraqi forces. This surprise manoeuvre was called a "left hook," and was meant to catch the Iraqis unprepared as they were dug in to repel a frontal assault. However, live information presented by the media almost foiled the surprise. According to Schwarzkopf, "if they [the Iraqis] had any kind of halfway

decent intelligence,” the surprise element of the operation would have been in peril.<sup>289</sup> Losing the surprise, in the opinion of Schwarzkopf, would certainly have cost Allied lives. In another incident, journalists reporting live from Israel and Saudi Arabia mentioned precisely where Iraqi Scud missiles were landing. If the Scud missiles and their operators had heard this information, they could have readjusted their equipment, and hit their targets more precisely.<sup>290</sup> Fortunately for the allies, the Iraqis lacked “halfway decent intelligence” and the Scud missiles were notoriously inaccurate. The point, however, was not lost to military planners in subsequent analysis. The US military since the Vietnam War has devoted great efforts to dealing with the media. Some commanders take a philosophical view towards the media and consider it another element that must be dealt with, like the weather.<sup>291</sup> In most cases, this means striking a balance and accommodating the media’s needs to the degree in which military operations can still go forward without risk. If unexpected situations should arise in its future that place operations and personnel in jeopardy, however, the military has considered harsher remedial methods, such as imprisoning journalists and jamming the signals of broadcasters.<sup>292</sup>

The second way that the CNN effect can impact the military is indirectly by reducing the support of the people and government. Maintaining support amongst the people and government, as outlined earlier, is vital to increasing the probability of a successful military campaign. If the military is seen as acting outside the provisions of a just war or if the costs of a war are perceived as

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<sup>289</sup> Cited in Dunsmore, “The Next War: Live?,” p.9.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid., p.10.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid., pp.15-16.

disproportionately greater than the ends sought, public support can often decline. With the CNN effect, video footage of dead civilians can be just as deadly for achieving final victory as a battlefield loss. This is particularly true if interventions are sold on humanitarian reasons, where vital interests are not perceived to be at stake. Although the CNN effect can have repercussions when a military acts, it can also be a factor in decisions not to act. This inaction can be at the strategic and tactical level. Strategically, for example, the military might avoid bombing civilian areas altogether to avoid collateral damage even though there might be legitimate military targets scattered across these areas. Tactically, units and soldiers might be much more timid to conduct an operation and avoid anything that could be perceived as media risky. In a detailed study, Gadi Wolfsfeld argued that Israeli soldiers in the occupied territories actually changed their behaviour as a result of media presence during the first Palestinian Intifada.<sup>293</sup> During a battle, however, such concern and timidity goes against the very nature of fighting, which requires bravery and risk-taking. This can be particularly problematic for a military when the adversary is not under the same scrutiny, as their state and its people may not be subject to the same level of media access and openness.

### **The Government and the CNN effect**

The two areas of governance most often associated with the CNN effect in the literature are diplomacy and foreign policy. Foreign policy, of course, relates to diplomacy and provides much of the content, direction, and parameters within

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<sup>293</sup> Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, p.206.

which diplomacy functions. But foreign policy is also dependent to some degree on diplomacy, as information and insight from diplomats play an important role in formulating policy. The following section first reviews changes in diplomacy from the rise of transcontinental media networks and the connection between diplomacy and the CNN effect, and then conducts a more detailed examination of foreign policy in relation to the CNN effect.

### **Diplomacy and the CNN effect**

Diplomacy dates back to the earliest interactions between ancient city-states and empires, but experienced its golden age from the end of the Napoleonic wars to the beginning of the First World War. Throughout most of this era, diplomacy was a rather secretive and autonomous affair based on refined skills of an elite trained to be steady, meticulous, and cautious. The main goal of diplomacy is to ensure smooth relations and diffuse potential conflict; indeed, the term “diplomatic” has gained a wider currency for all attempts to diffuse tense and difficult situations through skilful negotiation, politeness, and tact. Hans J. Morgenthau and Henry Kissinger both lamented the influence of modern communications on diplomacy, believing that it contributed to the loss of its vitality.<sup>294</sup>

In war, diplomacy has often been a separate sphere of interaction free from the hostilities of the larger conflict. Under its romanticised nineteenth-century “Concert of Europe” image, under skilled masters such as Metternich, diplomats

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<sup>294</sup> Cited in Royce J. Ammon, *Global Television and the Shaping of World Politics* (Jefferson N.C.: McFarland, 2001), p.6.

from warring states could be negotiating the finer points of a treaty over a beverage while their respective soldiers slaughtered each other on the battlefield. In the context of war, diplomacy is often the first tool in a line of options used to overcome conflicting interests, whereas the actual fighting is the final or default option when all attempts at diplomacy have failed.

At first consideration, the universe of instantaneous media seems to have little in common with the world of diplomacy. After all, media thrives on dispute and sensationalism, and its answers to viewers, given its rather superficial nature, must be delivered rapidly and be easily digestible. This approach is diametrically opposed to the traditional diplomat's world, which aims to minimise conflict and in which answers are often complex and reached through laborious efforts. In the world of rapid media transmission, audiences lack the patience for the research and analysis so essential to diplomacy, and media production lacks the luxury of time so necessary for the conduct of diplomacy. As a result, seasoned diplomats view the media and its involvement in their domain as a nuisance, at best, and a basis for grave diplomatic errors, at worst. To many, the media are a dangerous element that intentionally exaggerate crises and seek drama for commercial benefit, unintentionally intensifying tensions and fanning the flames of hate.<sup>295</sup>

Despite these differences, governments are increasingly attempting to use transcontinental media networks to their political advantage both domestically and externally. Internally, democratic societies since at least the time of Woodrow

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<sup>295</sup> Gadi Wolfsfeld, "The News Media and the Second Intifada," *Palestinian-Israeli Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture* 10, no. 2 (2003): pp.9-11.

Wilson have come to expect and demand information from their governments – especially during periods of crisis and war. Some have pointed to the first of Wilson's Fourteen Points that called for "open covenants openly arrived at...in the public view" as the great divide between "traditional diplomacy," based on autonomy and privacy and a "new diplomacy," based on accountability and openness.<sup>296</sup> If governments fail to provide positions on events, they lose their opportunity to influence, and allow speculation on their perspectives or opposing views to dominate.<sup>297</sup> According to American television veteran Ted Koppel, "For any administration, the absence of clearly enunciated policy is the political equivalent to a vacuum. It will be filled with whatever is available... The failure to engage in a clear, forthright, and timely fashion can cause irreparable damage."<sup>298</sup>

Externally, governments are increasingly viewing the media as a powerful instrument in both their fight against adversaries and the struggle to win the support of third-party governments not directly involved in the dispute, but who's support is important in legitimising a military campaign. In relation to adversaries, the 1991 Gulf War demonstrated some novel ways in which the media could be used in the domain of war. For example, on 11 January 1991, in the prelude to the war, US Secretary of State James Baker was televised as he was speaking to US Air Force personnel and journalists in an air hangar in Saudi

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<sup>296</sup> Ammon, *Global Television and the Shaping of World Politics*, pp.38-47.

<sup>297</sup> Increasingly sophisticated news management operations have allowed governments to maintain control of key political messages, according to one line of argumentation, and prevented the media from gaining significant autonomy over important political issues. See Lance W. Bennett and Steven Livingston, "A Semi-Independent Press: Government Control and Journalistic Autonomy in the Political Construction of News," *Political Communication* 20, no. 4 (2003): p.360.

<sup>298</sup> Koppel, "The Perils of Info-Democracy," p.356.

Arabia, stating: "I can tell you this: You will not have to wait much longer...Just so there is no misunderstanding, let me be absolutely clear. We pass the brink at midnight January 15<sup>th</sup>."<sup>299</sup> Parked behind Baker were an F-111 fighter-bomber and an EF-111A Raven electronics-jamming warplane. The hangar, military hardware and bellowing military service personnel all combined to make a daunting image of confidence and preparedness. Baker's target audience, of course, was not the air force personnel listening to his speech, but rather Saddam Hussein, who he knew would be watching the speech within the hour. As Baker later explained, "We didn't send that message through Joe Wilson [US diplomat in Iraq]. We sent it through CNN."<sup>300</sup> The use of media allowed the United States to send a message to its adversary at speeds not possible even a few decades before or through traditional diplomatic routes, adding a new type of pressure not available in past wars. As Baker himself remarked, "Your reaction time is in minutes and hours, not days."<sup>301</sup>

The use of such diplomacy grew throughout the 1990s, becoming increasingly professional and elaborate, often employing press offices that focused on short-term press coverage and its management or spin.<sup>302</sup> Even the reclusive leadership of Afghanistan's Taliban, who banned television during their rule, installed

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<sup>299</sup> Johanna Neuman, *Lights, Camera, War: Is Media Technology Driving International Politics?* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), pp.1-2.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>302</sup> Robin Brown, "Spinning the War: Political Communications, Information Operations and Public Diplomacy in the War on Terrorism," in *War and the Media: Reporting Conflict 24/7*, ed. Daya Kishan Thussa and Des Freedman (London: Sage, 2003), p.91. Brown calls this type of diplomacy "spin" and includes it as one of three tools of the "communications armoury," used by governments in war (focusing specifically on the war on terrorism). The other two instruments used in this regard are information operations and public diplomacy.



satellite dishes to monitor how they were portrayed by the outside world.<sup>303</sup> They also actively participated in the media game, updating the world and adversaries of their positions through Pakistan-based representatives in the months preceding their demise. Their adoption of such techniques was so effective, in fact, that Western powers reacted by creating Coalition Information Centres (CICs) that coordinated responses in Washington, London and Islamabad, in order to rebut Taliban statements and claims.<sup>304</sup>

Furthermore, media channels can facilitate communication with adversaries when traditional means are blocked. In times of war, diplomatic channels are often severed as relations collapse. Diplomacy through the media allows for a resumption of communication as circumstances on the ground shift and interests change. It can also be used on occasion to communicate with third parties not directly involved in the conflict.<sup>305</sup>

Diplomacy through instantaneous media, of course, does not eliminate traditional diplomacy. It only adds a subsidiary channel that can be more useful at times. When diplomacy involves negotiating and compromising, traditional diplomatic channels that are secure and private are still the norm.<sup>306</sup> This is often the case in

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<sup>303</sup> According to Jang (Pakistani newspaper), cited in Suzanne Lidster and Peter Feuilherade, "Battle for Afghan Airwaves," *BBC News Online*, 3 October, 2001, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/monitoring/media\\_reports/1575425.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/monitoring/media_reports/1575425.stm); According to Gadi Wolfsfeld, "Getting access to CNN has become a major priority for any antagonist hoping to reach an international audience." Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, p.59.

<sup>304</sup> Brown, "Spinning the War," p.93.

<sup>305</sup> For example, the United States and Iran have had no diplomatic relations since 1979, but have communicated through the media over issues of common interest during the 1991 Gulf War, 2001 Afghanistan War, and the 2003 Iraq War.

<sup>306</sup> Taylor, *Global Communications*, p.96.

negotiating terms to end wars, as diplomacy through the media may pre-empt compromise that might be seen as a sign of weakness by domestic audiences.

Regarding the CNN and other media effects outlined in the previous chapter, two effects are relevant in relation to diplomacy. The first of these is the accelerant CNN effect, which involves new pressures on diplomats to work at a faster pace to avoid seeming aloof and irresponsible to their public audiences. To keep up with the hastier requirements of policy makers, diplomats may feel rushed to provide input, ignoring the time-tested tools of analysis and reflection. Worse, policy makers forced to make decisions may jettison diplomats altogether as a source of information on occasion to meet the deadlines of 24-hour news. It is important to note that the accelerant effect largely impacts the processes of diplomatic activity and, as a result, policy making. This is a notable difference from other CNN effects that may influence the substance of foreign policy.

The second and more prevalent media effect in relation to diplomacy is the propaganda effect. As mentioned earlier, the propaganda effect is not a CNN effect because it relates to the propagation of official government policy through the media. This, in essence, is opposite to a CNN effect, which claims media influence on government policy. As the earlier example from James Baker demonstrated, media was utilised to embellish the government's official policy. It was, therefore, a propagandist act.

## **Foreign Policy and the CNN effect**

While diplomacy was a prominent area for CNN effect debates in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War, most of the literature since then has focused on the alleged influence of media on foreign policy. The following section begins by providing a brief review of foreign policy theory over the second half of the twentieth century, making three important distinctions. The first of these is between policy formulation and implementation; the second is between process and substance; the third differentiates strategic and tactical aspects of foreign policy. It then reviews how different CNN effects and other media effects outlined previously are likely to influence foreign policy. Finally, this section revisits foreign policy in the context of a third-party military intervention to assess when different media effects are likely to influence a policy as it shifts from a policy of non-intervention to one in support of military intervention.

## ***Foreign Policy Theory***

### ***Formulation versus implementation***

Foreign policy theorising, in an idealised scenario, can be used to distinguish policy formulation or decision making from implementation. There is much debate in the foreign policy literature as to the nature of the decision making process and the importance of structures, institutions, and individuals and their relationship to each other. Realism assumes that state behaviour is determined by the pursuit of national interests and security, bounded by power relative to other

states.<sup>307</sup> Neo-realists, likewise, believe that all states, regardless of domestic factors, follow signals sent by the international system under the general conditions of anarchy.<sup>308</sup> Rational actor theories, which are similar to realism in highlighting the importance of structure, assume that foreign policy outcomes are the result of choosing the best option based on a prescribed set of criteria (although not necessarily national interests or security). Such models, like realism, assume unitary governmental decision making with a high degree of control over implementation and access to near-perfect information. In practice, of course, governments are rarely unitary in foreign policy making and often hampered by a number of factors including access to accurate information and time constraints.<sup>309</sup> Since the 1970s, foreign policy analysis has largely moved beyond rational actor approaches and assumed the process to be more intricate and fluid. The incorporation of at least three variables has added to the complexity in foreign policy formulation theorising: the nature of the state, the leadership's character/personality and bureaucratic contestation.

The nature of the state is believed to be paramount to the nature of decision-making. Democratic states, for example, are widely believed to be more restricted than autocratic states, especially on using force as an instrument of foreign policy.<sup>310</sup> The characteristic of the leadership and the personality of the leader are

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<sup>307</sup> Although the national interest is an ambiguous concept that is subject to much criticism, governments still employ the term frequently and attempt to clarify it by breaking it down into specific goals. For example, the US State Department lists the following four goals as key national interests on its website: 1) Promoting peace and stability in regions of vital interest, 2) Creating jobs at home by opening markets abroad, 3) Helping developing nations establish stable economic environments that provide investment and export opportunities, and 4) Bringing nations together to address global problems such as cross-border pollution, the spread of communicable diseases, terrorism, nuclear smuggling, and humanitarian crises. From U.S. Department of State, "*State Department: What We Do*" [Web Site]; available from [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov).

<sup>308</sup> Chris Brown, *Understanding International Relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp.80-83.

<sup>309</sup> Christopher Hill, *The Changing Politics of Foreign Policy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p.98.

<sup>310</sup> Brown, *Understanding International Relations*, pp.82-83; Hill, *Changing Politics*, pp.235-40.

also considered important factors, as studies of the US President have demonstrated very different approaches to foreign policy formulation and management.<sup>311</sup> The third level of complexity, incorporated in the bureaucratic model of policy formulation, relates to the internal processes within government departments and competing desires to influence official policy. In most states, there are official individuals and institutions that hold responsibility over foreign policy. These institutions and individuals, however, do not formulate policy alone in practice. In a famous review of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Graham Allison found that organisational routines (standard operating procedures) and departmental interests were far more critical in policy formulation than any rationally based decisions from a unified perception of the national interest.<sup>312</sup> This model, according to Chris Hill, argues that “ministries and other bureaucratic units pursue at best their own versions of the national interest and at worst their own parochial concerns, so that foreign policy-making becomes an inward-looking battleground in which decisions are produced by horse-trading more than logic.”<sup>313</sup> Four of the main sources of competition to foreign ministries (State Department in the United States) include defence ministries (Department of Defence in the United States), economic ministries (Departments for trade, foreign aid, central banks etc.), intelligence services (Central Intelligence Agency in the United States), and others who attempt to coordinate complexity, such as the

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<sup>311</sup>David M. Barrett, "Presidential Foreign Policy," in *The Making of US Foreign Policy, 2nd Edition*, ed. John Dumbrell (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997); Douglas C. Foyle, *Counting the Public In: Presidents, Public Opinion and Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

<sup>312</sup>Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: HarperCollins, 1971). Theory of Bureaucratic politics first appeared in Graham Allison, "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *American Political Science Review* 63, no. 3 (1969).

<sup>313</sup>Hill, *Changing Politics*, p.86.

Prime Minister in the UK or the President in the US.<sup>314</sup> In recent years, the US President's National Security Council (NSC) has been a forum that has attempted to coordinate departmental interests in the United States. Although the bureaucratic model has been subject to a number of critiques, it nonetheless points to the competitive nature of policy formulation.<sup>315</sup>

Although formulation can be separated from implementation in an idealised model, they are difficult to divide in practice because policy is often reformulated during implementation.<sup>316</sup> Governments have a number of tools at their disposal to implement foreign policies, including diplomatic, economic, cultural, and military instruments.<sup>317</sup> The use of military force in the context of foreign policy was characterised by Clausewitz as a rational continuation of political discourse by other means.<sup>318</sup> Under this logic, war is a useful tool of policy if the goals are considered important and the level of commitment is high. But in many cases, the option of force is only a potential factor held in reserve and is just as effective as its actual use, serving as a vital tool of diplomacy.<sup>319</sup>

### *Policy process versus substance*

A second way in which foreign policy can be segmented involves separating the processes of policy making from its substance. The processes of foreign policy

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<sup>314</sup> Ibid., pp.82-85.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid., pp.88-92. Also see Steve Smith, "Perspectives on the Foreign Policy System: Bureaucratic Politics Approaches," in *Understanding Foreign Policy: The Foreign Policy Systems Approach*, ed. Michael Clarke and Brian White (Aldershot, Hants: Edward Elgar, 1989), pp.112-25.

<sup>316</sup> Hill, *Changing Politics*, p.128.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid., pp.128-29.

<sup>318</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, p.99.

<sup>319</sup> Hill, *Changing Politics*, p.128.

relate largely to specific activities involved in formulation and implementation. For example, information gathering, analysing, negotiating, and decision-making are all activities that go toward the formulation process. Once these activities are completed, then the policy's substance emerges, at least until it is reformulated. The decision(s) reached during formulation, based on the information gathered, analysis conducted, and negotiation completed, constitute the policy substance. While the processes of foreign policy making can be distinguished from its substance during the policy formulation phase, they are more difficult to separate during implementation, as the policy's substance may be identical to its implementation. For example, a policy of military intervention through aerial bombing will involve aerial bombing, in terms of implementation. In this regard, the third distinction between different aspects of policy substance is particularly useful.

### *Strategic versus tactical aspects of policy*

Policy substance can be differentiated in at least two ways in most cases, but in the context of a third-party military intervention, can be separated into three aspects. The first relates to the goals or objectives of the policy, and will be referred to as strategic policy. For example, a policy might seek to end a civil war or a humanitarian disaster. This aspect can be determined by answering the question: "What end(s) is the policy trying to accomplish?"

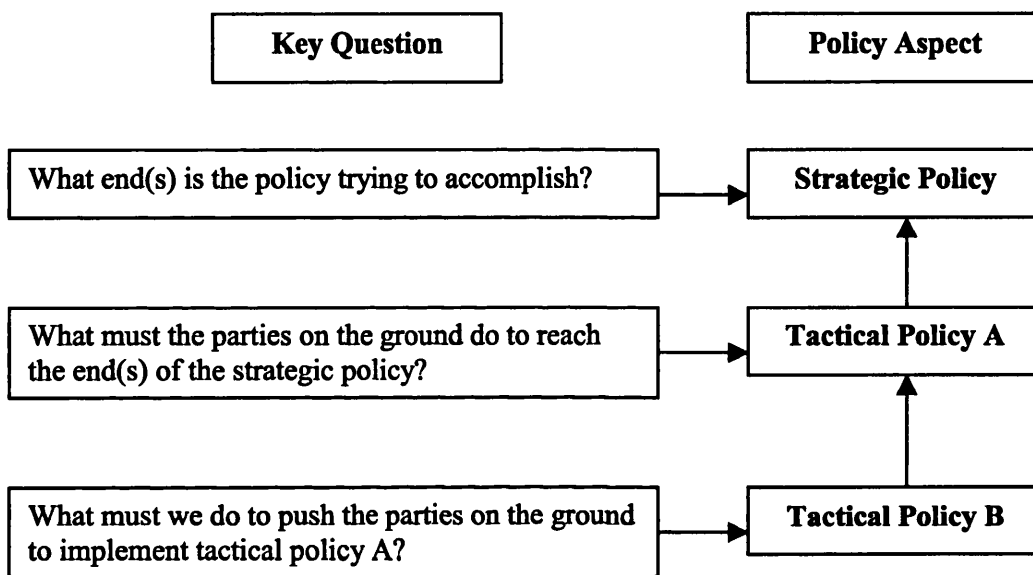
The second aspect of a foreign policy is particularly important in a third-party intervention context and deals with implementation. It answers the question: "What must the parties on the ground do to reach the end(s) of the strategic

policy?” For example, if the strategic policy is to end a civil war, the parties need to stop fighting and start negotiating. If it is to stop a man-induced humanitarian crisis, the parties need to cooperate and support the efforts of the intervening force. This aspect will be referred to as tactical policy A.

The third aspect of a foreign policy, which will be referred to as tactical policy B, also deals with implementation and follows directly from the second. It answers the question: “What must we (the external third parties) do to push the parties on the ground to implement tactical policy A?” For example, this aspect of the policy might use sanctions, rewards or a combination to promote a particular type of behaviour from the parties on the ground. Economic and military aid, enhanced diplomatic recognition, diplomatic pressure, economic sanctions or military intervention are all tools of a tactical policy B that may be employed at different periods in a foreign policy. In attempting to implement a policy, it is likely that this is the aspect of foreign policy that will change most frequently over time, particularly if evidence emerges that the strategic policy is failing to come to fruition.

The following graph illustrates the aspects of foreign policy in the context of a third-party military intervention in relation to the key question for each aspect:



**Graph 4-1: Aspects of Foreign Policy During Third-Party Military****Interventions**

### ***Foreign Policy and the CNN Effect***

In the second chapter, six different media effects were identified: accelerant, agenda setting, impediment, challenging, potential, and propaganda effects. The first four of these were CNN effects, while the last two were media effects not related to the CNN effect. This section reintroduces these media effects in order to assess how they relate to two of the distinctions within foreign policy analysis outlined in the previous section. In each case, it will be determined if the media effect is primarily relevant to policy formulation, implementation or both and whether it relates to the policy process, substance or both.

The accelerant effect, as previously outlined, describes the new pressures diplomats and policy makers face as they are forced to formulate policy faster under the demands of the 24-hour news cycle. As such, it relates largely to the process and formulation of foreign policy. Of course, policy substance might also be influenced indirectly due to the need to generate policy faster, making it more likely for misunderstandings and errors to form part of the policy. Additionally, given the faster, more pressurised nature of this effect, it is likely that the distinctions between formulation and implementation will increasingly become blurred.

The agenda-setting effect prioritises certain policy issues over others, as dictated by the importance bequeathed on topics by media coverage. As such, it relates primarily to policy formulation, but to a lesser degree to implementation. In terms of formulation, the constantly changing topics covered by the media will require ongoing policy making. Regarding implementation, shifting prioritisation on issues will invariably lead to adjustments in the implementation of existing

policies, which may be demoted or halted altogether if newer priorities consume limited foreign policy resources. The agenda setting effect largely impacts the process of foreign policy making, by circumventing many traditional elements in the policy making process and replacing them with the media. Diplomats and policy analysts who might have traditionally played important roles in gathering, deciphering and analysing information are now largely irrelevant to the policy making process, as the decision on what to focus on is already determined. The agenda-setting effect also influences the substance of policy to some degree, as it will tend to prioritise issues that are more sensational such as those involving mass suffering or death over those that may be dry to media audiences.

The impediment effect comes into play during military engagements and hinders policy by reducing domestic morale and operational security. As such, it affects policy largely at the implementation stage. It also has implications on formulation as new policy is needed to fill the void of the outdated policy, which is deemed to be failing. The impediment effect also largely impacts policy substance by promoting alternatives that reduce or eliminate the detrimental costs of official policy. In some cases, the impediment effect can hamper policy, leading to tactical revisions. This was the case, for example, after the bombing of Baghdad's Al-Amiriya shelter on 13 February 1991 during the Gulf War, when television viewers saw images of civilian corpses, raising doubts over coalition claims of precision bombing on military targets. After this incident, policy was amended

and targets in central Baghdad were largely avoided.<sup>320</sup> In other cases, the impediment effect can lead to major revisions or even the elimination of a strategic policy.

The challenging CNN effect, like the impediment, largely comes into play during the implementation stage of a foreign policy, making existing policy appear misguided or inappropriate under a new set of circumstances. In contrast to the impediment effect, however, it influences policy before a military intervention (when the policy is one of non-military intervention), and often in relation to “other people’s crises or wars” (whereas the impediment effect is at play during “our interventions/wars”). In like manner, the challenging effect also has implications for formulation, as new policy is required to replace the existing official one. In many cases, such a policy is one of intervention, or shifts to that end. The challenging effect, like the impediment, is mostly relevant to policy substance, challenging the content of existing policy and replacing it with a new policy that can fill the gaps between the old policy and media representations.

There are two other media effects that are worthy of review based on these classifications – the potential and the propaganda effects. The potential effect comes into play primarily during policy formulation and involves the creation of policy with safeguards against future CNN effects that might damage policy. This effect relates largely to the substance of policy, which will either incorporate

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<sup>320</sup> According to Peter Arnett:

The pictures had been so shocking that people did begin to question policy. Few argued that the consequences of a bombing raid that killed so many civilians should be ignored, particularly in a hi-tech war where such mistakes were not meant to happen. Long after the war, I learned that policy had indeed been changed by the shelter carnage, and that so-called “military-civilian targets” were struck off the bombing lists...

Peter Arnett, “You Are the Goebbels of Saddam’s Regime,” *The Guardian*, 14 February, 2003, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,3604,894706,00.html>.

defensive measures, such as the placement of strict controls on media access, or offensive measures, such as the utilisation of propaganda to counter damage from unfavourable images and framing that might impede the success of a government policy.

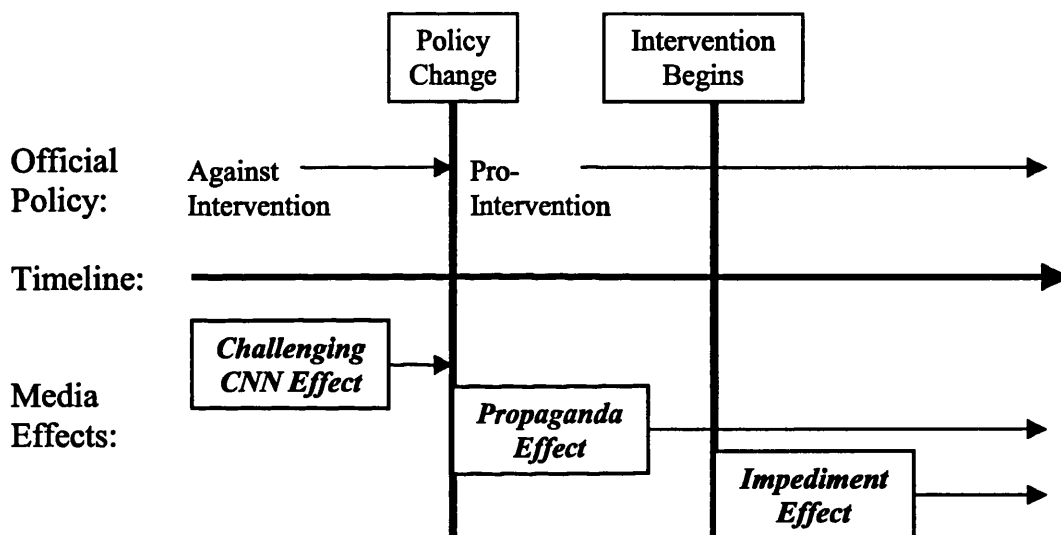
The propaganda effect involves the deliberate promotion of media images and framing by the government to promote its official policy. While the propaganda effect is put into practice during policy implementation, it is a variable that is often incorporated at the formulation stage, as policy makers will no doubt incorporate measures that will maximise the likely success of their agenda. Propaganda largely relates to the substance of policy. In the context of a military intervention into “other people’s wars,” for example, it is used to identify the victims and villain, often exaggerating both the suffering of victims and the immorality of those it identifies to be at fault.

In the context of a third-party military intervention, different media effects will influence policy at different phases leading up to the intervention and during its execution. Graph 4-2 revisits the illustration presented in Graph 3-1 and presents a number of media effects besides the challenging CNN effect, identifying the phases in which each comes into play.<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> While the agenda setting, accelerant and potential effects may also be relevant for this analysis, focus is on the challenging, propaganda and impediment effects, which are the most significant in such a scenario.

**Graph 4-2: Different Media Effects in Relations to Policy Change in Third-Party Military Intervention**



As the graph illustrates, the challenging CNN effect can influence an official foreign policy that is against military intervention up to the point when policy changes in favour of intervention. After this point, two other media effects are most relevant. The first is the propaganda effect, in which media images and framing promote the government's official policy. These can in some cases be the exact same images that had challenged the government's official policy under the challenging CNN effect before the policy had changed. After the actual intervention begins, the propaganda effect may be accompanied by the impediment effect, which can work to opposite consequence, diminishing support for the government's official policy. During the 78-day NATO bombing campaign against the FRY in 1999, for example, images of Albanian refugees expelled from Kosovo and pre-intervention massacre aftermaths were often used in propagandist ways to strengthen support for the West's war efforts. At the same time, images of NATO blunders and collateral damage involving civilian deaths reduced support for the war in the West.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> Livingston, "Media Coverage of the War," pp.379-281.

## Section 2: The CNN Effect and the Kosovo Crisis

On 24 March 1999, NATO bombs began dropping on the FRY. Seventy-eight days afterwards, Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic capitulated to NATO's demands and the Serbs lost effective control of Kosovo, which they had held for almost nine decades. To many observers, the Kosovo conflict did not begin in March 1999 but in March 1998 in the tiny Kosovo village of Prekaz in the Drenica region. It was here that a prominent Kosovo rebel leader named Adem Jeshari and over fifty family members were outgunned and killed by Yugoslav forces. This massacre was significant on two grounds. First, it catapulted the KLA, a movement that sought Kosovo independence through armed resistance, from a regional peripheral movement into the mainstream of Kosovo politics, drawing thousands of recruits and supporters. Second, and more significant for the purposes of this dissertation, these events provided the Kosovo Albanians with the television images that might draw the West into their struggle. The Kosovo conflict has been considered an example in which the CNN effect moved Western governments.<sup>323</sup> This section of the dissertation delves into this claim over three chapters and assesses the validity and potential impact and nature of the CNN effect on Western policy during the prelude to the NATO military intervention. Chapter five reviews American television coverage of the Kosovo civil war from the beginning of March 1998 to 24 March 1999, to determine if any events from this period met the media criteria for the CNN effect, as outlined in the first section of the dissertation. It also reviews the severity of these events in relation

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<sup>323</sup> See, for example, Nye Jr., "Redefining NATO's Mission," and Livingston, "Media Coverage of the War," pp.379, 81.



to their media coverage to determine if the events themselves might be the basis of any potential government policy change or the media coverage of them. Chapters six and seven then turn to the issue of Western government actions and policy to assess if any events that might have met the media criteria for a CNN effect led to a policy change, based on the four research strategies outlined in the third chapter. If it can be shown that Western governments changed policy and key decision-makers linked policy change to the media, then there is evidence to support a CNN effect as a factor in the West's policy change in support of military intervention. However, it should be noted that even if a CNN effect is demonstrated, this does not mean that the CNN effect was the only factor at work. The shift towards NATO's war in Kosovo was a complex process involving a range influencing variables including the conflict's historical background and a number of macro factors that were at work. Accounting for the background and macro factors, therefore, is important in understanding the role and limitations of the CNN effect in the overall situation. As such, before proceeding to the case study, a review of the background and a number of macro factors will be conducted.

## **Background**

Kosovo was relatively unknown to the public in the West until well into the dissolution of the FRY. This lack of awareness, however, was not just a manifestation of the 1990s. Described as the lost heart of the Balkans and a place almost as unknown and inaccessible as Central Africa, even European maps of the region had major inaccuracies regarding Kosovo's geography until the twentieth

century.<sup>324</sup> Since the Second World War, this ignorance was exacerbated by the fact that Kosovo was buried under numerous identities. First, it was only an autonomous region in one of seven republics that formed Yugoslavia. Second, Yugoslavia was masked to a large degree from Western eyes behind the cloak of the monolithic communist world, which officially claimed to have buried national and religious differences as historic relics. In reality, of course, much of this perception was misplaced. Josip Broz (Tito) made great efforts to follow an independent path from other communist states after breaking from Stalin in 1948. As a result, Yugoslavia was distinct from other Soviet satellite states politically and economically. Kosovo Albanians also never lost their national character and ambitions throughout their 45-years within a cohesive Yugoslavia. There were constant struggles by Albanians to preserve and maintain their unique culture within Yugoslavia, and even Tito relinquished initial attempts to homogenise them by giving them many of their demands in the 1974 Yugoslav Constitution. This new constitution, which remained in force until the break-up of Yugoslavia, gave the autonomous region of Kosovo almost all the rights of Yugoslav republics, including direct representation in Yugoslav federal institutions.<sup>325</sup>

While wars were taking place in Croatia and Bosnia, few media reports in the West mentioned Kosovo, even though regional experts identified it as a ticking time bomb. The province had many of the underlying tensions that had sent other parts of the FRY into war. Like Croatia and Bosnia, Kosovo had a non-Serb majority – the Albanians – who constituted 90 percent of the population by the

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<sup>324</sup> Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1999), p.1.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.327-28.

1990s.<sup>326</sup> Differences between the Albanians and Serbs existed on a number of fronts including language and religion. The Kosovo Albanians were largely Albanian-speaking and Muslim, while the Serbs predominantly spoke Serbian and were Orthodox Christian. The history of Serb-Albanian relations was marked by much conflict and bloodshed, with each side claiming to be the victim of the other's atrocities.<sup>327</sup> In the twentieth century, major conflict, which became particularly ethnic in nature, was recorded on a number of occasions, beginning with the Serb conquest of Kosovo in October 1912 from the Ottoman Empire. Unlike Croatia and Bosnia, Kosovo had significance to Serb nationalists who saw it as their nation's birthplace. This ensured that it would not be given up easily. The Serbian claim dated back to the legendary 1389 Battle of Kosovo, in which Serbian Prince Lazar was killed and his army defeated at the hands of the Ottoman Turks, who then ruled Serbia for the next 500 years. According to Noel Malcolm, the Battle of Kosovo was a "talismán of Serbian identity...unlike that of anything else in the history of the Serbs."<sup>328</sup> This legacy, combined with the fact that the Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church was located in the town of Pec, made

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<sup>326</sup> In the 1981 census conducted by the FRY Institute of Statistics, Kosovo's total population was 1,585,000, 77.5 percent were Albanian, 13.3 percent Serb, and 9.2 percent other minorities. In the 1991 census, in which the Albanians did not participate, it was estimated that Albanians constituted approximately 90 percent of the population, while the Serbs had fallen to less than 10 percent. Cited in Louis Sell, *Slobodan Milosevic and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), p.69 and 367. According to the Serbian government, the 1991 census showed a population of 1,956,196, with 82% Albanian and 10% Serb. Cited on website: <http://www.serbia.sr.gov.yu/cms/>.

<sup>327</sup> Malcolm, *Kosovo*, pp.250-53. It should be noted, however, that Serb-Albanian relations in Kosovo were not always hostile. There was a long tradition of cooperation and intermarriage amongst their mountain tribes. Also, in the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, Serbs and Albanians are believed to have fought together in both directions – some for Prince Lazar and others for the Ottoman Sultan. When Austrian invasions took place in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Serbs and Albanians fought together against Ottoman rule. Furthermore, ethnic divisions between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo were never clear-cut and many visitors to the region including Serbs from other parts of Serbia could hardly distinguish them, Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p.xxix.

<sup>328</sup> Malcolm, *Kosovo*, p.56.

Kosovo a holy land to many Serbs. These factors made Kosovo much more dangerous than Bosnia. According to Richard Holbrooke:

The hatred between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo was far, far greater than any of the so-called ethnic hatreds of Bosnia, which had been grossly exaggerated by the crooks, and the Mafioso demagogues in the ethnic communities of Bosnia. This was the real thing in Kosovo between Albanians and the Serbs. Different cultures, different languages, and different histories, but a common obsession with the same sacred soil.<sup>329</sup>

In 1989, newly elected Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic sparked the latest round of tensions in Kosovo by revoking its autonomous status to appease Kosovo Serbs and nationalists in Serbia proper. From the Serbian position, the 1974 autonomy given to the Kosovo Albanians led to discrimination and repression against the Serb minority who were put under pressure by the Albanian majority to leave Kosovo. Milosevic's early popularity, in fact, originated from the Kosovo issue, where he became known as a champion of the Serbs. The loss of autonomy, in addition to a series of other measures to promote the interests of the minority Serbs, led to a backlash amongst the Kosovo Albanians. Milosevic, however, crushed protests through brutal crackdowns.<sup>330</sup>

Unlike other rebellious regions of the FRY, Kosovo's Albanian political

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<sup>329</sup> Interview with Richard Holbrooke, in Peter Boyer, Michael Kirk, and Rick Young, *War in Europe: Frontline PBS Documentary*, Videocassette, Alexandria, Virginia: PBS, 2000.

<sup>330</sup> In the immediate aftermath of losing autonomous status, up to 100 demonstrators were killed and over 1,000 put on trial. In another incident in 1995, Belgrade transferred 25,000 police to Kosovo to quell rising tensions amongst the Albanian populations who believed they were intentionally poisoned. See Malcolm, *Kosovo*, pp.344-45.

leadership under the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) took a non-violent approach to its goal of independence in the early 1990s. Under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, the LDK asked its people for patience, believing that the international community would eventually address their demands in an overall settlement for the FRY.<sup>331</sup> When a potential opportunity for such an agreement arrived in the form of the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, Rugova, to his disappointment, was not even invited and the Kosovo issue was completely ignored. The Dayton Agreement's primary goal was to end the war in Bosnia. Kosovo was relatively peaceful in 1995 and bringing the Kosovo Albanian demands into the negotiations would complicate them and reduce the chances of reaching peace in Bosnia. Richard Holbrooke, the key American diplomat at Dayton, for one, did not believe that it would have been possible to win Milosevic's agreement on Bosnia if Kosovo were included. Croatian President Franjo Tudman and Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, the other two parties at the negotiations, had no interest in the Kosovo issue.<sup>332</sup> The outcome of Dayton became a turning point for the Kosovo Albanians, who increasingly came to the realisation that international attention and independence could only be garnered through armed struggle.<sup>333</sup> According to Ivo Daalder,

The failure to deal with Kosovo in Dayton left the Albanians to conclude that the way in which you get Western attention, in which you get a Dayton-like conference, in which you get the President of the United States to pay attention to you, is to use violence. That violence begets international attention and that

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<sup>331</sup> Ibid., p.353.

<sup>332</sup> Alex J. Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp.54-55.

<sup>333</sup> Paul Wood, "The KLA's Armed Struggle," *BBC News Online*, 21 September, 1999, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/453897.stm>.

therefore one should start violence. A policy that the Kosovars had been pursuing since 1989 of non-violent opposition all of a sudden became less and less viable and as time goes by, more and more people realise or come to the conclusion that the way you get the West involved is to start killing people.<sup>334</sup>

This conclusion took material form with the emergence of the KLA, who engaged in their first significant armed clashes with Yugoslav authorities in early 1996 and took on an increasingly public profile by the end of 1997.<sup>335</sup> By 1998, these clashes erupted into a full-scale guerrilla war. As predicted, the world finally noticed – the Kosovo Albanians successfully managed to internationalise their struggle. Having largely ignored the pacifist struggles of Rugova, the world's media increasingly became interested in Kosovo once the killing started, adding weight to the adage, "If it bleeds, it leads."

## Macro Influences

The Kosovo Conflict of 1998 and 1999, perhaps like all wars, occurred under unique circumstances. Accounting for the macro influences is important in understanding the potential impact of, and limitations on, the CNN effect. If the events of Kosovo had occurred in a different time, place and political environment, the result and role of the CNN effect might have been very different. Before conducting the case study on the CNN effect during the prelude to the

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<sup>334</sup> Interview of Ivo Daalder, in Boyer, Kirk, and Young, *War in Europe*.

<sup>335</sup> Although some cite cases of armed resistance as early as 1991, the first public appearance of the KLA in Kosovo occurred on 28 November 1997 when three armed men in ski masks appeared at a funeral of Albanians killed in a skirmish with Serb police to the cheers of twenty thousand mourners. A month later, the KLA issued its first public statement. Sell, *Slobodan Milosevic*, p.279.

Kosovo intervention, the following section reviews the political culture, costs, and context in relation to the Kosovo crisis and a potential military intervention.

### **Western Political Culture**

The West's appetite for intervention would likely have been very different had it not been in Kosovo and in 1998-99. In terms of its location, Kosovo was part of the former Yugoslavia – a place that had become familiar over the 1990s to Westerners for the kind of outrages, such as ethnic cleansing, that had supposedly disappeared from Europe decades before. Between 1991 and 1995, Western observers and television audiences witnessed two brutal wars, ethnic cleansing, and the worst massacre in Europe since the Second World War in Srebrenica. As the Balkan wars persisted, the Serbian side was increasingly presented as the bellicose aggressor. The primary motive assigned to it – the creation of a Greater Serbia at the expense of others – was considered archaic and out of touch with the wider pan-European trends towards unity and co-operation. By 1995, villains in Yugoslavia were clearly established in Western minds and media frameworks. After the Bosnia conflict, notions of good and evil were further reinforced as the full scale of the devastation that had taken place in Srebrenica unfolded. This led to a kind of collective guilt and shame in much of the West.<sup>336</sup> Many wondered how almost 8,000 men could have been slaughtered in the middle of Europe in a place relatively close to the borders of the European Union and, supposedly, a UN “safe haven.” By March 1998 when the Kosovo civil war began and the first

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<sup>336</sup> This sense of guilt led the Dutch government to resign in 2002 after the release of a report by Dutch Institute for War Documentation on 10 April 2002. The report partially blamed the government for its failure to protect the Srebrenica “safe haven,” which its troops were assigned to safeguard on behalf of the United Nations. Abi Daruvalla, “Srebrenica's Newest Victims,” *Time Europe*, 16 April, 2002, <http://www.time.com/time/europe/eu/daily/0,13716,230843,00.html>.

news of a massacre emerged, it did not take much time for many in the West to determine who was at fault. The Kosovo conflict was almost like the latest chapter in the same book: It entailed the same villains – Milosevic and the Serb nationalists; the same motives – Serb domination over other ethnic groups; and the same tactics – murder, massacre and ethnic cleansing. The only difference was that the new victims were now Kosovo Albanians, whereas previously they had been Muslims in Bosnia and Croats in Croatia.

The timing of the Kosovo conflict in 1998-99 was also an important determinant in the intervention for several reasons. First, it was important because it happened after the Croatia and Bosnian wars. Had the Kosovo crisis become violent in 1991 instead of 1998, it might have taken years and many more thousands of deaths before an intervention by Western powers. In a way, Bosnia's sacrifice paved the way for intervention in Kosovo. Second, the conflict emerged close to the turn of the twenty-first century. Many Westerners, including the West's political leadership, were feeling the weight of their time and desiring to enter the new century with a clean slate under a more ethical set of principles. Massacres and ethnic cleansing had no place in the new century, and were part of the darkest periods of the past century – a time many believed had now passed.

### **Political Cost**

On the eve of the Kosovo intervention, US President Bill Clinton went on American television to explain his reasons for going to war. During the speech,



Clinton stated, "I do not intend to put ground troops in Kosovo to fight a war."<sup>337</sup>

From a military perspective, this declaration seemed naïve, at best, as it revealed information that could put NATO at a disadvantage by allowing the adversary to prepare for the tactical choices that remained outside of a ground campaign. But from a political perspective, many advisors believed that a ground war could not be sold to the public in many NATO countries. This concern was also demonstrated in how the air war was conducted. During aerial bombing raids, concern over the loss of pilots meant that fighters could only fly at 15,000 feet, placing them out of anti-aircraft firing range. The same motive led to the decision not to employ the tank-killing Apache helicopters.<sup>338</sup> Concern over a public backlash from a high casualty count, also known as the 'bodybag effect,' meant that only low-risk modes of military engagement would be followed.<sup>339</sup>

Data from public opinion polls at the time seemed to support this risk-averse approach. Although the majority of Americans supported the air war throughout its entire duration, support for the war declined significantly in hypothetical scenarios involving American casualties in a ground war.<sup>340</sup> When asked "Would you still favour sending ground troops to Kosovo if 100 American soldiers were killed?" only 24 percent of respondents stated yes, while 65 percent stated no.

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<sup>337</sup> White House Office of the Press Secretary, *Address by the President to the Nation*, March 24, 1999.

<sup>338</sup> It was estimated that the loss rate of these helicopters was five percent per sortie or higher, while fixed-wing aircraft loss rates were estimated to be less a hundredth of a percent. Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), p.94.

<sup>339</sup> Lawrence Freedman, "Victims and Victors: Reflections on the Kosovo War," *Review of International Studies* 26, no. 3 (2000).

<sup>340</sup> According to the Pew Research Center, Support for US involvement in the Kosovo conflict registered 60 percent approval in March 1999. This figure increased to 62 percent in April, before dropping to 53 percent in May. The Pew Research Center for The People & the Press, "Collateral Damage Takes its Toll." Cited in Livingston, "Media Coverage of the War," p.377.

These numbers fell to 20 percent in favour and 69 percent opposed if 500 Americans were killed and 15 percent for and 72 percent against if 1,000 were killed.<sup>341</sup> A similar trend was evident amongst leading European NATO members, where support for a ground invasion was always lower than the air option that was actually employed. In France and the UK, for example, who recorded the highest level of support for the NATO action, support for a ground war was generally at least 10 percent below that of the ongoing air war. In Germany, support for the ground option was about 30 percent below that of the air campaign.<sup>342</sup>

As such, the West's decision to engage in Kosovo, and the manner by which this action was conducted, were based largely on the costs associated with such a commitment.<sup>343</sup> If early planning foresaw the need for a full-scale ground war involving high Western casualties, there would likely have been no military intervention in Kosovo.

As the qualified nature of Western involvement in Kosovo demonstrated, military intervention was conditioned by the costs that the interveners were willing to pay. It is questionable whether the media could have been a factor in anything beyond

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<sup>341</sup> Poll conducted by ICR Research Group for National Public Radio, Kaiser Family Foundation, and Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, between 23 April and 28 April 1999. Cited in *Ibid.*, p.376.

<sup>342</sup> Auerswald, "Integrated Decision Model of NATO Policy in Kosovo," pp.640-41, 59-60.

<sup>343</sup> Although costs, in terms of American lives, are the most critical, costs in terms of collateral damage (Serbs killed as a result of NATO mishaps) and the actual financial costs are also important. On the latter point, it was originally anticipated that the intervention might only last for a few days. Had it been known that it would take 78 days of bombing costing billions of dollars to achieve the desired outcome before the intervention, there might have been great reluctance to proceed. According to a joint study by the BBC and *Jane's Defence Weekly*, the overall cost of the intervention was £31.67 billion (about US\$50 billion), with the actual bombing phase costing £2.63 billion. Mark Savage, *78 Days: An Audit of War*: BBC 2, 17 October, 1999.

the limited aerial bombing that was the centrepiece of the Kosovo intervention. Had ground forces been used and casualties sustained, the pressures for withdrawal would likely have been great.<sup>344</sup> Even Slobodan Milosevic seemed cognisant of this fact, telling German Foreign Minister Joschka Fisher, “I can stand death – lots of it – but you can’t.”<sup>345</sup>

### Political Context

The Kosovo civil war occurred in a unique period in Western history. The 1990s marked the end of the Cold War and a reduction in the probability of nuclear annihilation or “A list” threats, as outlined earlier.<sup>346</sup> During the Cold War, world events were judged and strategic decisions could be made in a relatively straightforward fashion. The West knew who belonged to the “we” category and who was with the enemy. The post-Cold War world, however, was a far murkier terrain. Nonetheless, many events involving violations of human rights still outraged human sensitivities. During the Cold War, such outrages could be ignored for more important geopolitical interests, as the West’s survival was ultimately at risk. The post-Cold War 1990s, however, made such linkages difficult to establish and violation of human rights more difficult to justify.

The end of the Cold War also had a significant impact on media in the West. Sharing the same culture as their governments and people, Western media coverage and framing during the Cold War, with some exceptions, largely

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<sup>344</sup> Assuming that unforeseen circumstances did not change the strategic significance of the original intervention.

<sup>345</sup> Cited in Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.94.

<sup>346</sup> Nye Jr., “Redefining NATO’s Mission,” pp.12-15.

reflected the perspective of their governments. When coverage had pitted human rights against strategic interests, framing often either ignored violations or justified them for the greater good. The rising relative importance of human rights in foreign policy through “C list” threats and the absence of a dominating framework like the Cold War made it more common and politically justifiable to frame events on the basis of human rights without resorting to greater justifications. Furthermore, dramatic images of human suffering fit the media’s growing demands for shock and sensationalism. The news, which had traditionally been viewed by media networks as a public service and more a source of prestige than income, had increasingly become a commercial domain. This trend was having an impact on what was covered and how it was covered. This confluence of interests encouraged coverage of events that may have been ignored in previous decades. It also allowed for media framing to be more independent from the government, as constraints inherent in “A list” security environments were now largely absent.

Finally, the Kosovo conflict occurred in a period of relative quiet in international affairs. Had the Kosovo civil war taken place after the terrorist attack of 11 September 2001, when the Western world was caught up in the grips of the “War on Terror,” it may have not been noticed or given much attention. Allegations of links between the KLA and Osama Bin Laden and his network would also have been much more detrimental to the Albanian cause in this new period. Certainly, news of Russian human rights violations in Chechnya have not been getting nearly the attention in the West that they once commanded.

## **Chapter 5: The Media during the Kosovo Crisis**

After the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords that ended the Bosnian conflict, 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 the former Yugoslavia and other parts of the world that were more sensational and interesting to the media throughout most of the 1990s. 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 potential role of the CNN effect on governmental actions and policy in the West, it is first necessary to review Western media coverage of Kosovo.

The CNN effect model, as outlined in the third chapter of this dissertation, requires criteria from both the media and government for evidence in support of a CNN effect. Chapter five focuses primarily on the media criteria, while chapters six and seven assess the government. In terms of the media, it was determined that access, unexpected events and challenging framing are all essential factors for a possible CNN effect. To this end, this chapter begins by reviewing Western media coverage, represented by American television news coverage, of the Kosovo civil war from the beginning of 1998 to the last week before NATO began its air campaign over the FRY, in order to identify incidents that meet the media

criteria.<sup>347</sup> Once potential CNN effect incidents are reviewed and validated, based on the criteria, they are then subjected to an assessment that will determine if the events themselves were the basis of potential political influence or whether their media coverage is the most important factor. Finally, this chapter concludes by examining if a media accumulating effect was present during the prelude to the Kosovo intervention. To determine this, the media coverage of Kosovo is reviewed to see if the Kosovo civil war grew in importance to Western media as incidents meeting the CNN effect criteria accumulated.

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

To begin, the main television evening news programs of four major American networks – ABC, CBS, NBC and CNN – were reviewed from 1 January 1998 to 20 March 1999, the final week before NATO bombing.<sup>348</sup> ABC, CBS, and NBC's programs were each 30 minutes in length, while CNN's was 60 minutes.<sup>349</sup> In each case, a search was made for content relating specifically to the Kosovo crisis.<sup>350</sup> These results were compiled on a weekly basis and are presented in Graph 5-1 and Table 5-1.

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<sup>347</sup> While policy will be reviewed from January 1998 in chapters six and seven, Media coverage (in terms of American television coverage) of Kosovo only began in March 1998, as there were no stories on Kosovo in January and February 1998. Furthermore, as it is practically not feasible to assess all Western media coverage, American television news coverage is selected to represent Western media. This is due to the salience of television as the central medium in the CNN effect, and the leading role of the United States in influencing Western policy.

<sup>348</sup> The information for this study was gathered from January to April 2002: Vanderbilt University, "*Vanderbilt Television News Archive*"; available from <http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu/>. Additionally, specific portions of television news video were viewed and coded at the Archive in May 2002.

<sup>349</sup> It should be noted that only 70 percent of this time, on average, is devoted to news content, while the remaining 30% is devoted to television commercials.

<sup>350</sup> In order to qualify for this study, at least 50% of the time within the news story must be on the Kosovo crisis.

During the Kosovo civil war, despite the efforts of FRY authorities, conditions and external pressures did allow journalists to gain access to and capture unexpected and emotive images from the conflict zone. The KLA, for its part, was eager to permit international media presence, believing it to be a powerful weapon in its arsenal. 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>351</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>352</sup>
- 3) The Gornje Obrinje massacre of 26 September 1998 and its aftermath.
- 4) The Racak massacre of 15 January 1999 and its aftermath.
- 5) The Rambouillet Conference and its final days of negotiation.

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<sup>351</sup> A notable spike is defined as at least 40 minutes of dedicated Kosovo coverage in one week.

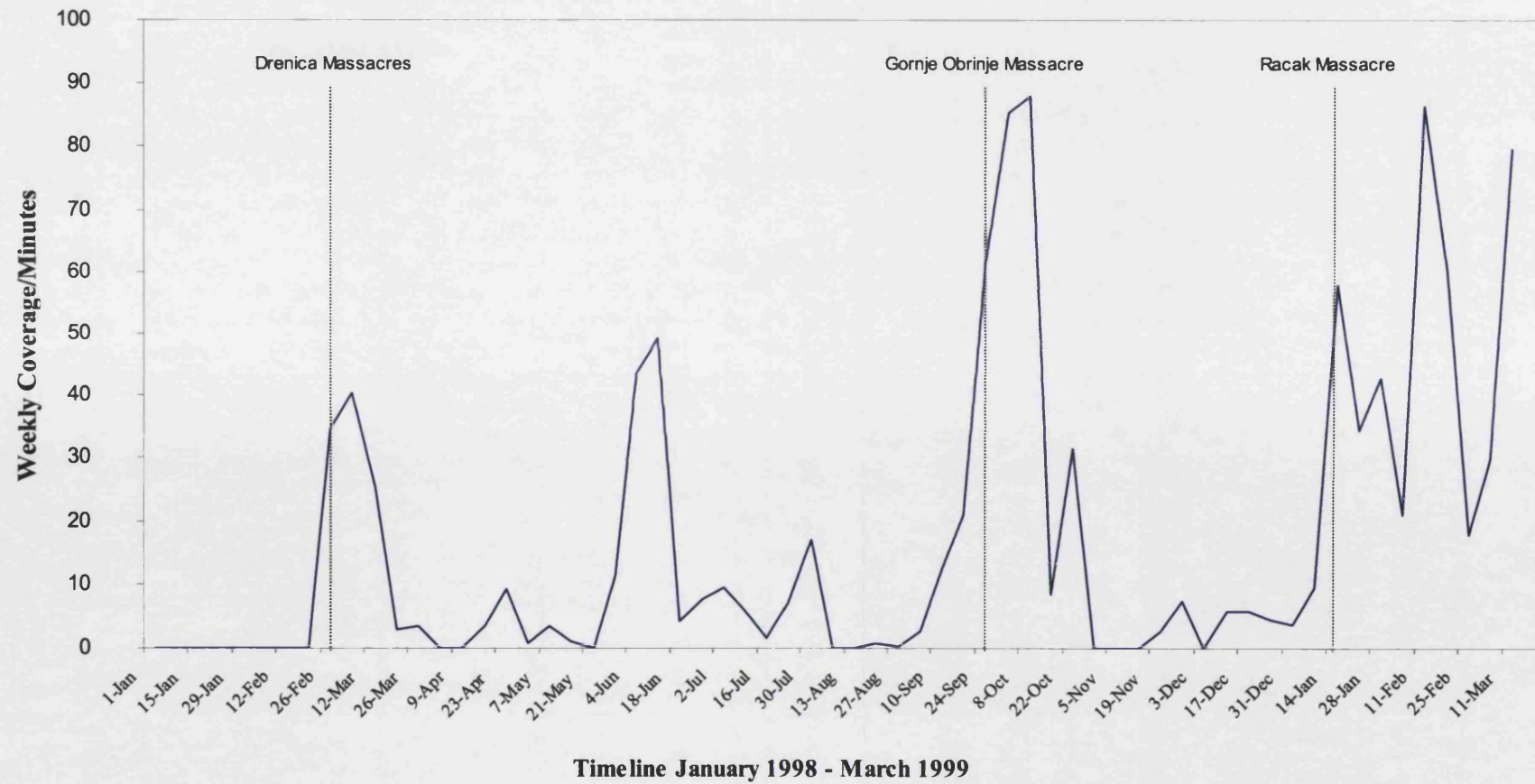
<sup>352</sup> This operation (also informally referred to as the NATO Air Show) involved eighty NATO warplanes from 13 member states that flew over the Adriatic Sea, Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in a clockwise swirl. The exercise lasted five hours and was conducted as a show of force to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to demonstrate NATO’s willingness to act militarily if necessary over Kosovo. CNN News, “NATO Begins Show of Force over Balkans,” *CNN.com*, 15 June, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9806/15/nato.kosovo.on/> and CNN News, “NATO Demonstrates Firepower over Balkans,” *CNN.com*, 15 June, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9806/15/nato.kosovo/>.

- 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 images from unexpected events from the conflict zone – the massacres at Drenica, Gornje Obrinje and Racak. These incidents shocked viewers and surprised policy makers. The other spikes relating to the NATO air exercises in mid June, Rambouillet diplomacy, and the prelude to the military intervention were not unexpected and more closely associated to institutionally initiated news stories, outside the realm of the CNN effect.



**Graph 5-1 - American Television News Coverage of Kosovo on Leading Networks**



**Table 5-1: American Television Coverage of Kosovo on Leading Networks****(ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) – 1 January 1998 – 20 March 1999**

<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Total Coverage (Minutes)</b>	<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Total Coverage (Minutes)</b>
1-March, 1998	34 1/2	13-Sep	12 1/3
8-Mar	40 1/3	20-Sep	21
15-Mar	25 1/3	27-Sep	61 1/6
22-Mar	3	4-Oct	85 1/3
29-Mar	3 1/2	11-Oct	88
5-Apr	0	18-Oct	8 1/2
12-Apr	0	25-Oct	31 1/2
19-Apr	3 1/2	1-Nov	0
26-Apr	9 1/6	8-Nov	0
3-May	2/3	15-Nov	0
10-May	3 1/2	22-Nov	2 2/3
17-May	1 1/6	29-Nov	7 1/3
24-May	0	6-Dec	0
31-May	11 1/3	13-Dec	5 5/6
7-Jun	43 1/2	20-Dec	5 5/6
14-Jun	49 1/3	27-Dec	4 1/2
21-Jun	4 1/6	3-January, 1999	3 2/3
28-Jun	7 1/2	10-Jan	9 1/2
5-Jul	9 1/3	17-Jan	57 5/6
12-Jul	5 5/6	24-Jan	34 1/6
19-Jul	1 1/2	31-Jan	42 2/3
26-Jul	7 1/6	7-Feb	21
2-Aug	17	14-Feb	86 1/3
9-Aug	0	21-Feb	60 1/6
16-Aug	0	28-Feb	17 5/6
23-Aug	5/6	7-Mar	29 5/6
30-Aug	1/3	14-Mar	79 2/3
6-Sep	2 2/3		

The following section reviews the background of these three massacre incidents, their media representation, and framing in more detail to assess if they meet the media criteria for the CNN effect.

### *Incident 1: The Drenica Massacres*

On 28 February 1998, four Serb policemen were killed in clashes with KLA rebels in the Drenica region of Kosovo.<sup>353</sup> The Drenica region was a key centre of KLA activity and support and had challenged Serbian rule for many years. By 1998, Serbs were clearly unwelcome in this area.<sup>354</sup> In response to the killing of the policemen and to the general situation in Drenica, the Serb authorities sought to resolve what they perceived as a major challenge to their control in a decisive manner and set an example for other villages and regions in Kosovo that might consider challenging them. They did this through two raids on the Drenica area involving several thousand Serbian Ministry of Interior (MUP) and Yugoslav Army (VJ) forces. The offensive reportedly went well beyond normal policing and involved the use of helicopter gunships, tanks, artillery, and dozens of armoured personnel carriers topped with machine guns. In two major attacks, 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 Albanian side called “executions” of suspected KLA members. From the Serb perspective,

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<sup>353</sup> A reconstruction of this event suggests that a police car was chasing suspected KLA rebels on a road to Likoshani when the car was ambushed by the KLA. A backup patrol was also hit by the KLA, causing four officer deaths in total. James Walsh, "A Volcano Explodes," *Time Europe Website*, 16 March, 1998, <http://www.time.com/time/europe/timetrails/serbia/sr980316.html>.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid.

the Albanian deaths were based on self-defence from forces that were fired on. In these raids, five Albanians were arrested and an arsenal of weapons, including hand grenades, explosives, and machine guns were captured.<sup>355</sup>

In the second raid on the nearby village of Prekaz, which began on 5 March and lasted for two days, 51 members of the Jashari family were killed. The head of this family, Adem Jashari, was one of the founders of the KLA and had been a target of police arrest for years.<sup>356</sup> The incident began with a KLA attack on Serb police that injured two officers, from where, according to Serbian accounts, the KLA retreated to the Jashari compound in Prekaz. The police responded by surrounding the compound and giving residents and suspected "terrorists" several hours to surrender. Although thirty people surrendered, others stayed to fight. Serb authorities reported that the Jashari clan fought back using machine guns, rocket launchers and bazookas, killing two Serb police officers, before being killed. The battle lasted for twenty-seven hours until all resistance ended. 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>357</sup>

### *Images of the Drenica Massacres*

The Serbs initially attempted to cut off access to the Drenica area by sealing the area from journalists and setting up heavily guarded roadblocks on the main routes

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<sup>355</sup> CNN News, "At Least 20 Dead in Kosovo Fighting," *CNN.com*, 1 March, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9803/01/yugo.kosovo/>.

<sup>356</sup> Adem Jashari had been sentenced to a 20-year jail term in absentia for attacks wounding police and civilians. CNN News, "Serbs Say Kosovo Guerrilla Leader Killed in Crackdown," *CNN.com*, 6 March, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9803/06/kosovo.pm/>.

<sup>357</sup> R. Jeffrey Smith, "Eerie Quiet Follows Assault in Kosovo," *Washington Post*, 9 March, 1998, A13; Tanjug News Agency, "Kosovo Killing: Belgrade's Official Version of Events," *BBC News Online*, 12 March, 1998, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/monitoring/64947.stm>.

into the villages where conflict had occurred. The information that initially trickled out was largely through the eyewitness accounts of people who fled the area during the attacks.<sup>358</sup> Despite their efforts, however, images did eventually seep out of the conflict zone from a number of sources. The first were those of desperate refugees whom journalists found huddled together in the nearby Cicevica Mountains.<sup>359</sup> The second, surprisingly, was from Serb television, which perhaps naively showed dramatic footage of shelled houses and corpses littering the Jashari compound.<sup>360</sup> It also showed a bulldozer destroying the house of Adem Jashari.<sup>361</sup> Once these images were broadcast in the FRY, they were picked up and broadcast around the world by other networks. The third source came from Western journalists who, after some pressure, were reluctantly allowed limited and controlled entry into the Drenica area through an organised tour on 8 March. This tour was allowed by the Serbian Interior Ministry, which used the event to trumpet victory over "Drenica terrorists." Allowing this tour, however, had the opposite effect of its intention, as Western journalists focused on the destroyed houses and terrified villagers.<sup>362</sup> The final source, which provided the most gruesome pictures, came from journalists who accompanied villagers who went to identify and claim the bodies of relatives killed. These stark images of corpses were subsequently put on the Internet. According to a leading Albanian newspaper publisher, "As soon as we got the pictures of Prekaz...we put them on

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<sup>358</sup> Smith, "Eerie Quiet."

<sup>359</sup> CNN News, "World Leaders Condemn Kosovo Violence," *CNN.com*, 7 March, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9803/07/yugo.kosovo/>.

<sup>360</sup> CNN News, "Serbs Say Kosovo Guerrilla Leader Killed in Crackdown."

<sup>361</sup> Walsh, "Volcano."

<sup>362</sup> CNN News, "World Leaders Condemn Kosovo Violence," and Smith, "Eerie Quiet."

the Internet.”<sup>363</sup> Most of the images that reached Western audiences originated from the Prekaz massacre.

### *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 massacre on American television for the one-week period (seven days) after the images from the incident 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, and an internationally recognised part of the FRY. While Serbs acknowledge that Albanians represented the majority of Kosovo's population, they believed that this outcome had been reached through illegitimate means.<sup>364</sup> Believing it their right to defend Kosovo from illegal attempts to challenge state authority, Serbs saw their actions in Drenica as a justified response to a KLA ambush that was part of a pattern of increasing terrorism over recent months.<sup>365</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>366</sup>

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<sup>363</sup> Allan Little, "Behind the Kosovo Crisis," *BBC News Online*, 12 March, 2000, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/674056.stm>.

<sup>364</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>365</sup> CNN News, "Serbian Police Break up Mass Protest in Kosovo," *CNN.com*, 2 March, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9803/02/yugo.kosovo/>.

<sup>366</sup> Sell, *Slobodan Milosevic*, p.65.

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 recognised as part of the FRY, this was due to a 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>367</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 include:

- 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

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<sup>367</sup> CNN News, “Serbs Say Kosovo Guerrilla Leader Killed in Crackdown.”

## 2 – Pro-Serbian Framing

Examples of language in this framework include:

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

## 3 – Both positions represented

## 4 – Neutral position

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

**Table 5-2: American Television Framing of the Drenica Area Massacre on Leading Networks (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) – 5 March 1998 – 11 March 1998**

	<b>Number Of Stories</b>	<b>Percentage Of Coverage<sup>368</sup></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>

Over the week following the massacre, Western media presented both perspectives in half their coverage and the Albanian position in slightly over 40 percent. Surprisingly, one story framed the conflict from the Serbian viewpoint,



while one story did not present either perspective. At this stage, the Kosovo conflict was still new to many journalists and the public in the West. As such, the majority took a balanced view of this incident. Nonetheless, pro-Albanian framing still dominated pro-Serbian by a ratio of nine to one, whenever only one perspective was presented, likely due to the collective memories of previous Serb atrocities in other Balkan wars. Despite the three years since the end of the Bosnian war, the Milosevic-led regime was still vilified in the West, and much of the media found close parallels between Kosovo and Bosnia, making it easier to adopt similar framing. This outcome, of course, is not surprising, given journalistic practices that attempt to link new conflicts to something familiar by asking: "How did we cover this type of conflict in the past?"<sup>369</sup>

### *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 26 September 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, 36 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>370</sup>

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<sup>368</sup> Percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

<sup>369</sup> Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, p.50.

<sup>370</sup> Human Rights Watch, "A Week of Terror in Drenica: Human Law Violations in Kosovo" (Human Rights Watch, 1999); available from <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/kosovo/> and BBC News, "UN Condemns Kosovo Atrocities," *BBC News Online*, 2 October, 1998, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/184698.stm>.

*Images of the Gornje Obrinje Massacre*

After the MUP and VJ left the area, locals who had escaped the attack returned the next day to find their relatives. On 29 September, international journalists and human rights activists who had heard about the massacre arrived in the village to document and film the atrocities and their aftermath. Over the next few days, gruesome images of the massacre dominated television news in the West. These included images of burned homes still smouldering; homes damaged by shrapnel, bullets and tank fire; cattle that had been shot; hay stacks and food supplies that had been torched; and, of course, scores of corpses. What made this incident particularly shocking and emotive was that many of the dead were the weakest in the village that were not fast enough to escape their attackers. These included women, children and the elderly. In one example, a 95 year old invalid man seemed to have been burned alive as his charred remains were discovered where relatives had last seen him alive a few days before.<sup>371</sup> In another example, a mother with her children were chased into a local forest and gunned down at close range where they were hiding.<sup>372</sup> Besides focussing on damaged property and dead victims, much of the footage focused on images of mourning relatives and interviews with surviving family members, who described how and where they found their fallen relatives. As Gornje Obrinje was a relatively small village with several large extended families, many of the survivors lost multiple family members. The interviews made the tragedy even more powerful to Western audiences, who could identify more closely with the victims as a result.

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<sup>371</sup> Cited in Human Rights Watch, *"A Week of Terror."*

<sup>372</sup> "Kosovo – Women, Children Massacred," *Reuters*, September 30, 1998. Cited in Ibid.

*Framing from the Gornje Obrinje Massacre*

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 Gornje Obrinje massacre were similar to versions presented by Western media, who rarely questioned allegations of Serb brutality. To the Serbs, however, the deaths were a continuation of earlier fighting with the KLA that had killed many Serb police. The massacre was part of an anti-Serb media campaign, which they saw as a continuation of Serb demonisation present in previous Yugoslav wars.<sup>373</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>374</sup> They also criticised what they referred to as a double standard by the international community, in which KLA “terrorist crimes” against civilians were ignored, while their anti-insurgency actions were magnified.<sup>375</sup> After Gornje Obrinje media reports surfaced, the Serbian side pointed to an alleged KLA massacre of thirty-four Serbs and Albanians that was discovered by Yugoslav police on 9 September 1998, yet was not covered by Western media. To the FRY, this was clear evidence of an anti-Serb bias. Table 5-3 reviews media framing from the aftermath of the Gornje Obrinje massacre during the week after reports of the incident first reached the West:

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<sup>373</sup> Federal Government of Yugoslavia, *Press Statement*, October 2, 1998.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid.

**Table 5-3: American Television Framing of the Gornje Obrinje Massacre on Leading Networks (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) – 29 September 1998 – 5 October 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>

By the beginning of the autumn 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 had dropped significantly from 59 to 27 percent of all coverage. This growing sympathetic framing was placing media coverage in a critical and challenging position in relation to official policy, which had failed to prevent the massacre despite the lapse of over six months since the Drenica area massacres.

### *Incident 3: The Racak Massacre*

The third major unexpected set of televised images came from the village of Racak on 15 January 1999. After the Gornje Obrinje massacre, it became clear that the status quo was not working. The massacre, along with hundreds of thousands of refugees facing an oncoming winter, in conjunction with a recently passed Security Council resolution and NATO activation warning, provided

Western leadership with a new zeal to pressure Milosevic. With a more credible threat of NATO action, Milosevic changed course and curtailed his offensive, accepting a more rigorous monitoring regime in Kosovo, led by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Although the situation calmed down after October and many refugees returned home, there were still many incidents of violence, often provoked by the KLA.<sup>376</sup> The Serbs, for their part, seemed all too eager to follow form with heavy-handed reactions.

On 8 January 1999, the KLA ambushed and destroyed an armoured 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, four other policemen and two civilians were injured, and eight Yugoslav soldiers were taken hostage.<sup>377</sup> The same day, a second ambush on a convoy carrying rations to troops resulted in no casualties, but another similar incident on 10 January 1999 resulted in the death of another policeman.<sup>378</sup> After these incidents, a build-up by Yugoslav forces began around Stimlje, a town about half a kilometre from Racak, a village with a KLA base that was about to face a heavy-handed Serb retaliation.<sup>379</sup> By January 1999, Racak, which had a pre-conflict population of 2,000, was down to around 400. This was

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<sup>376</sup> According to the OSCE monitoring regime, most violations between October 1998 and January 1999 were KLA provocations. As stated by Gabriel Keller of the OSCE observer mission, "Generally speaking, I would say that the KLA is responsible for most provocations, and the Yugoslav authorities and Serb police are responsible sometimes for exaggerated actions or are reacting heavy-handedly." Cited in CNN News, "Kosovo Rebels Ambush Police, Take Soldiers Hostage," *CNN.com*, 8 January, 1999, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9901/08/kosovo.01/index.html>.

<sup>377</sup> The Yugoslav soldiers were released five days later on 13 January 1999. CNN News, "Kosovo Rebels Release Yugoslav Soldiers," *CNN.com*, 13 January, 1999, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9901/13/kosovo.01/index.html>.

<sup>378</sup> CNN News, "Kosovo Rebels Ambush Police."

<sup>379</sup> According to Hasim Thaci, "They set out to commit atrocities, because a key KLA unit was based in this area." In Allan Little, *Mortal Combat - NATO at War*, London: BBC 2, March 12, 2000. Also see Human Rights Watch, "Yugoslav Government War Crimes in Racak" (Human Rights Watch, 1999); available from <http://www.hrw.org/press/1999/jan/yugo0129.htm>.

largely because the village had already been shelled the previous summer by a government offensive that had destroyed some houses and driven most of the population to surrounding towns.<sup>380</sup> At 6:30 am on 15 January the 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 armoured vehicles positioned around the village perimeter.<sup>381</sup> When hostilities broke out, some residents reportedly escaped to Petrovo, a neighbouring village under Yugoslav fire, while KLA members escaped to positions on the surrounding hills. The KLA resistance that morning lasted at least several hours. After this point, the Yugoslav forces took Racak, staying until 4:30 pm that day.<sup>382</sup> The details of what happened after they took the village that morning has become a subject of much controversy. According to Kosovo Albanian accounts and those of international human rights organisations, 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 3:00 p.m., villagers reported hearing shots from the hillside where 25 bodies would be found the next day.<sup>383</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 argued that they had not hid their intentions to conduct a military operation and even invited some journalists and international monitors to watch from the surrounding hills. Some Associated Press journalists and American monitors

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<sup>380</sup> Human Rights Watch, *"Yugoslav Government War Crimes."*

<sup>381</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society*, p.114.

<sup>382</sup> Ibid.

<sup>383</sup> Human Rights Watch, *"Yugoslav Government War Crimes."*

from the OSCE mission were present as events unfolded throughout the day,<sup>384</sup> although the monitors were intentionally kept at a distance from the village and had a limited view.<sup>385</sup> The Serbs further argued that they had even issued several reports before, during, and after the offensive of the village, with updates on events.<sup>386</sup> Immediately after the attack, they issued a press statement that claimed success in the Racak operation, which included the killing of 15 KLA fighters and a seizure of armaments.<sup>387</sup> From their account, the entire day involved fighting with KLA units, with different degrees of intensity, until their departure in the afternoon. All the dead from that day were KLA who had fallen in combat. Although there was dispute surrounding the events of 15 January, what was clear was the outrage felt in the West when images of Racak's aftermath reached television screens the following day.

### *Images of the Racak Massacre*

Journalists and monitors arrived on the scene in Racak the next morning on 16 January 1999. Throughout the village, 45 dead bodies were discovered. Although the vast majority of victims were men who, local eyewitnesses claimed, were separated from women and children by Yugoslav forces earlier in the day for execution, victims also included a young woman, a 16-year old girl, a 12-year old boy, and a 70-year old man. Many scenes showed the dead up close, focusing on the wound that had killed the individual. One of the worst images was that of a

<sup>384</sup> Renaud Girard, "Kosovo: Obscure Areas of the Massacre," *Le Figaro*, 20 January, 1999, <http://www.balkanpeace.org/wcs/wct/wctk/wctk02.html>.

<sup>385</sup> Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society*, p.114.

<sup>386</sup> Michael McAuliffe and Sandra Bartlett, *The Road to Racak: CBC Radio News World at Six Documentary*: CBC, 23 May, 2000.

<sup>387</sup> CNN News, "At Least 15 Rebels Killed in Renewed Kosovo Fighting," *CNN.com*, 15 January, 1999, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9901/15/kosovo.02/index.html>.

gully at the edge of the village where the main atrocity was purported to have occurred. The gully was littered with numerous dead bodies, with a section containing a mangled pile of about 17 or 18 victims on top of each other, with some even mutilated.<sup>388</sup> In presenting the footage to television audiences, images of the carnage were intermingled with scenes of bewildered and shocked villagers, some of whom had just returned to the village to find their relatives dead. There were also interviews with family members crying over their lost relatives. Perhaps 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>389</sup> At another point, surrounded by journalists and microphones, he pronounced, "This is about as horrendous an event as I have seen and I have been in some pretty nasty situations."<sup>390</sup> Unlike other incidents resulting in a large number of deaths, this one had almost immediate judgement of blame, which along with the pictures, made for a powerful cocktail. Later that day, at a press conference in Pristina, Walker stated, "I've seen all the ingredients of a massacre."<sup>391</sup> The media then took this theme and elaborated on it by referring to extra-judicial killings and the mutilation of unarmed Albanians.<sup>392</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> CNN News, "NATO Convenes over Kosovo Massacre," *CNN.com*, 17 January, 1999, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9901/17/kosovo.01/>.

<sup>389</sup> Boyer, Kirk and Young, *War in Europe*.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid.

<sup>391</sup> McAuliffe and Bartlett, *The Road to Racak*.

<sup>392</sup> CNN News, "New Fighting Near Scene of Kosovo Massacre," *CNN.com*, 17 January, 1999, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9901/17/kosovo.02/index.html>.



*Framing from the Racak Massacre*

To the Albanian side, Racak, like previous massacres, was another attempt by Serbian authorities to project their power and crush all desire for basic rights. To the Serbs, however, the events of 15 January 1999 in Racak 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 authorities encountered stiff resistance from the KLA. To Serbs, Racak was not a massacre, but an attempt by the KLA, who had retaken the town after the Serb’s departure, to frame a massacre scene and create international outrage. What the world saw the following day involved the gathering of fallen KLA fighters from the day’s battle, subsequently dressed in civilian clothing and placed in a fashion that depicted a massacre. According to Serbian accounts, this was done at night so that, by the next morning, international journalists and monitors could record the event as an atrocity, not a battle.<sup>393</sup> The Serbs were particularly offended with the behaviour and comments of William Walker, who they believed showed bias towards the Albanian side by making judgements on the incident without a full investigation. 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. The West, however, largely dismissed the forensic team’s findings as biased due to the Yugoslav and Belorussian composition of the team. This

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<sup>393</sup> Renauld Girard, a French journalist who was one of the few Western journalists to support the Serb position, wondered whether the KLA had sought to turn a military defeat into a political victory? According to Girard, two Associated Press TV journalists had accompanied the Yugoslav forces all day during the assault on Racak and their video supported the government version of events. Also, a French journalist and OSCE monitors were in the village on the evening that the massacre allegedly occurred and after the Yugoslav forces left. Apparently, nothing out of the ordinary happened, as the officials were talking to the villagers and later only took several wounded people away. See Girard, “Kosovo: Obscure Areas.”

conclusion was further refuted several months later when an EU-sponsored forensic team that had access to the same corpses referred to the incident as a crime against humanity.<sup>394</sup>

In the week after images from the Drenica massacres 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 5-4: American Television Framing of the Racak Massacre on Leading Networks (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) – 16 January 1999 – 22 January 1999**

	<b>Number Of Stories</b>	<b>Percentage Of Coverage<sup>395</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>

The framing from Kosovo in the West continued to become more sympathetic towards the Albanian position, putting additional pressure on official Western policy that had again failed to prevent a massacre. As Graph 5-2 below

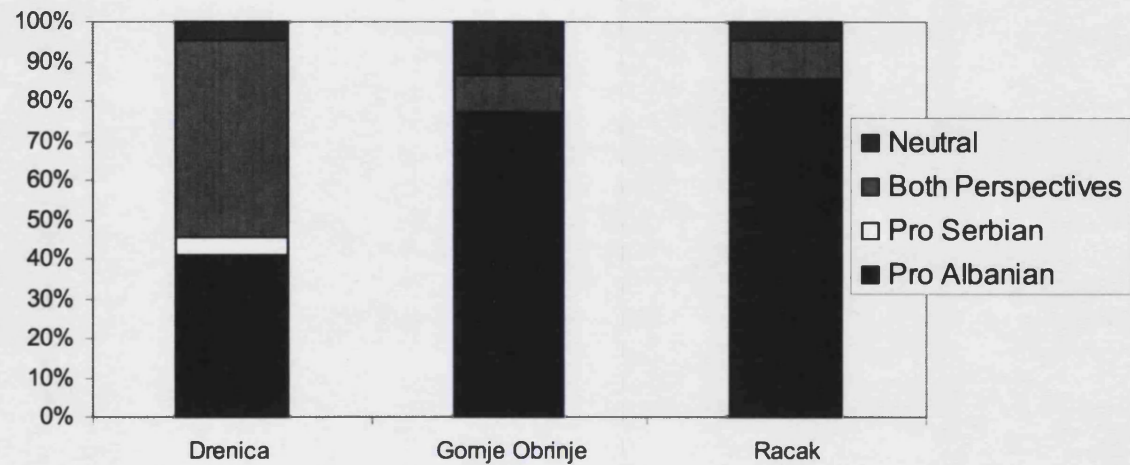
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<sup>394</sup> Although the vague nature of comments by Dr. Helena Ranta, the Finnish pathologist who led the team, has led some to question the official interpretation of her findings by the West. See Peter Worthington, "The Hoax That Started a War: How the U.S. NATO and the Western Media Were Conned in Kosovo," *The Toronto Sun*, 1 April, 2001, p.C6.

<sup>395</sup> Numbers do not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

demonstrates, American television coverage had clearly been largely sympathetic towards the Albanian framework throughout the conflict, becoming more pro-Albanian as massacres accumulated over time. Significantly, pro-Albanian framing, which accounted for 41 percent of all framing after the Drenica area massacres, increased to 86 percent after the Racak massacre.

**Graph 5-2: American Post-Massacre Television Framing of the Kosovo Conflict**



### **Events or Media Coverage?**

As outlined in chapter three, in providing evidence in support of a CNN effect, it is not only necessary to highlight events meeting the media criteria followed by the government criteria, but also to show that the media coverage of the event, as opposed to the event itself, was the critical factor. If the event itself is the significant variable, then the media coverage of the event is largely irrelevant as an independent factor. This section reviews the three unexpected massacres in Kosovo in order to assess whether they received proportionate media coverage. This is done over two parts. The first assesses the percentage of overall media coverage these 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 data format in Tables 5-5 and 5-6, respectively.

**Table 5-5: Television Coverage of Kosovo Massacres versus Total Coverage  
on Leading Networks (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) –1 March 1998 – 20  
March 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</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</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</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 2 March 1998 in three 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 5 March. As outlined in Table 5-5, from the week that began on 1 March 1998 to the final full week before the NATO intervention (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>396</sup> Based on the total minutes devoted to Kosovo over the total number of days in this period, Kosovo received an average of two minutes and 45 seconds of coverage each day.<sup>397</sup> 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 eight minutes of average coverage per day – almost three times the daily average (five minutes and 40 seconds average after Drenica, 12 minutes and 30 seconds average after Gornje Obrinje, and six minutes average after Racak). Although these three two-week periods after the massacres represented 10.9 percent of the total period 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. In other words, these three incidents accounted for nearly half of all media coverage. But were these incidents significant enough to justify such disproportionate coverage?

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<sup>396</sup> There were an estimated 40,425 minutes of television news coverage over this period (one hour on CNN and 30 minutes each on ABC, CBS and NBC. This equals two hours and 30 minutes or 150 minutes per day. Less 30 percent for commercials, this equals 105 minutes of actual programming. One hundred and five minutes times 385 days that constitutes this 55 week period equals 40,425). If this number is then divided by the 1,061 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>397</sup> Out of 105 total minutes of total news content per day.

Table 5-6 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 to those recorded in the media coverage they garnered in the overall conflict, then it could be argued that these incidents received proportionate attention for their significance in the conflict. If the incidents represent far less damage in relation to the overall conflict, then media coverage could be considered disproportionate.

**Table 5-6: Massacres as Proportion of Overall Death and Destruction  
During the Kosovo Civil War –1 March 1998 – 20 March 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 5-6, an estimated 2,000 Albanians died in the Kosovo civil war, while 400 of their villages were destroyed.<sup>398</sup> Although some of these incidents involved fighting between Yugoslav authorities and KLA militants, the majority of those killed were civilians who died in ways not captured by cameras.

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<sup>398</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Press Statement*, "Kosovo Albanians Agree to Accord; Serbs Still Holdouts," 25 February, 1999.



In the three unexpected and emotive incidents outlined above, a total of 156 people were killed.<sup>399</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. While the media clearly acted disproportionately when unexpected and emotive images from Kosovo emerged, it is important to see how these images were framed. For governments to be pressured into action and policy change, framing in a manner that challenges existing policy is important. The government's reaction to these incidents is reviewed in the following two chapters.

### **The Accumulating Effect**

Although any television news story can potentially have political impact, leading news items presented as the first story on the television evening news are likely to generate more attention and it can be assumed have more potential influence.<sup>400</sup> Therefore, to determine if there was an accumulating effect within Western media coverage regarding the importance allotted to the Kosovo civil war, research is conducted on the level of leading story coverage devoted to the issue over the timeline to intervention. Graph 5-3 compares all news coverage to leading story news coverage, while Table 5-7 and Table 5-8 show the same data in tabular format, in absolute and relative terms, respectively.

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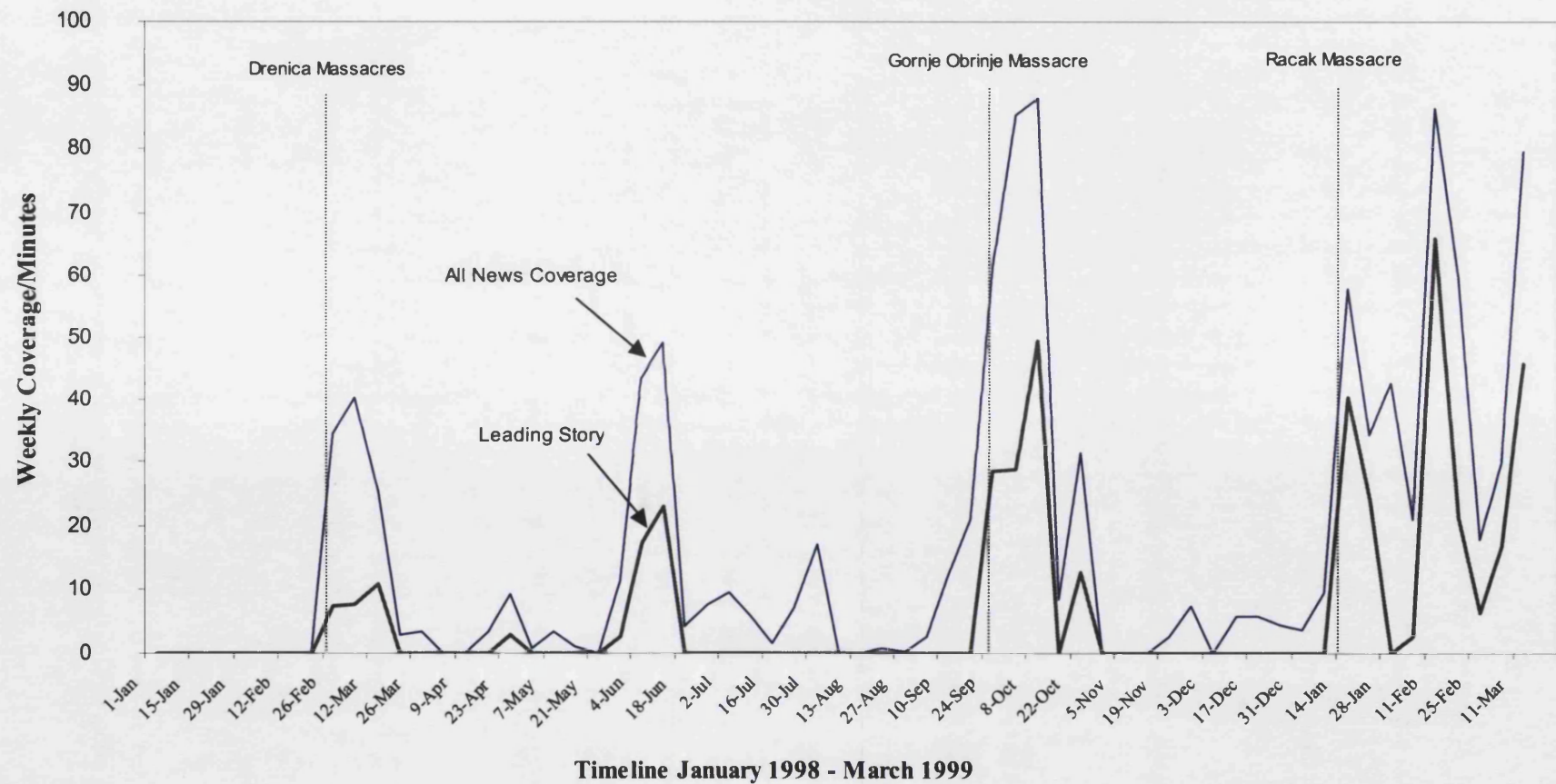
<sup>399</sup> Seventy-five Kosovo Albanians were killed in the Drenica massacres of 28 February to 6 March, 1998; 36 were killed in the massacre of Gornje Obrinje and surrounding villages on 26 September, 1998; and 45 were killed in the Racak massacre of 15 January, 1999. It should be noted that there is some discrepancy in the number of deaths in these incidents. The figures presented here are those most commonly cited in media reports.

<sup>400</sup> In Robinson's Policy-Media Interaction Model, for example, a strong CNN effect requires television news coverage within the first ten minutes of the evening news for at least three consecutive days. Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, p.38.

The results show that the same events that created spikes earlier also generated leading news stories, but with a notable pattern of increasing coverage as events moved closer to military intervention. The events of mid June, for example, generated more attention than those in the Drenica area in early March; those of Gornje Obrinje in early October were greater than June's; and the post-Racak events generated more attention than the October events. In other words, while Kosovo registered on the Western media radar screen as soon as events turned bloody, its designated level of importance increased as events accumulated.

In percentage terms, as outlined in Table 5-8, the week of 8 March, the first full week after the Drenica massacres ended, 19 percent of Kosovo coverage was the leading story. This figure increased to 47 percent during the week of 4 October after Gornje Obrinje, and 70 percent during the week of 17 January following Racak. While the Kosovo crisis was relatively unfamiliar to the West in March 1998 when initial post-massacre images surfaced, subsequent coverage over the next thirteen months made Kosovo increasingly familiar. Each televised massacre, it seemed, exposed the shortcomings of Western policy that had failed to prevent the bloodshed. If images of human suffering were to influence policy, then the impact seemed to be strengthened with each passing incident.

**Graph 5-3 - American Television Coverage of Kosovo as Leading Story Versus All Coverage**



**Table 5-7: American Television Coverage of Kosovo as Leading Story on**

**Leading Networks (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN) – 1 January 1998 –20 March 1999**

<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Leading Story (Minutes)</b>	<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Leading Story (Minutes)</b>
1-Mar	7 1/3	13-Sep	0
8-Mar	7 2/3	20-Sep	0
15-Mar	10 2/3	27-Sep	28 1/2
22-Mar	0	4-Oct	28 5/6
29-Mar	0	11-Oct	49 1/2
5-Apr	0	18-Oct	0
12-Apr	0	25-Oct	12 2/3
19-Apr	0	1-Nov	0
26-Apr	2 5/6	8-Nov	0
3-May	0	15-Nov	0
10-May	0	22-Nov	0
17-May	0	29-Nov	0
24-May	0	6-Dec	0
31-May	2 1/2	13-Dec	0
7-Jun	17 1/6	20-Dec	0
14-Jun	23 1/6	27-Dec	0
21-Jun	0	3-Jan	0
28-Jun	0	10-Jan	0
5-Jul	0	17-Jan	40 1/3
12-Jul	0	24-Jan	24
19-Jul	0	31-Jan	0
26-Jul	0	7-Feb	2 2/3
2-Aug	0	14-Feb	66
9-Aug	0	21-Feb	21 1/6
16-Aug	0	28-Feb	6 1/3
23-Aug	0	7-Mar	16 5/6
30-Aug	0	14-Mar	45 5/6
6-Sep	0		

**Table 5-8: American Television Coverage of Kosovo as Leading Story vs.  
Total Coverage (ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN), in Percentiles –1 January 1998 –  
20 March 1999**

<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Leading Story (% of Total)</b>	<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Leading Story (% of Total)</b>
1-Mar	21%	13-Sep	0%
8-Mar	19%	20-Sep	0%
15-Mar	42%	27-Sep	47%
22-Mar	0%	4-Oct	34%
29-Mar	0%	11-Oct	56%
5-Apr	0%	18-Oct	0%
12-Apr	0%	25-Oct	40%
19-Apr	0%	1-Nov	0%
26-Apr	31%	8-Nov	0%
3-May	0%	15-Nov	0%
10-May	0%	22-Nov	0%
17-May	0%	29-Nov	0%
24-May	0%	6-Dec	0%
31-May	22%	13-Dec	0%
7-Jun	39%	20-Dec	0%
14-Jun	47%	27-Dec	0%
21-Jun	0%	3-Jan	0%
28-Jun	0%	10-Jan	0%
5-Jul	0%	17-Jan	70%
12-Jul	0%	24-Jan	70%
19-Jul	0%	31-Jan	0%
26-Jul	0%	7-Feb	13%
2-Aug	0%	14-Feb	76%
9-Aug	0%	21-Feb	35%
16-Aug	0%	28-Feb	36%
23-Aug	0%	7-Mar	56%
30-Aug	0%	14-Mar	58%
6-Sep	0%		

## **Chapter 6: The Government during the Kosovo Crisis – The Macro Review**

This chapter now turns to the second key element essential for a CNN effect – impact on government foreign policy. In the third chapter, four tests in relation to the government and its policy were introduced for validating cases of the CNN effect. This chapter focuses on the first two of these tests – the quantitative and the coding tests. The next chapter focuses on the last two tests – the policy content and the linkage tests. This division is made because the first two tests review the fifteen-month period before the NATO intervention in Kosovo in its entirety, while the latter two review the period over seven phases, discerning the periods before and after the events meeting the media criteria for the CNN effect. As such, this chapter is referred to as a macro review, while the next chapter is a micro review.

Before beginning the analysis, four terms need to be defined in the context of this dissertation – “Western,” “government,” “actions” and “attitude”. “Western” refers to the US and EU, with greater emphasis on the US.<sup>401</sup> “Government” refers to the following six institutions: the US Department of State, the US Department of Defence, the US White House (Presidency), the Contact Group, NATO, and the European Union Council.<sup>402</sup> “Actions” refer to two activities: the

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<sup>401</sup> This weighting is selected because the US played a dominant role in both pushing 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>402</sup> There is again more weight on US government institutions for the same reasons as in the previous footnote.

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 Western government position themselves between the two sides in the Kosovo civil war, in terms of the framework adopted, the assignment of blame, and references made to the need for a military intervention as a solution to the conflict. Throughout the rest of this chapter, whenever these terms are used, they refer to the definitions outlined here.

### **The Quantitative Test**

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 1 January 1998 to 24 March 1999.<sup>403</sup> These findings are first analysed on their own and then compared to media activity over the same period in order to answer the question “who leads whom?” Finally, government actions are distinguished between those that are diplomatic and those that are policy oriented, in order to gain additional insights on the nature of government actions over time.

Throughout the fifteen-month period preceding NATO intervention, many developments occurred in the Kosovo civil war. A review of all government actions over this period on a weekly basis, however, shows that only seven

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<sup>403</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.

periods garnered a significant number of government actions, as outlined below and in Graph 6-1:<sup>404</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

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<sup>404</sup> At least seven actions are considered significant.



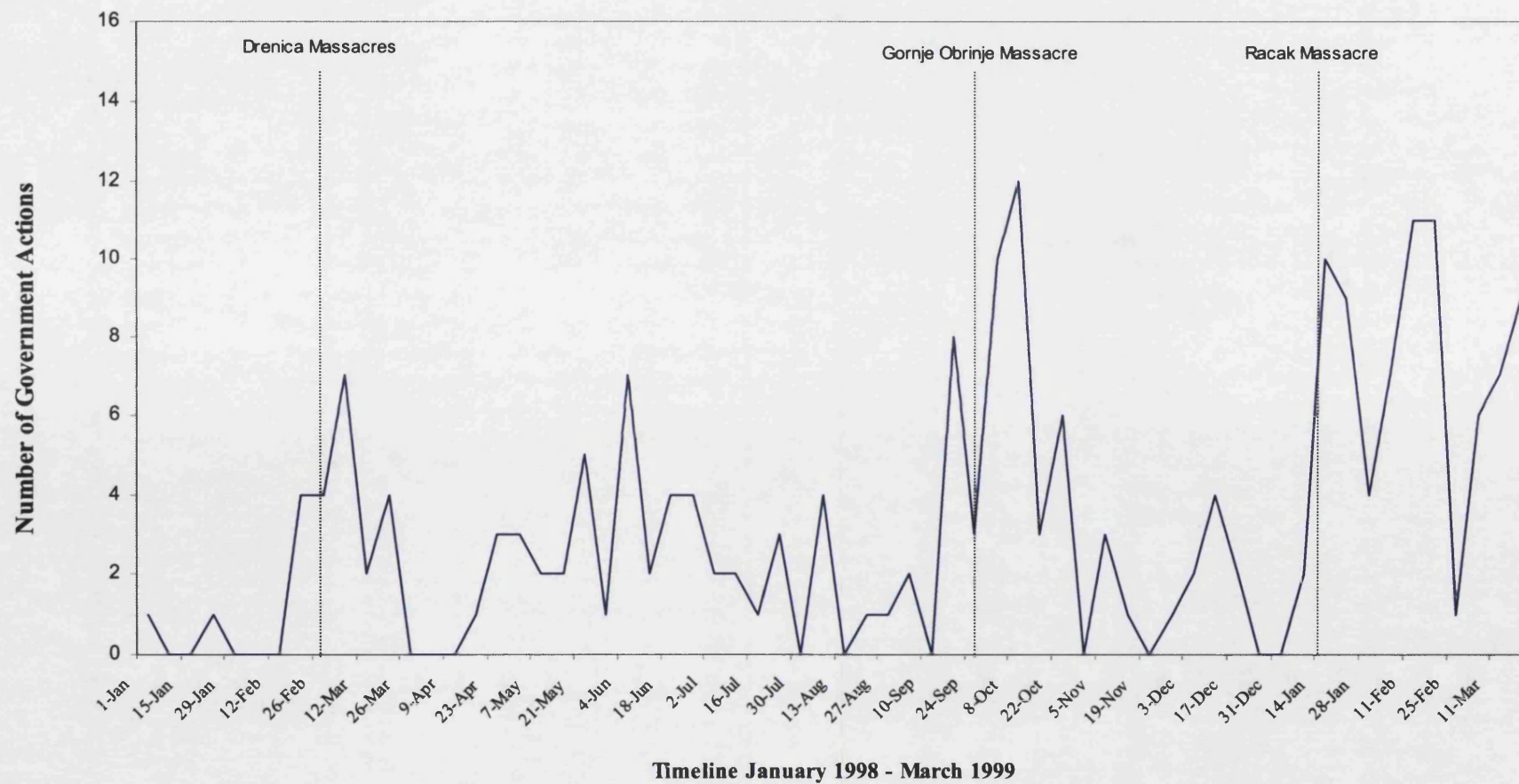
imposed solution; and the third entailed a relatively quiet period when the solution was implemented. In each case, the solution led to conciliatory countermeasures by the FRY authorities, which created a short-term lull in the violence.

In Graph 6-1, 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 9 March 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 31 March 1998. After the Gornje Obrinje massacre, the imposed solution was the cease-fire and monitoring regime incorporated in the Holbrooke-Milosevic Agreement of 13 October 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 legitimise the war, as many critics have argued.<sup>405</sup>

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<sup>405</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 *Degraded Capacity: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis*, ed. Philip Hammond and Edward S. Herman (London: Pluto Press, 2000), pp.115-17.

**Graph 6-1 - Western Governmental Actions Related to Kosovo Preceding NATO Intervention**



**Table 6-1: Western Government Actions Preceding the Kosovo Intervention****– 1 January 1998 – 23 March 1999**

<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Number of Actions</b>	<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Number of Actions</b>
4-Jan	1	23-Aug	1
11-Jan	0	30-Aug	1
18-Jan	0	6-Sep	2
25-Jan	1	13-Sep	0
1-Feb	0	20-Sep	8
8-Feb	0	27-Sep	3
15-Feb	0	4-Oct	10
22-Feb	4	11-Oct	12
1-Mar	4	18-Oct	3
8-Mar	7	25-Oct	6
15-Mar	2	1-Nov	0
22-Mar	4	8-Nov	3
29-Mar	0	15-Nov	1
5-Apr	0	22-Nov	0
12-Apr	0	29-Nov	1
19-Apr	1	6-Dec	2
26-Apr	3	13-Dec	4
3-May	3	20-Dec	2
10-May	2	27-Dec	0
17-May	2	3-Jan	0
24-May	5	10-Jan	2
31-May	1	17-Jan	10
7-Jun	7	24-Jan	9
14-Jun	2	31-Jan	4
21-Jun	4	7-Feb	7
28-Jun	4	14-Feb	11
5-Jul	2	21-Feb	11
12-Jul	2	28-Feb	1
19-Jul	1	7-Mar	6
26-Jul	3	14-Mar	7
2-Aug	0	21-Mar	9
9-Aug	4		
16-Aug	0	<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>

Of course, not all Western government activity related to the CNN effect. As shown in Graph 6-1, four periods of notable activity had only a limited relationship to the CNN effect. These could more accurately be tied to other factors outside media influence and were largely based on government-driven initiatives. The first of these centred on NATO's Operation Determined Falcon on 15 June 1998 – an air exercise in which NATO jets flew over Kosovo's borders with Albania and Macedonia, signalling NATO's willingness to take action if necessary.<sup>406</sup> Unlike the unexpected incidents, such as the Drenica massacres of March, this heightened level of activity was based on a very different pattern that built over time and was driven by events that were planned by the West. There were no emotive and reactionary condemnations as seen after the massacres and no attempts at implementing a radically different solution. The nature of these government activities was largely incremental.

The second increase in activity outside the CNN effect occurred during the week of 20 September, 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 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>407</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> NATO, *Press Release (98)80*, "Statement by NATO Secretary-General, Dr. Javier Solana, on Exercise Determined Falcon," 13 June, 1998, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p98-080e.htm>.

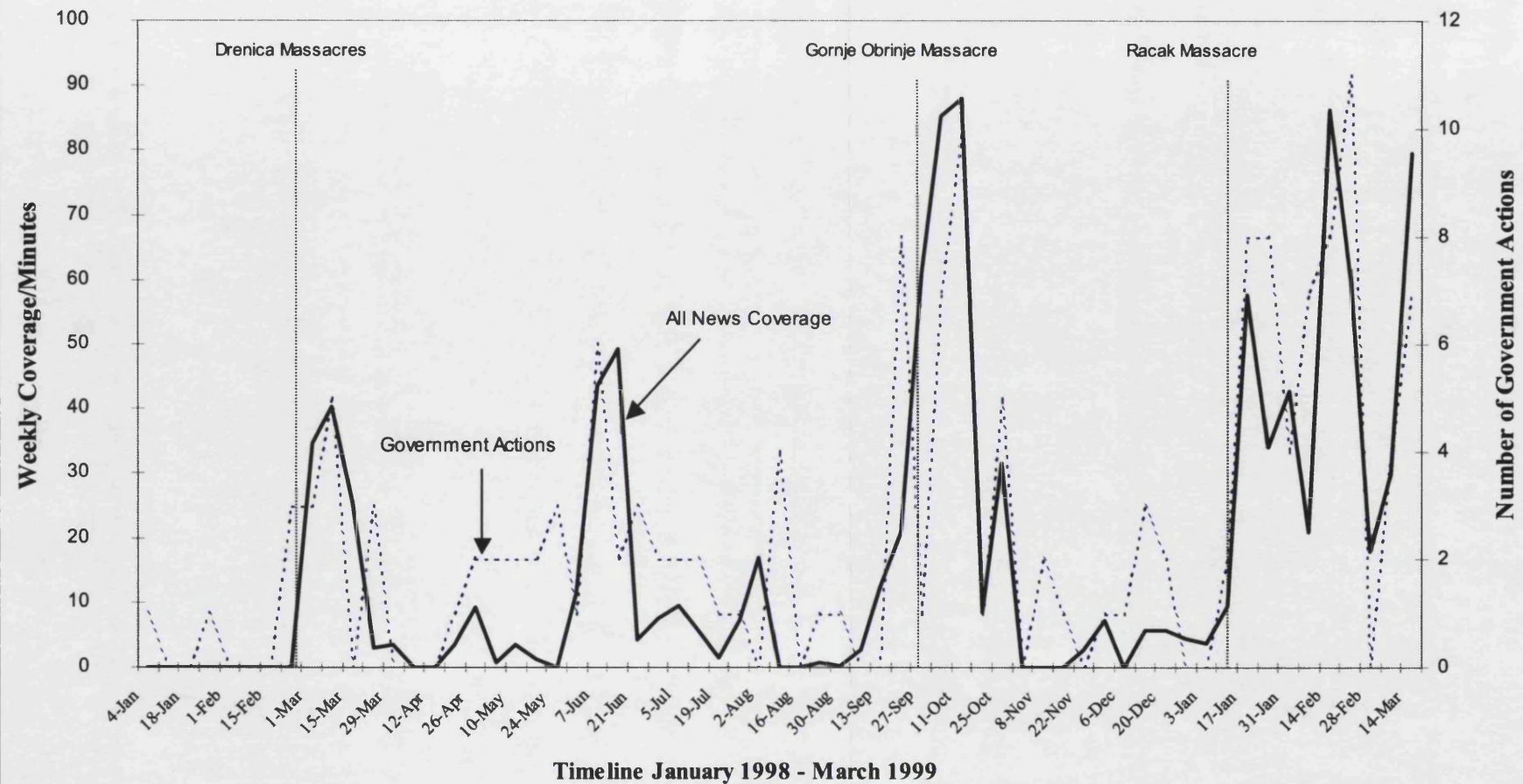
<sup>407</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.23. Also see, CNN News, "U.N. Demands Cease-Fire in Kosovo," *CNN.com*, 23 September, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9809/23/kosovo.02/>, and CNN News, "NATO Prepares for Possible Air Strikes in Kosovo," *CNN.com*, 24 September, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9809/24/kosovo.01/>

The third government-driven spike centred 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.

### ***Media Coverage Versus Government Actions***

Graph 6-2 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 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.

**Graph 6-2 - American Television Coverage of Kosovo Versus Government Actions**



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- 2 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 and events driven or institutionally initiated?
- 3) Was there a discernable media or government spike first or did the spikes occur simultaneously?

**Table 6-2: Review of Major Spikes in Both Media Coverage and Government Actions Over Kosovo – 1 January 1998 – 23 March 1999**

<b>Spike Period</b>	<b>Main Reference</b>	<b>Unexpected or Institutional</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	Institutional	Government led
First 2 weeks of Oct./98	Gornje Obrinje massacre / Attempted solutions	Unexpected	Media led
Last 2 weeks of Jan./99	Racak massacre/ Proposed solutions	Unexpected	Simultaneous
Last 2 weeks Of Feb./99	Rambouillet	Institutional	Simultaneous
Week of 14 March	Final diplomacy before war	Institutional	Simultaneous

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



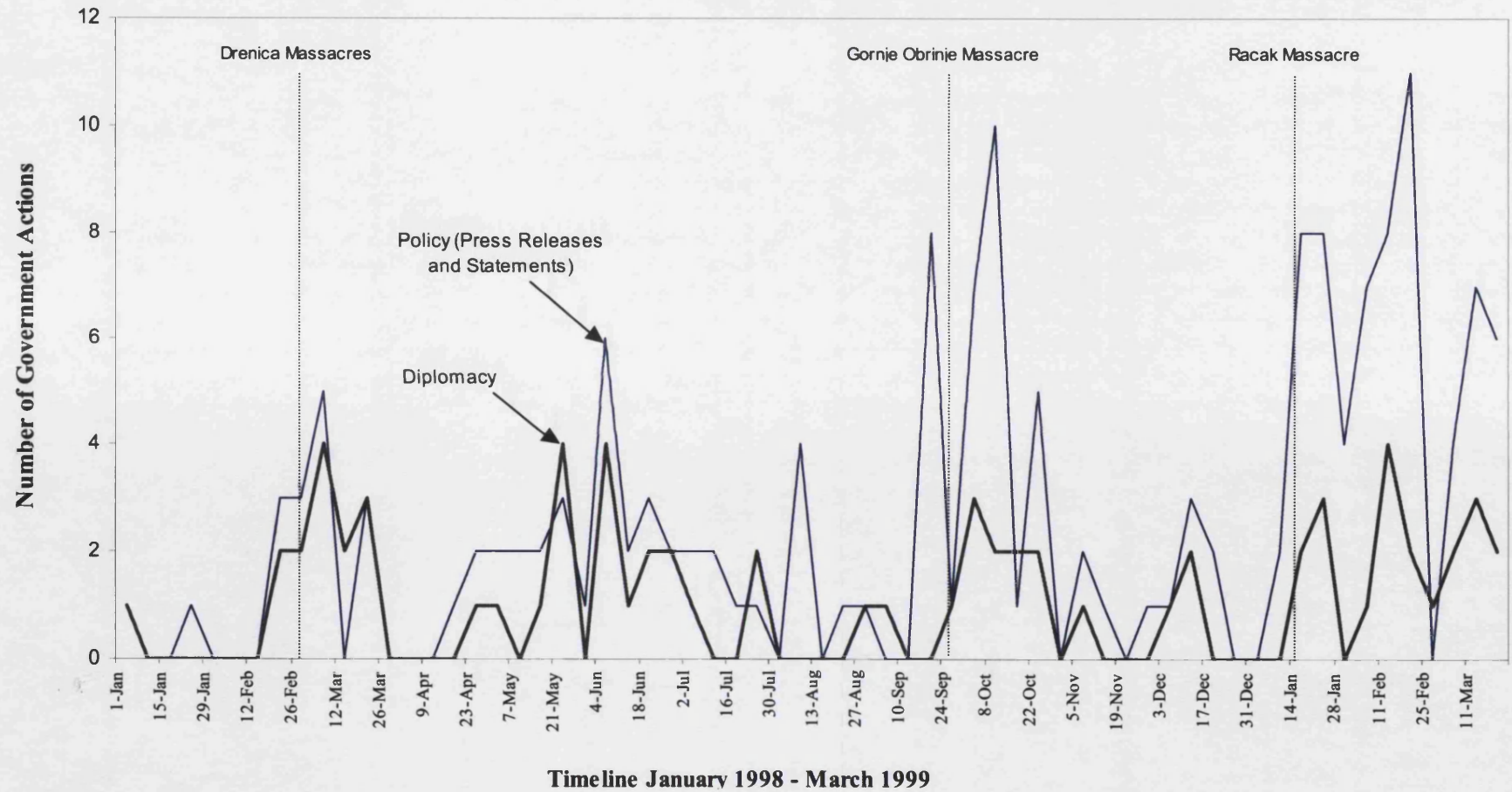
at the same time on the day following the massacre. By this time, many Western government institutions were heavily involved in the Kosovo civil war, compared to the earlier massacres, and had moved much closer to supporting the Albanian position on the conflict, which allowed them to make judgments regarding the conflict much quicker and with less inhibitions than in earlier phases of the conflict.

### *Diplomacy versus Policy Actions*

When Western diplomatic and policy-related acts are differentiated, as in Graph 6-3 and Table 6-3, important subtle differences in the pattern of activity emerge. In the first two incidents relating to the Drenica massacres and the Serb offensive in late May, which led to NATO's operation "Determined Falcon," diplomacy and policy-related activities are similar in terms of timing and frequency. During the four later incidents, however, there are many more policy-related actions than diplomatic ones. This could be due to two factors: the practical limitations of diplomacy and the increasing number of Western government institutions that became involved in Kosovo as the West was increasingly caught up in the crisis. In terms of the practical limits inherent in diplomacy, there are only so many high-level meetings amongst Western leaders that can be held and only so many foreign dignitaries that Yugoslav leaders can accommodate in short periods. This is one reason why diplomatic acts were never more than four in any given week during the one-year prelude to the intervention. In terms of the increase in policy-related activities that followed the last two media incidents, it is important to point out that the West found itself more entrenched in the conflict over time. This was evident in the range of institutions that became involved in the crisis. Initially,

after the Drenica massacres, government involvement was only at the diplomatic level. In the United States, the conflict was largely within the domain of the State Department, which acted on its own and through the Contact Group with European allies. It was only in the summer of 1998 that Western interest began to take on a greater military dimension with the involvement of the US Department of Defence and NATO. As the possibilities of war became more likely, the US executive branch began to get more involved through the White House. In Europe, while the EU did not act collectively on Kosovo except in a few occasions, preferring to act largely through the Contact Group, its involvement did increase as the crisis progressed.

**Graph 6-3 - Western Diplomacy and Policy Leading to NATO Intervention in Kosovo**



**Table 6-3: Western Government Policy (Press Releases and Statements)****Versus Diplomacy – 1 January 1998 –23 March 1999**

<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Diplomacy</b>	<b>Week Beginning</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Diplomacy</b>
4-Jan	1	1	23-Aug	1	0
11-Jan	0	0	30-Aug	1	1
18-Jan	0	0	6-Sep	0	1
25-Jan	1	0	13-Sep	0	0
1-Feb	0	0	20-Sep	8	0
8-Feb	0	0	27-Sep	1	1
15-Feb	0	0	4-Oct	7	3
22-Feb	3	2	11-Oct	10	2
1-Mar	3	2	18-Oct	1	2
8-Mar	5	4	25-Oct	5	2
15-Mar	0	2	1-Nov	0	0
22-Mar	3	3	8-Nov	2	1
29-Mar	0	0	15-Nov	1	0
5-Apr	0	0	22-Nov	0	0
12-Apr	0	0	29-Nov	1	0
19-Apr	1	0	6-Dec	1	1
26-Apr	2	1	13-Dec	3	2
3-May	2	1	20-Dec	2	0
10-May	2	0	27-Dec	0	0
17-May	2	1	3-Jan	0	0
24-May	3	4	10-Jan	2	0
31-May	1	0	17-Jan	8	2
7-Jun	6	4	24-Jan	8	3
14-Jun	2	1	31-Jan	4	0
21-Jun	3	2	7-Feb	7	1
28-Jun	2	2	14-Feb	8	4
5-Jul	2	1	21-Feb	11	2
12-Jul	2	0	28-Feb	0	1
19-Jul	1	0	7-Mar	4	2
26-Jul	1	2	14-Mar	7	3
2-Aug	0	0	21-Mar	6	2
9-Aug	4	0			
16-Aug	0	0	<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>69</b>

## The Coding Test

The second research method reviews Western government documents related to the Kosovo crisis in order to assess change in government attitude.<sup>408</sup> While change in attitude is not the same as change in policy, which is reviewed more specifically in the next chapter, it serves as a good proxy for such a potential shift. To demonstrate a change in attitude at a macro level, three qualitative gauges were coded and tracked over the fifteen-month period before NATO intervention, based on a review of all press releases and statements by relevant Western government institutions regarding the Kosovo crisis over this period.<sup>409</sup> The three factors that were diagnosed related to how the West framed the conflict between the two sides, which side the West blamed for the specific problems in the conflict, and the propensity for Western military involvement in the conflict. A policy that would not promote intervention would likely frame the conflict in distancing or neutral terms, and either assign no blame, or blame both sides and not mention the possibility of Western military engagement. An interventionalist policy would likely frame the conflict from the position of one side, blame the other side for problems, and openly mention military engagement against the party at fault as a solution.

## 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 favoured the Albanian

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<sup>408</sup> The details of the 161 documents used in this study, segmented by government department/institution, are presented in Appendix A.

<sup>409</sup> A micro study of the one-month periods before and after each of the massacres, based on the same coding scheme presented here, is provided in Appendix B.

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

Examples of language in this framework include:

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

#### 2 – Both positions represented

#### 3 – Pro-Serbian Framing

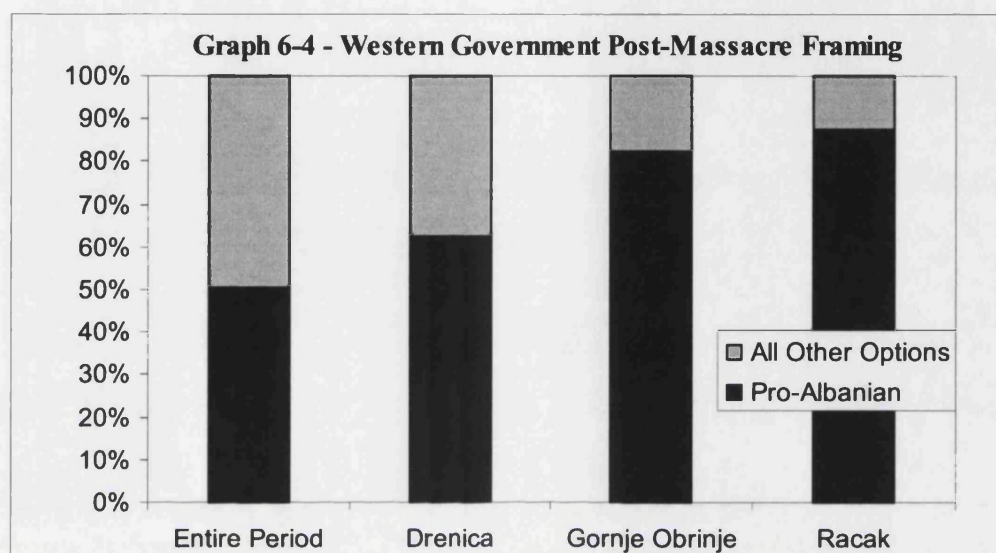
Examples of language in this framework include:

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

#### 4 – Neutral position taken, no reference to contentious issues.

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 framing during the two-week periods after the three massacres in relation to framing during the entire period, as

illustrated in Graph 6-4 and Table 6-4, there are sharp increases in pro-Albanian framing just after each of the massacres and as the conflict moves closer to Western intervention.



**Table 6-4: Review of Western Government Post-Massacre Framing versus Entire Period – 1 January 1998–23 March 1999**

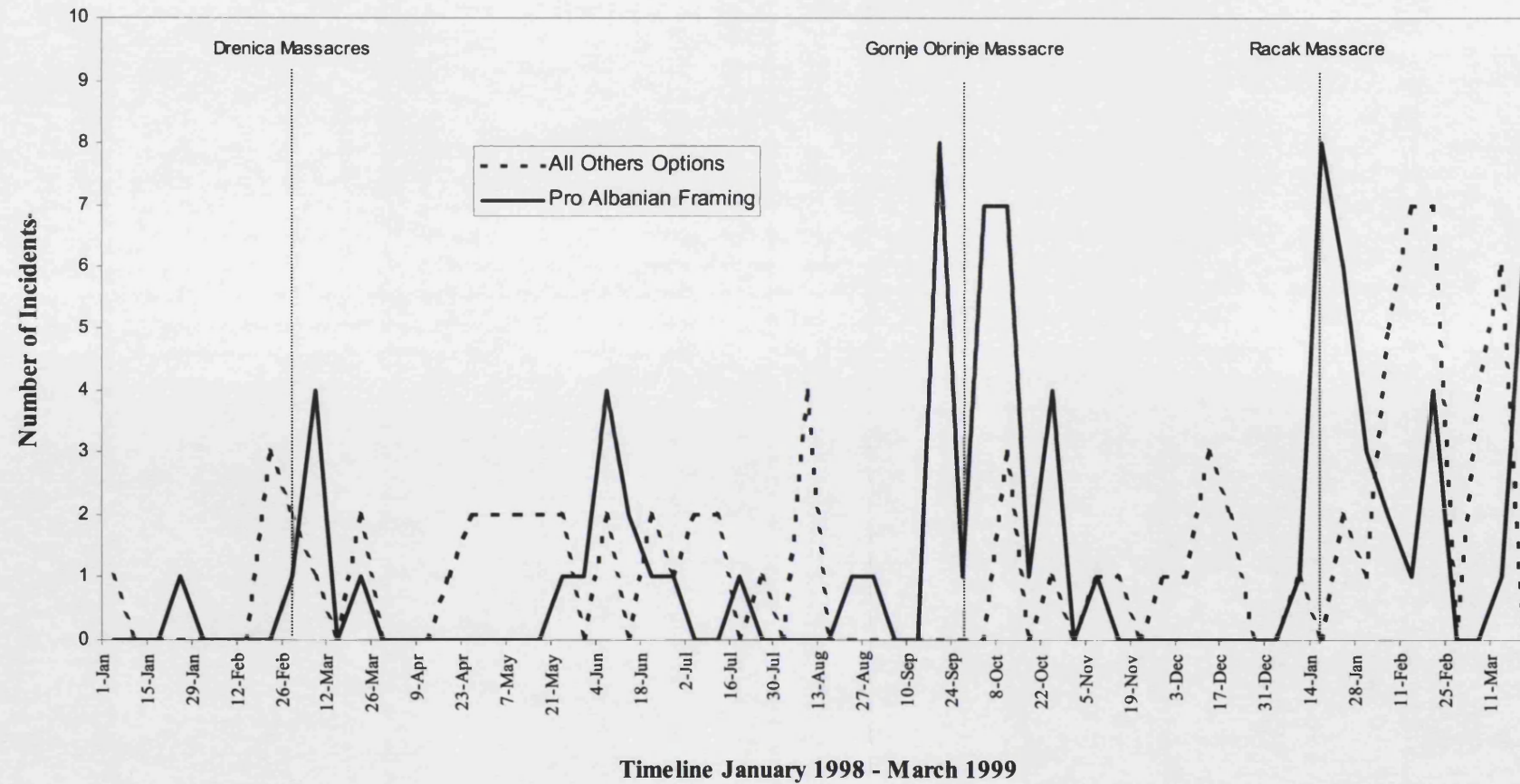
Period	Pro-Albanian	All Other Options
Entire Period	50.3%	49.7%
Post Drenica	62.5%	37.5%
Post Gornje Obrinje	82.4%	17.6%
Post Racak	87.5%	12.5%
Post Massacres	80.5%	19.5%

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. A review of all government press releases and statements over the 15-month period under review is presented in Graph 6-5 and Table 6-5.



**Graph 6-5 - Western Framing Leading to NATO Intervention in Kosovo**



**Table 6-5: Western Government Framing in Press Releases and Statements –****1 January 1998 – 23 March 1999**

Options:      1 – Pro-Albanian Framing                      3 – Pro-Serbian Framing  
                   2 – Both Positions Represented                4 – Neutral

Week Beginning	Options				Total	Week Beginning	Options				Total
	1	2	3	4			1	2	3	4	
4-Jan	0	1	0	0	1	23-Aug	1	0	0	0	1
11-Jan	0	0	0	0	0	30-Aug	1	0	0	0	1
18-Jan	0	0	0	0	0	6-Sep	0	0	0	0	0
25-Jan	1	0	0	0	1	13-Sep	0	0	0	0	0
1-Feb	0	0	0	0	0	20-Sep	8	0	0	0	8
8-Feb	0	0	0	0	0	27-Sep	1	0	0	0	1
15-Feb	0	0	0	0	0	4-Oct	7	0	0	0	7
22-Feb	0	2	1	0	3	11-Oct	7	0	0	3	10
1-Mar	1	0	0	2	3	18-Oct	1	0	0	0	1
8-Mar	4	0	0	1	5	25-Oct	4	0	0	1	5
15-Mar	0	0	0	0	0	1-Nov	0	0	0	0	0
22-Mar	1	1	0	1	3	8-Nov	1	1	0	0	2
29-Mar	0	0	0	0	0	15-Nov	0	0	0	1	1
5-Apr	0	0	0	0	0	22-Nov	0	0	0	0	0
12-Apr	0	0	0	0	0	29-Nov	0	0	0	1	1
19-Apr	0	0	0	1	1	6-Dec	0	0	0	1	1
26-Apr	0	1	0	1	2	13-Dec	0	2	0	1	3
3-May	0	2	0	0	2	20-Dec	0	0	0	2	2
10-May	0	0	0	2	2	27-Dec	0	0	0	0	0
17-May	0	1	0	1	2	3-Jan	0	0	0	0	0
24-May	1	1	0	1	3	10-Jan	1	0	0	1	2
31-May	1	0	0	0	1	17-Jan	8	0	0	0	8
7-Jun	4	0	0	2	6	24-Jan	6	0	0	2	8
14-Jun	2	0	0	0	2	31-Jan	3	0	0	1	4
21-Jun	1	0	0	2	3	7-Feb	2	0	0	5	7
28-Jun	1	1	0	0	2	14-Feb	1	0	0	7	8
5-Jul	0	2	0	0	2	21-Feb	4	2	0	5	11
12-Jul	0	1	0	1	2	28-Feb	0	0	0	0	0
19-Jul	1	0	0	0	1	7-Mar	0	0	0	4	4
26-Jul	0	0	0	1	1	14-Mar	1	0	0	6	7
2-Aug	0	0	0	0	0	21-Mar	6	0	0	0	6
9-Aug	0	0	0	4	4						
16-Aug	0	0	0	0	0						
						<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>161</b>

## Blame

Related to framing is the assignment of blame. While framing relates to the context in which the crisis is based, blame is more immediate and deals with who is at fault for a particular situation or problem and who are the victims. Blame is simpler to determine than the framework because it often requires no previous knowledge of the context. As the degree of violence in a conflict increases, the media will be more likely to assign blame and identify aggressors.<sup>410</sup> The issue of blame is important because if the West is to enter other people's wars on a particular side, it will need to justify such an action by showing that the side it is defending is blameless,<sup>411</sup> and the side it is fighting is at fault for existing problems. In relation to the impact of the CNN effect, blame is potentially a stronger indicator of shifting attitude because before a shift in framing can occur, it would seem necessary for one side to be at fault for a number of incidents. For the purposes of this study, the following coding system is applied to each document:

- 1 – Full blame with the Kosovo Albanians
- 2 – Majority of blame with the Kosovo Albanians
- 3 – Both sides are to blame
- 4 – Majority of blame with the Serbs
- 5 – Full blame with the Serbs
- 6 – No blame assigned

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<sup>410</sup> Wolfsfeld, *Media and Political Conflict*, p.53.

<sup>411</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1998), p.24.

During the fifteen-month period before the intervention, 57 percent of all Western policy-related documents fully blamed the Serbian side, with majority blame in 54 documents (34 percent of total) and all the blame in the remaining 38 (24 percent of total). In contrast, no documents fully blamed the Albanians and only two put the majority of blame with them. The remainder of the 67 documents either blamed both parties (43 times or 27 percent of total) or were written in a neutral manner (24 times or 15 percent of total) in which no party was blamed. Graph 6-6 and Table 6-6 illustrate the pattern of blame assigned to the Serbian side in comparison with all other options. If a country's foreign policy were to favour one side in a conflict over another and eventually engage militarily, then it must be able to justify this by placing blame for the problem on the side it opposes. In regard to the massacres, their immediate aftermath accounted for three of the top five spikes in Serb blame by the West. The incidents in Racak and Gornje Obrinje were first and second, in terms of the greatest number of times that Serbs were blamed in one week, while the Drenica massacres placed fifth. The only periods in which the Serbs received a higher degree of Western blame for the Kosovo crisis were in mid September 1998 and the week before the start of the intervention. These two spikes, however, were based on government actions and were not part of the CNN effect.

It is interesting to note that there is a clear relationship between the quantity of Kosovo-focused documents issued and the likelihood of higher Serb blame. In general, when there was a low level of Western attention on the Kosovo conflict, measured by the number of press releases and statements, the blame was more

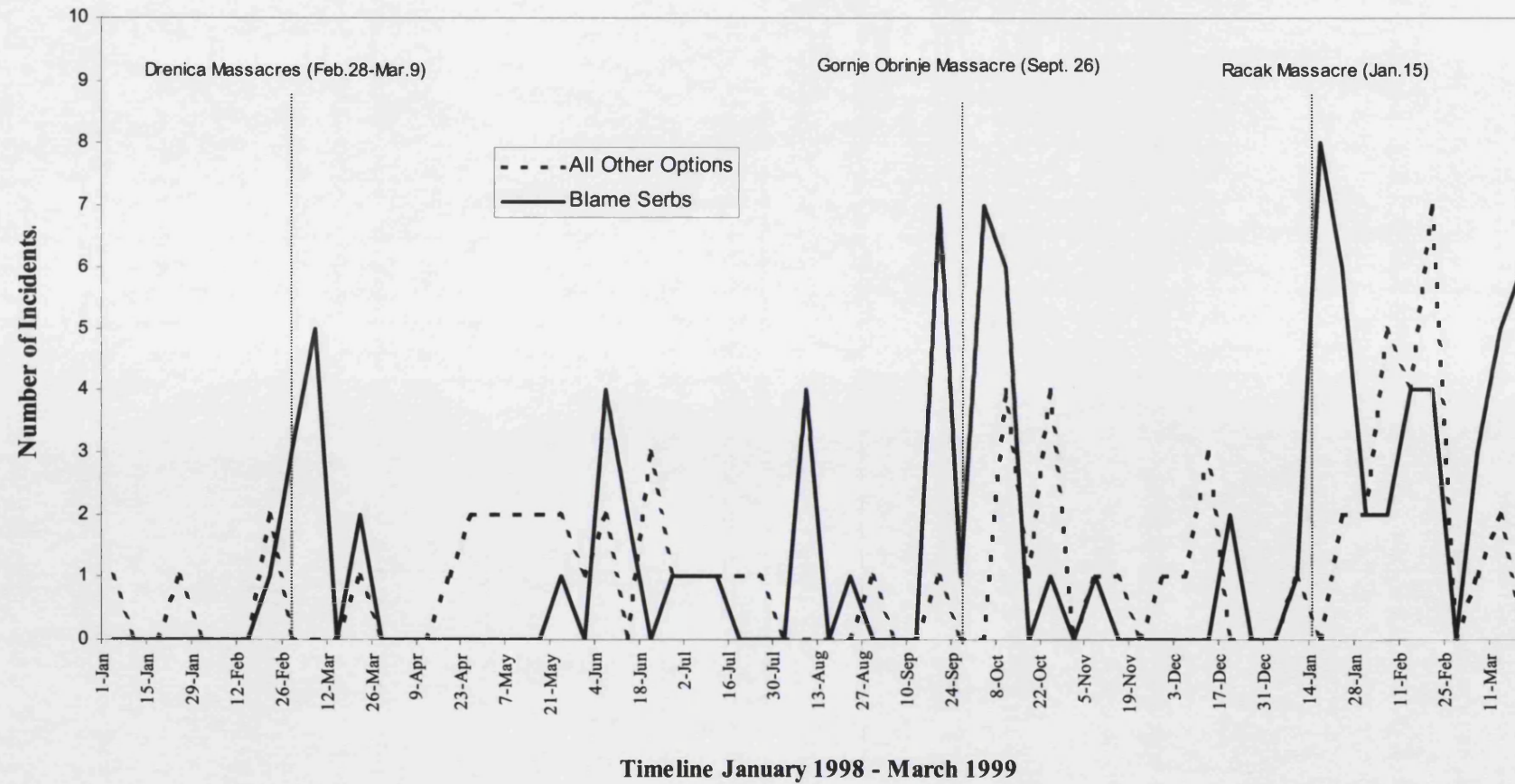
neutral. As attention increased, however, the level of Serb blame rose. Not surprisingly, most of these increases were ignited by the three massacres outlined earlier.

Graph 6-7 reveals some very important subtleties about the nature of blame assigned to the Serbs by the West, by differentiating accounts that put the majority of blame on the Serbs versus those that placed all the blame on them. Accounts that place the majority of blame on the Serbs attempted to mention that the other side had some fault in the overall problem. Those that solely blamed the Serbs, however, seem much more biased. Of course, there could always be some degree of blame placed on the KLA, since they were always engaged in violence over this period and never renounced it. If one side had completely given up violence and was still under attack, then complete blame on the other could be objectively argued. However, this was never the case over the fifteen months preceding NATO intervention. Thus, when the West placed all the blame with the Serbs, they increasingly took the position of a subjective player, and ultimately, a potential combatant. In periods preceding military engagement, it is rare for combatants to place any blame on their side, and this was the case in the week before 24 March when the West had finally decided to go to war in Kosovo on the Albanian side.

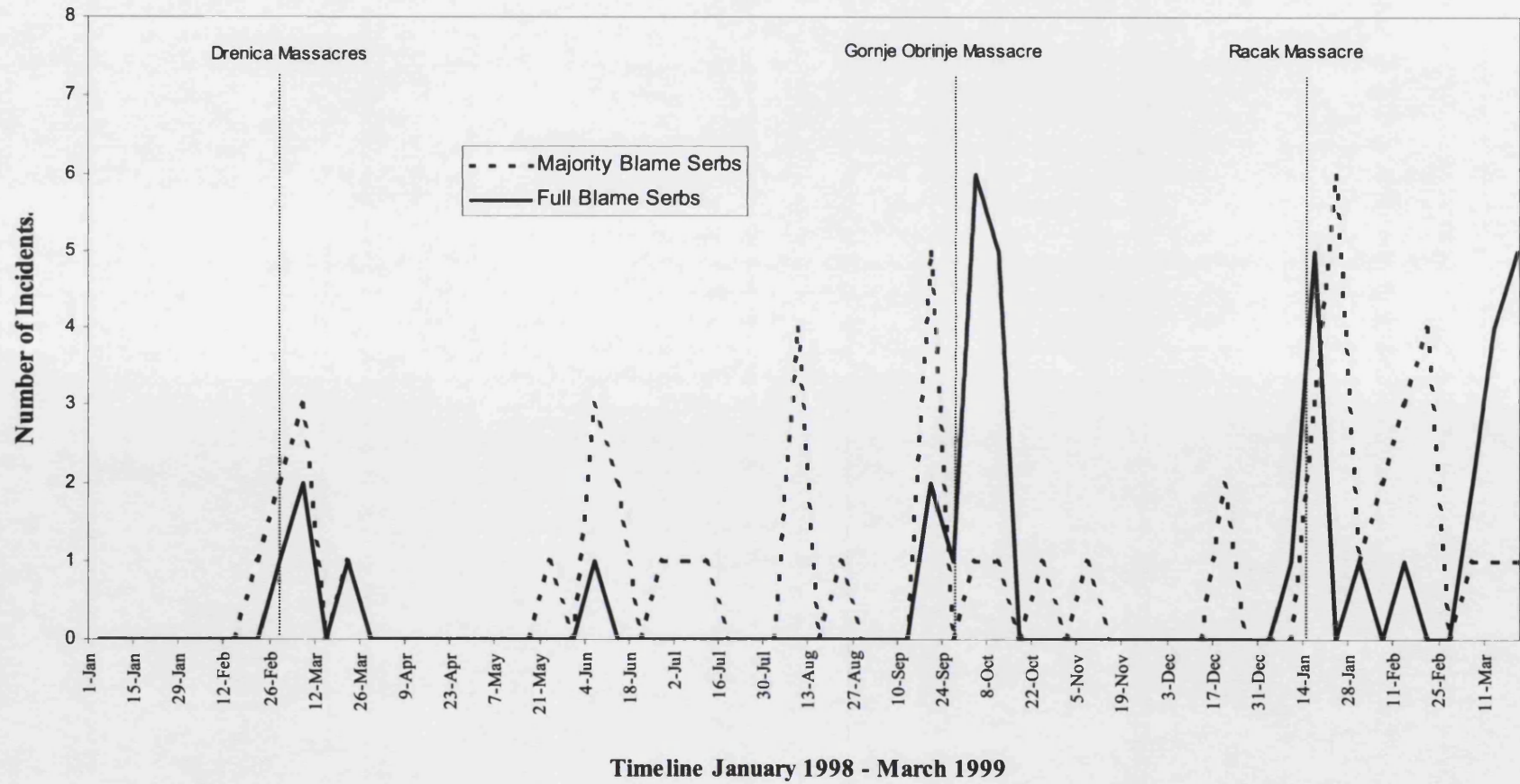
The only other times when such a strong bias was recorded was immediately after the Gornje Obrinje and Racak massacres. The similarity in the bias after these massacres and during conflict makes it seem like the passions of disdain that are evident during war can also emerge in the aftermath of graphic massacres.

Most interesting for the CNN effect is the severity of the reactions in terms of blame. In Graph 6-7, seven incidents were identified as being responsible for spikes in Western government attention towards Kosovo. Three of these occurred after events meeting the criteria for the CNN effect in Drenica, Gornje Obrinje, and Racak. The remaining four had no direct relationship to media coverage. The West was much more aggressive in its blame on the Serbs, placing full blame on them more than majority blame during CNN effect related incidents, while they placed majority blame over full blame on them more often during the incidents not related to the CNN effect.

**Graph 6-6 - Western Assigned Blame Leading to NATO Intervention in Kosovo**



**Graph 6-7 - The Degree of Western Blame on Serbs Leading to NATO Intervention in Kosovo**





**Table 6-6: Western Government Assignment of Blame in Press Releases and Statements –1 January 1998 – 23 March 1999**

Options:      1 – Full Blame Albanians                      4 – Majority Blame Serbs  
                     2 – Majority Blame Albanians                      5 – Full Blame Serbs  
                     3 – Both Sides Blamed                                  6 – No Side Blamed

Week Beginning	Options							Week Beginning	Options						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total		1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
4-Jan	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	16-Aug	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11-Jan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23-Aug	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
18-Jan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30-Aug	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
25-Jan	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	6-Sep	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1-Feb	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13-Sep	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8-Feb	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20-Sep	0	0	1	5	2	0	8
15-Feb	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27-Sep	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
22-Feb	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	4-Oct	0	0	0	1	6	0	7
1-Mar	0	0	0	2	1	0	3	11-Oct	0	0	1	1	5	3	10
8-Mar	0	0	0	3	2	0	5	18-Oct	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
15-Mar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25-Oct	0	0	1	1	0	3	5
22-Mar	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	1-Nov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29-Mar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8-Nov	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
5-Apr	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15-Nov	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
12-Apr	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22-Nov	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19-Apr	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	29-Nov	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
26-Apr	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	6-Dec	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
3-May	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	13-Dec	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
10-May	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	20-Dec	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
17-May	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	27-Dec	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
24-May	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	3-Jan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
31-May	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	10-Jan	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
7-Jun	0	0	1	3	1	1	6	17-Jan	0	0	0	3	5	0	8
14-Jun	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	24-Jan	0	0	2	6	0	0	8
21-Jun	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	31-Jan	0	0	2	1	1	0	4
28-Jun	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	7-Feb	0	0	1	2	0	4	7
5-Jul	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	14-Feb	0	0	3	3	1	1	8
12-Jul	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	21-Feb	0	0	3	4	0	4	11
19-Jul	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	28-Feb	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26-Jul	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	7-Mar	0	0	1	1	2	0	4
2-Aug	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14-Mar	0	0	0	1	4	2	7
9-Aug	0	0	0	4	0	0	4	21-Mar	0	0	0	1	5	0	6
<b>Total</b>								<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>161</b>	

### **Propensity for Intervention**

The third factor coded in this research is the propensity for or likelihood of military intervention as a proposed solution to the problem. This measurement is the most transparent indicator of the shift towards military intervention. In this study, three different options were coded 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 made at least some reference to the possibility of NATO military intervention. Of the 161 documents surveyed, 97, or 60 percent, mentioned the possibility of military engagement while 64, or 40 percent, made no reference to this possibility. Out of the 97 statements that mentioned the possibility of intervention, only 18 made clear threats of this possibility, while 79 referred to it in the background as a last resort. If a third-

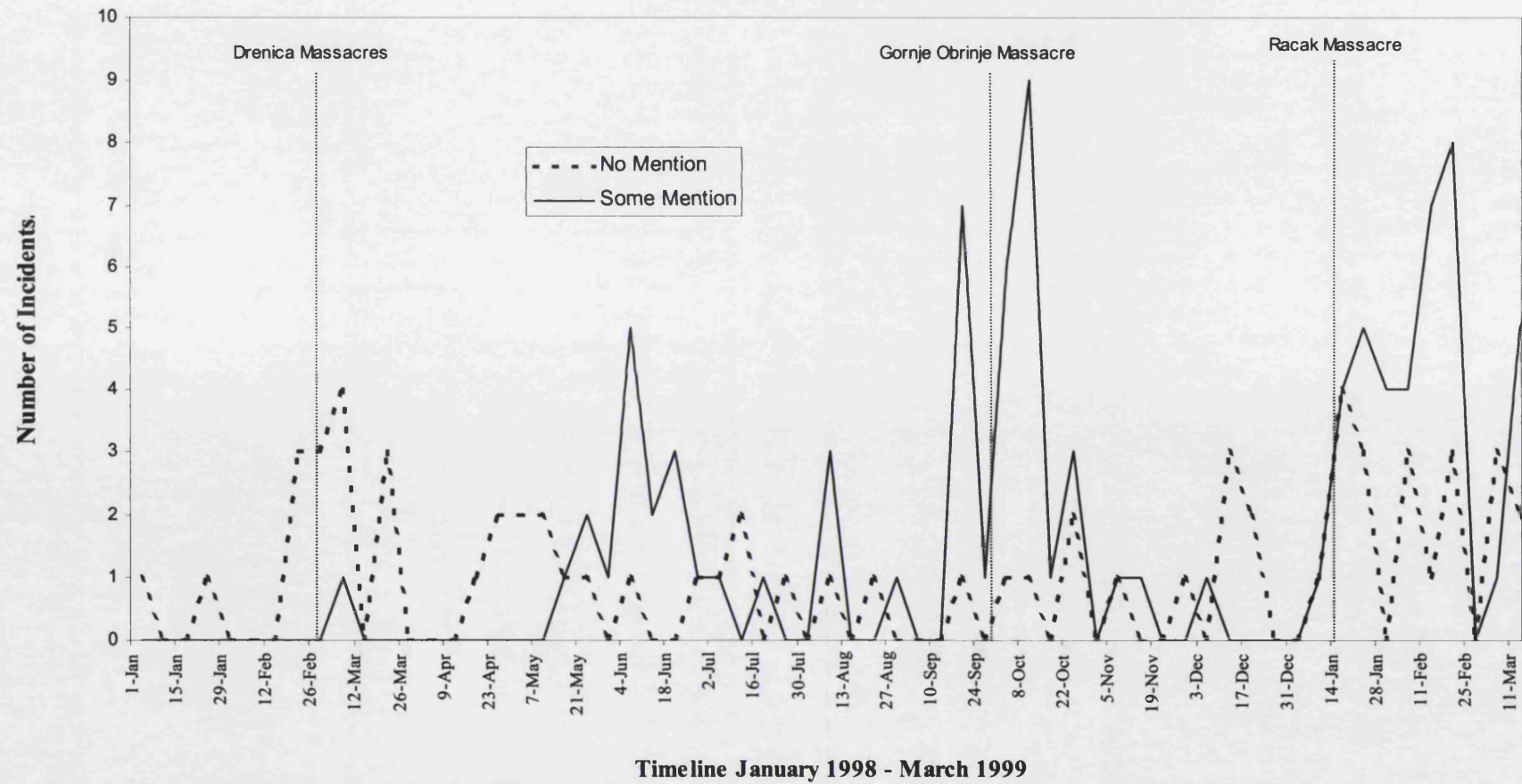
party begins to consider becoming engaged militarily in other people's wars, it is likely they will mention this option increasingly and more aggressively as they get closer to the engagement. This was certainly the case in Kosovo, where mention of war became more common and the severity of the threat increased with time. In the lead up to NATO intervention, discussion of military engagement flared on four separate occasions, as illustrated in Graph 6-8 and Table 6-7. It first appeared in late May with NATO's initial involvement after initial diplomatic efforts seemed to be failing. It then retracted briefly, until it re-emerged in September after the passage of UN and NATO accords, and then in early October after the discovery of gruelling footage from the Gornje Obrinje massacre. This massacre 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 threats of sanctions. The reaction to the Gornje Obrinje massacres was the first credible threat of Western military engagement, as it was the first time that NATO Activation Orders (ACTORDs) were issued by NATO's North Atlantic Council (NAC), making air strikes possible.<sup>412</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 point, NATO threats were always an active part of the vocabulary until 24 March 1999, when they became a reality.

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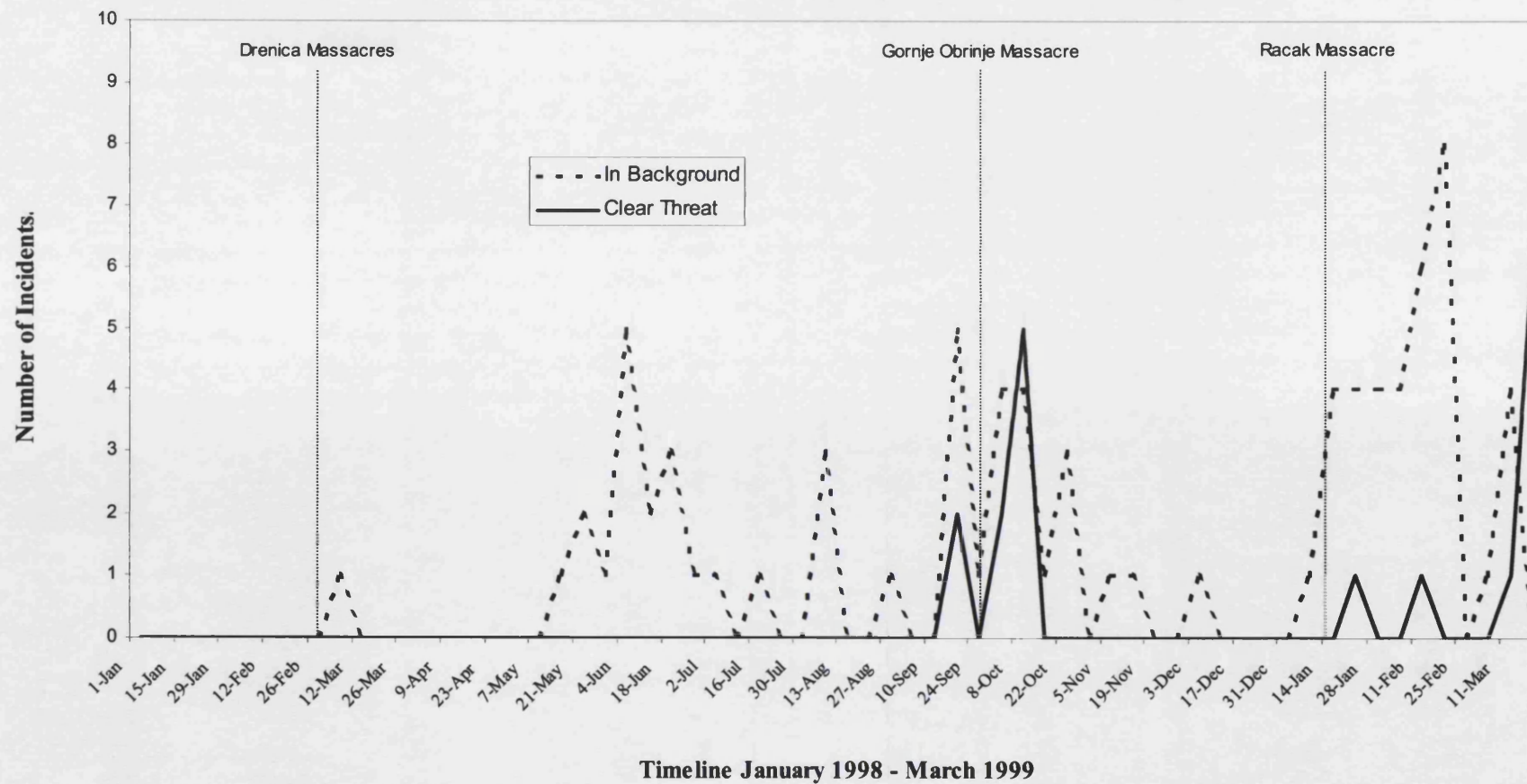
<sup>412</sup> NATO, *Press Statement*, "Statement to the Press by the Secretary General Following Decision on the ACTORD," 13 October, 1998, <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1998/s981013a.htm>.

Graph 6-9 takes the threats of Western military engagement one step further by differentiating the severity of such references. As mentioned earlier, almost 49 percent of Western press releases and statements made references to force as an option of last resort to be employed if other tactics failed. Only 11 percent of these documents made these threats in a decisive manner, in which force was imminent unless the status quo changed. In reviewing the fifteen-month period leading to intervention, this more aggressive rhetoric was found to be more prevalent only in two weeks; the first was the week of 11 October that followed the images from the Gornje Obrinje massacre, while the second was the week preceding the 24 March launch of the air war.

**Graph 6-8 - Western Propensity to Use Force Leading to NATO Intervention in Kosovo**



**Graph 6-9 - Propensity of Clear Threat to Use of Force Leading to NATO Intervention in Kosovo**



**Table 6-7: Western Propensity to Use Force in Press Releases and Statements****– 1 January 1998 – 23 March 1999**

Options:      1 – No Military Option Mentioned  
                   2 – Military Option in Background  
                   3 – Clear or Imminent Military Threat

Week Beginning	Options			Total	Week Beginning	Options			Total
	1	2	3			1	2	3	
4-Jan	1	0	0	1	23-Aug	1	0	0	1
11-Jan	0	0	0	0	30-Aug	0	1	0	1
18-Jan	0	0	0	0	6-Sep	0	0	0	0
25-Jan	1	0	0	1	13-Sep	0	0	0	0
1-Feb	0	0	0	0	20-Sep	1	5	2	8
8-Feb	0	0	0	0	27-Sep	0	1	0	1
15-Feb	0	0	0	0	4-Oct	1	4	2	7
22-Feb	3	0	0	3	11-Oct	1	4	5	10
1-Mar	3	0	0	3	18-Oct	0	1	0	1
8-Mar	4	1	0	5	25-Oct	2	3	0	5
15-Mar	0	0	0	0	1-Nov	0	0	0	0
22-Mar	3	0	0	3	8-Nov	1	1	0	2
29-Mar	0	0	0	0	15-Nov	0	1	0	1
5-Apr	0	0	0	0	22-Nov	0	0	0	0
12-Apr	0	0	0	0	29-Nov	1	0	0	1
19-Apr	1	0	0	1	6-Dec	0	1	0	1
26-Apr	2	0	0	2	13-Dec	3	0	0	3
3-May	2	0	0	2	20-Dec	2	0	0	2
10-May	2	0	0	2	27-Dec	0	0	0	0
17-May	1	1	0	2	3-Jan	0	0	0	0
24-May	1	2	0	3	10-Jan	1	1	0	2
31-May	0	1	0	1	17-Jan	4	4	0	8
7-Jun	1	5	0	6	24-Jan	3	4	1	8
14-Jun	0	2	0	2	31-Jan	0	4	0	4
21-Jun	0	3	0	3	7-Feb	3	4	0	7
28-Jun	1	1	0	2	14-Feb	1	6	1	8
5-Jul	1	1	0	2	21-Feb	3	8	0	11
12-Jul	2	0	0	2	28-Feb	0	0	0	0
19-Jul	0	1	0	1	7-Mar	3	1	0	4
26-Jul	1	0	0	1	14-Mar	2	4	1	7
2-Aug	0	0	0	0	21-Mar	0	0	6	6
9-Aug	1	3	0	4					
16-Aug	0	0	0	0	<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>161</b>

## **Chapter 7: The Government during the Kosovo Crisis – The Micro Review**

In the previous chapter, Western government actions and attitude were reviewed over the fifteen-month period preceding NATO's intervention in Kosovo using the quantitative and coding tests, as outlined in chapter three. Although evidence of a connection between media coverage and Western government policy change in the aftermath of incidents meeting the media criteria for the CNN effect can be inferred, there is no precise evidence of policy change and no direct links between such shifts and media images and framing. To attain additional evidence that corroborates these initial findings, a more detailed review of policy in the immediate aftermath of these incidents is required, including analysis on policy substance using the classifications outlined in chapter four (strategic, tactical A and tactical B policy aspects). It is also necessary to evaluate the comments from policy decision makers after each of these incidents to ascertain the role of the media in any policy shift. To this end, focus now turns to the last two tests in relation to the government as outlined in the challenging CNN effect model – the policy content and linkage tests. This chapter reviews the timeframe assessed in the previous chapter in seven different phases, as outlined below:

Phase 1 – 1 January 1998 to 27 February

Phase 2 – 28 February to 27 March

Phase 3 – 29 March to 27 September

Phase 4 – 28 September to 27 October

Phase 5 – 28 October to 14 January 1999



Phase 6 – 15 January to 14 February

Phase 7 – 15 February to 24 March

Three of these periods represent the one-month period after the massacres. The other four represent the periods before and after these phases. In all seven periods, a review of the key events of that timeframe are presented, in addition to a description of Western policy substance. In the phases following the massacres, a detailed analysis of policy is conducted, including a review of policy decision makers' statements after the incidents on the media's role.

### **Phase 1 – 1 January 1998 to 27 February 1998**

After 1995, the FRY had gradually faded from the world stage. Despite thousands of deaths and its dissolution, the country was widely thought to be at peace during the early months of 1998. In the first two months of 1998, Kosovo rarely appeared in Western media, and diplomatic and political efforts regarding Kosovo were minimal.<sup>413</sup> Although there was a notable increase in tensions between the two sides since at least late 1997, there were a relatively low numbers of casualties on either side. Over the six months leading to the outbreak of the first significant clashes in Kosovo in early March 1998, Western leaders met through the Contact Group to discuss Kosovo on four occasions and issued three press

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<sup>413</sup> In January and February 1998, for example, the tensions in Kosovo were not mentioned during the primary television news reports of the four major US networks (CNN, NBC, CBS and ABC). Also, over these two months, except for two Contact Group meetings, a Department of Defence press statement, and a diplomatic visit by US Special Representative Robert Gelbard in late February 1998, there were no public Western actions regarding Kosovo.

releases.<sup>414</sup> The Contact Group, which had been set up originally to deal with the Bosnian conflict, became increasingly drawn into the Kosovo crisis, as tensions increased in the province over 1997 and early 1998. The West, however, was also careful not to push the Yugoslav authorities too hard on Kosovo, fearing that its cooperation, which had proven critical in reaching and implementing the Dayton Peace Accords, may be at risk. Keeping the Yugoslavs on board over Bosnia was more important than the Kosovo tensions at this stage. In terms of the West's foreign policy towards the Kosovo issue, as outlined in chapter four, three aspects can be distinguished. The first, referred to as the strategic policy, addresses the question: what end(s) is the policy trying to accomplish? In this regard, the West's main goal was greater autonomy for the Kosovo Albanians similar to what Milosevic had taken away from them in 1989. According to the Contact Group statement of 25 February 1998: "The Contact Group reiterated that it supports neither the independence nor the maintenance of the status quo... The Contact Group supports an enhanced status for Kosovo within the FRY and recognises that this must include meaningful self-administration."<sup>415</sup>

To achieve its strategic policy, the West's tactical policies were critical. The first of these, referred to as tactical policy A, addressed the question: what must the parties on the ground do to reach the end(s) of the strategic policy? At this stage, this policy was relatively vague and only called for dialogue between the Serbs

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<sup>414</sup> These meetings were not solely dedicated to the Kosovo situation and were originally set up to review the implementation of the Bosnia Dayton Accords, but dealt with Kosovo after tensions began growing in the region. These meetings took place in New York on 24 September 1997; in Bonn, Germany on 9/10 December 1997; in Washington DC on 8 January 1998; and Moscow on 25 February 1998. The meetings in New York, Washington and Moscow issued statements on Kosovo. Statements by the Contact Group were issued on 24 September 1997; 8 January 1998; and 25 February 1998.

<sup>415</sup> Contact Group, *Statement on Kosovo*, 25 February, 1998.

and Albanians. The second of these, referred to as tactical policy B, addressed the question: what must we (the external third parties) do to push the parties on the ground to implement tactical policy A? To promote dialogue between the two sides, the West's policy involved a twofold approach. The first, which relied on sanctions, used the remaining "outer wall" of sanctions over the FRY from the Bosnian conflict as leverage. According to Robert Gelbard, the US Special Representative to the FRY, "Kosovo is right there in the centre of those issues which can allow for the end of that outer wall of sanctions."<sup>416</sup> The second part, which relied on incentives, involved concessions to the FRY for co-operative behaviour to date. Since the Dayton Peace Agreement of 1995, there had been a growing trend in the West towards welcoming the FRY back into the international community and the normalisation of relations. 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 31 September 1996; EU preferential trade status in April 1997; and a European Commission aid package worth \$112 million on 15 May 1997.

In late February 1998, Gelbard continued this trend when he travelled to the FRY and offered a number of concessions to lure further compliance from Belgrade on Kosovo and to reward the FRY for its cooperation in influencing the Bosnian Serbs to accept the Dayton Accords.<sup>417</sup> These concessions included the acceptance of the FRY in the Southern European Cooperation Initiative (SECI);

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<sup>416</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Robert Gelbard Press Conference*, Pristina, Serbia, 22 February, 1998.

<sup>417</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*, Belgrade, Serbia, 23 February 1998.

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>418</sup>

Although Gelbard criticised the FRY on Kosovo and the status quo, he was even more critical of 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. I refuse to accept any kind of excuses. Having worked for years on counterterrorist activity I know very well that to look at a terrorist group, to define it, you strip away the rhetoric and just look at actions. And the actions of the group speak for themselves.<sup>419</sup>

This message had been a repetition from a day earlier in Pristina, in which Gelbard had stated, "It is the strong and firm policy of the United States to fully oppose all terrorists actions and all terrorists organizations."<sup>420</sup>

## **Phase 2 – 28 February to 27 March 1998**

After the Drenica area massacres, Western governments reacted in several ways.

At the multilateral level, an emergency meeting of the Contact Group was arranged on 9 March, after news of the incident reached the West. The meeting was marked by much debate and eventual compromise, with the United States and

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<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

<sup>420</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Robert Gelbard Press Conference*, 22 February, 1998.

Russia taking opposing positions on the degree of action necessary. Representing the United States was Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who saw the Kosovo crisis as a continuation of Serbian ethnic cleansing practices that had dominated the region for much of the decade. She believed that it was important to act immediately and decisively to prevent another Balkan tragedy – a position that would put her at odds with other NATO countries and members of her own country's National Security Council (NSC).

After this meeting, the group released a statement that placed much of the responsibility for the violence with the FRY. The statement called on the FRY authorities to enact a number of measures within ten days. These included the withdrawal of special police units, access for representatives of the Red Cross and humanitarian organisations, and a commitment to dialogue with the Kosovo Albanian political leadership. If compliance could not be achieved, the Contact Group threatened to impose a limited 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>421</sup> Although the first sanction was directed to the United Nations Security Council, the next two were to be enforcement by the nation-states of the Contact Group. At the UN, following the recommendation of the Contact Group, the Security Council met and adopted Resolution 1160 on 31 March 1998, which established

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<sup>421</sup> Contact Group, *Statement on Kosovo*, London, UK, 9 March, 1998. It should be noted that Russia did not endorse all of the sanctions agreed to by other Contact Group states.

an arms embargo against the FRY, including Kosovo.<sup>422</sup> This resolution was enacted under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter and condemned the FRY police for using excessive force against civilians in Kosovo.

This was the strongest action by the West against a Serb-dominated regime since the decision to bomb the Bosnian Serbs in 1995. Although the West was now active on the Kosovo issue, there was no serious consideration at this stage for any military involvement. According to Robin Cook, in press comments after the Contact Group meeting, “we did not discuss military intervention, that is not on the agenda at the present time.”<sup>423</sup> At NATO, there was condemnation for the violence, but no threat of military action.<sup>424</sup> The goal at this early stage was to use diplomacy and the threat of mostly economic sanctions to coerce the FRY authorities into the desired behaviour.

In terms of US bilateral action, some in the US initially considered whether the FRY had crossed the “Christmas Warning” – a threat sent by former President George Bush at the end of his term on 25 December 1992, to intervene unilaterally if the Kosovo Albanians were suppressed by force.<sup>425</sup> To date, this

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<sup>422</sup> According to Resolution 1160, the arms embargo meant: “arms and related material of all types, including weapons and munitions, military vehicles and equipment and spare parts for them. It also decided that States shall prevent arming and training for terrorist activities there.” United Nations Security Council, *Press Release Sc/6496*, 31 March, 1999, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/1998/19980331.SC6496.html>.

<sup>423</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and the Ministers to the Contact Group of Kosovo*, “Press Conference,” London, UK, 9 March, 1998.

<sup>424</sup> NATO, *Press Release (98)29*, “Council statement on the situation in Kosovo,” 5 March, 1998, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p98-029e.htm>.

<sup>425</sup> The one-sentence statement, which was provoked by US intelligence suggesting a plan of mass ethnic cleaning in Kosovo similar to the one executed in 1999, stated, “in the event of conflict in Kosovo caused by Serbian action, the US will be prepared to employ military force against Serbians in Kosovo and in Serbia proper.” Cited in Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society*, p.34. Also see R. Jeffrey Smith, “U.S. Envoy Warns Serbs, Kosovo Rebels,” *Washington Post*, 11 March, 1998, A21.

warning had not been considered because Kosovo remained relatively calm under Rugova's pacifist approach. After the events of early March 1998, however, a limited circle within the US government, including the Secretary of State, believed that the warning had been triggered. The majority in the NSC and US Congress, however, were in no mood for war.<sup>426</sup>

The US began to show its displeasure towards the FRY by first halting and then revoking the concessions it made in late February. This was followed by the return of special representative Gelbard into the FRY on 10 March, but this time, with a very different emphasis. Whereas two weeks earlier, Gelbard's mission had focused on conciliatory measures, the message after the Drenica massacres was largely one of condemnation, referring to recent government actions as "brutal, disproportionate and overwhelming force."<sup>427</sup> Gelbard criticised 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. He demanded that authorities allow forensic teams access to the bodies before they were buried, backing the demands with the threat of sanctions that the Contact Group had outlined.<sup>428</sup> To appear even-handed, Gelbard also visited Rugova and the Albanian political leadership in Kosovo and outlined Washington's opposition to their goals of independence. Other states including Britain, Germany and France took similar actions, sending representatives to both

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<sup>426</sup> The US Administration of President Clinton was engulfed in the early stages of the Monica Lewinsky scandal at this time, which limited the possibility of military intervention, which critics may have interpreted as an evasion tactic. The concern over this type of speculation, in reality, had the reverse effect on the chances of intervention, as it decreased the odds of engagement. Former US Senator Robert Dole later referred to this scenario, calling Kosovo the first casualty of the Lewinsky affair. Interview with Robert Dole, in Boyer, Kirk, and Young, *War in Europe*.

<sup>427</sup> Smith, "U.S. Envoy Warns Serbs."

<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

the Serb and Albanian sides to pressure them into dialogue and a political resolution.

### **Policy Shift after the Drenica Massacres**

Since late 1995, the West had carefully attempted to balance the need for the FRY's cooperation in Bosnia with the desire to pressure the FRY into granting political rights to the Kosovo Albanians. In Western calculations, the cost of losing the FRY's cooperation was higher than the benefits that might be gained through pushing the FRY into granting more Albanian political rights. 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 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 political leadership, after all, was pursuing Ghandi-like tactics of passive resistance and philosophically opposed to violence.

Events on the ground, however, had changed 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 stronger grip on the population. The implementation of the Accords was helping to defuse tensions and moving people towards more moderate political leadership. In Kosovo, the reverse was happening. Belief in Rugova's pacifism was losing the support of increasing segments of the Albanian



population, who despairingly compared their unsuccessful plight to that of other groups in the former Yugoslavia that had gained independence through the use of force. This shifting allegiance took root in the emergence of the KLA, who were ready to fight for independence through armed struggle. Small-scale KLA provocations and Serb reprisals became increasingly common throughout late 1997 and early 1998. Until 28 February 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.

The Drenica massacre exposed the increasingly misplaced cost-benefit structures of Western policy towards the FRY in dramatic fashion and made it difficult for the West to maintain its previous stance. 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 had greatly diminished. As a result, the West's commitment to its Kosovo policy was more open to change, and pressure on the FRY over Kosovo that was previously minimal, could now be increased significantly. Table 7-1 summarises the changing aspects of Western policy in regard to Kosovo.

**Table 7-1: Change in Western Policy Aspects Between Phases 1 and 2**

	Phase 1	Phase 2
<b>Strategic Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kosovo autonomy (meaningful self-administration)</li> </ul>	
<b>Tactical Policy A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serb/Albanian dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serb/Albanian dialogue</li> <li>• FRY to withdraw forces</li> <li>• Allow access to Red Cross/humanitarian groups</li> </ul>
<b>Tactical Policy B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sticks – outer wall of sanctions</li> <li>• Carrots               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ FRY in SECI</li> <li>➢ JAT landing rights</li> <li>➢ Greater FRY diplomatic recognition/consulate permission</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arms embargo</li> <li>• Senior official's visa restrictions (threatened)</li> <li>• Moratorium on government credit/investment (threatened)</li> <li>• US revokes February concessions</li> </ul>

As table 7-1 shows, Western policy did not change strategically but only at tactical levels after the Drenica area massacres, with most of the changes related to tactical policy B. In terms of tactical policy A, the key means by which the strategic policy was to be achieved remained constant. However, to achieve the necessary environment for dialogue, the FRY was required to make additional moves regarding its forces in addition to the provision of access for humanitarian organisations. The greatest change in policy took place in the West's tactical policy B, which was completely overhauled. Whereas the previous policy was heavily tilted towards incentives to promote dialogue, the new policy essentially withdrew these and instead introduced a number of new sanctions. These measures, not surprisingly, were largely targeted at the FRY, which bore the brunt of Western government blame for the Drenica incident. The one exception related to the arms embargo, which was equally applied to the Kosovo Albanians.

### **Western Decision Making and the Media**

The Drenica incident and its media images shattered much of the previous Western passivity over Kosovo and revived the horrors of the Bosnian war. It especially brought back memories of Srebrenica – an incident that seemed to still hold much collective guilt for the West, based on the statements of Western leaders. Commenting after the 9 March 1998 Contact Group meeting, for example, Madeleine Albright stated: “[We] were in the same room that we had been in during Bosnian discussions. I thought it behoved me to say to my colleagues that we could not repeat the kinds of mistakes that had happened over Bosnia, where there was a lot of talk and no action and that history would judge us

very, very severely.”<sup>429</sup> Disturbed by the images from Drenica, Albright made several references to them during high-level meetings after the massacres. For example, several days before the Contact Group meeting 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>430</sup> After the Contact Group meeting, Albright again seemed to acknowledge the importance of media images by stating, “History is watching us...In this very room our predecessors delayed as Bosnia burned...”<sup>431</sup> Albright was not alone in making this linkage. US President Bill Clinton made perhaps the clearest link amongst the images from Drenica, the failure in Bosnia and the new Western tactical policy B 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>432</sup>

The media images from Kosovo also played a role with legislatures in the US Congress, which would eventually support US participation in the NATO intervention. On 10 March 1998, in the immediate aftermath of the Drenica massacre, US Congressman Steny H. Hoyer from the House of Representatives brought up the Kosovo issue and expressed support for actions taken by the Contact Group. Sighting the picture on the front page of the *Washington Post* as evidence of Kosovar suffering and a basis for doing something, the Maryland representative stated, “The front page of the Washington Post shows an Albanian

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<sup>429</sup> Interview with Madeleine Albright, in Little, *Mortal Combat*.

<sup>430</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Press Briefing at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, Rome, Italy, 7 March, 1998.

<sup>431</sup> Cited in Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.24.

<sup>432</sup> White House Office of the Press Secretary, *Remarks by the President and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in Photo Opportunity*, 11 March, 1998.

mother and her small child, victims of this Serbian onslaught...Mr. Speaker, this House, the Senate and this Nation must speak out for the safety of those in Kosovo.”<sup>433</sup> The scenes of violence and suffering continued to have an impact over several weeks in March. On 17 March, in a debate in the House of Representatives, Congressman Ben Gilman from New York described what he had seen, stating,

in recent weeks the world has witnessed the horrifying spectacle of violence again sweeping a part of the Balkans. Serbian paramilitary police forces brutally assaulted the long suffering people of the province of Kosova.... Whole villages were attacked and their inhabitants were forced to flee into the hills. Entire families were massacred as Serbian forces fired indiscriminately into their homes.<sup>434</sup>

Similar sentiments were expressed by fellow New York Congressman Eliot Engel, who argued, “We saw the extent of tyranny...a couple of weeks ago when women, children and innocent people who were just wantonly killed by Serbian police using helicopters and artillery. It is something that we ought not see in the year 1998.”<sup>435</sup>

The pressure continued to build in the US Legislature until it led to the passage of a concurrent resolution. On 18 March, the US Senate passed Concurrent Resolution 85 by a vote of 98 to 0 “Calling for the end of violent repression on the

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<sup>433</sup> *Human Rights Violations in Kosovo*, Remarks by House Representative Steny H. Hoyer, 105th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 144 (10 March, 1998): H 929.

<sup>434</sup> *Calling for an End to Violent Repression of Legitimate Rights of People of Kosovo*, Remarks by House Representative Ben A. Gilman, 105th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 144 (17 March, 1998): H 1203.

<sup>435</sup> *Ibid.*, Remarks by House Representative Eliot L. Engel: H 1202.

people of Kosovo.” Based on the arguments by leading Senators, media images of suffering Albanians played a crucial role in sustaining support for the resolution. Joseph R. Biden, who was a leading Democratic Senator on foreign policy issues, played an important role in pushing the Kosovo issue after Drenica and throughout the following year. In comments made during the debate on the resolution, Biden made clear links between the images and stories reported by media outlets, and conclusions he had reached about blame. According to Biden, “The past two weeks have seen appalling massacres of innocent ethnic Albanians in Kosovo by heavily armed Serbian paramilitary forces...the world has witnessed the spectre of survivors exhuming the bodies of their loved ones in order to give them dignified, Muslim burials.”<sup>436</sup> Clearly, Biden’s references to the world witnessing events in Kosovo related to media reports and images. Other members of the Senate supporting this resolution also described how media images and framing had influenced their decision-making on Kosovo. According to Chris Dodd, Senator from Connecticut and one of the resolution’s sponsors,

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>437</sup>

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<sup>436</sup> *Calling for an End to the Violent Repression of the People of Kosovo*, Remarks by Senator Joseph R. Biden, 105th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 144 (18 March, 1998): S 2203.

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid.*, Remarks by Senator Chris Dodd: S 2203-04.

### **Phase 3 – 29 March to 27 September**

The period from the end of 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 approval. After the Drenica massacres, the tougher Western policy towards the FRY had some effect. After initially rejecting calls for outside intervention on grounds that Kosovo was an internal matter, FRY leadership seemed to change course and offer a number of concessions to appease the West. These included at least three calls in March 1998 for direct negotiations with the Albanian leadership, calls for the return of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) missions which had been asked to leave several years before, and the signing of an education agreement with the Kosovo Albanians to promote their return to the state education system from which they had been excluded since 1991.<sup>438</sup> For most of April and May 1998, the Yugoslav authorities also showed military restraint in Kosovo, and the US took this opportunity to use diplomatic pressure against both sides. In May, Richard Holbrooke, considered by some to be a Milosevic expert, was asked to assist with negotiations. Holbrooke had earned a reputation as a formidable diplomat by playing a significant role in bringing an end to the Bosnian conflict in 1995. In Kosovo, Holbrooke's efforts seemed to be getting results with the first ever meeting between Rugova and Milosevic on 15 May, which suggested progress towards the West's tactical policy A. These gestures

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<sup>438</sup> Although it should be noted that according to Serb accounts, the Albanians withdrew on their own. CNN News, "Thousands Protest Kosovo Education Accord," *CNN.com*, 23 March, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/9803/23/kosovo.update/>.

and concessions by Belgrade led to the delay of some of the threatened sanctions.<sup>439</sup> The West could see signs of progress and did not want to spoil the gains by overplaying its hand. In an 18 May statement, it even went so far as to praise Milosevic personally for his role in promoting dialogue, stating, “The Contact Group is encouraged by the fact that President Milosevic has taken personal responsibility for the start of dialogue...”<sup>440</sup>

Events on the ground, however, were overtaking what would prove to be only hollow signs of progress. The death of Jashari and eighty other Kosovo Albanians in Drenica swelled the KLA’s ranks from hundreds to thousands, and drew significant material and moral support from Albania and the Albanian Diasporas.<sup>441</sup> The KLA continued its central tactic of targeting FRY authorities, but now on a much wider scale. By late May (23 and 24 May), the FRY authorities, now facing a more formidable challenger with better armaments, launched an offensive on KLA strongholds, particularly focused on cutting supply lines near the Albanian border. This measure, however, led to a strong Western response involving the first NATO military exercises linked to Kosovo and the implementation of sanctions that had been put on hold since March. Pressure also came from Russia, the traditional Serb ally, who attempted to act as an intermediary between the FRY and Western powers. As a result of these actions, by mid June, the FRY’s leadership again returned to a position of appeasement, limiting its military actions against the growing KLA presence. The FRY also

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<sup>439</sup> At a meeting of the Contact Group on 25 March 1999, it was decided that most of the threatened sanctions except the arms embargo, which was passed through the UN Security Council the following week, would be delayed for another month until the next meeting of the Contact Group on 29 April 1998 to give the Serbian side more time for greater compliance with earlier demands. Contact Group, *Statement on Kosovo*, 25 March, 1998.

<sup>440</sup> Contact Group, *Statement on Kosovo*, Birmingham, UK, 18 May, 1998.



accepted the presence of a permanent foreign monitoring regime – the Kosovo Diplomatic Observer Mission (KDOM), which came into effect on 6 July 1998, with Russian pressure.

These attempts to appease the West and Russia left Kosovo open again for advances by the KLA, who controlled an estimated 40 percent of Kosovo by mid July.<sup>442</sup> The KLA took advantage of periods of FRY restraint to take territory, claiming to have “liberated” it on a path towards independence. To reverse this trend, FRY authorities again launched a major counter offensive to root out the KLA, beginning in late July. During this campaign, the West was more relaxed against the FRY than in the early summer. While still paying lip service to the crisis and condemning FRY military aggression, the West, led by the United States, was reluctant to take additional steps towards military intervention. One reason for this disinclination was an underlying misalignment between Western strategic policy goals and Kosovo Albanian political demands. The West did not endorse the outright demand for independence, fearing regional destabilisation and the setting of a precedent that could have dire long-term consequences. The Kosovo Albanian political leadership and population, however, were largely united on this goal. Their differences lay largely in the means by which such an outcome should be achieved. This incongruence placed the West’s strategic policy closer to that of the FRY, which also in theory claimed to support greater autonomy for Kosovo within the internationally recognised jurisdiction of the

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<sup>441</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.35.

<sup>442</sup> Ibid.

FRY.<sup>443</sup> Some analysts even suggested that the West secretly wished for a quick and decisive FRY victory in the summer offensive, to humble the Albanian position away from independence and towards autonomy.<sup>444</sup> Given the KLA's tactics, which the US itself had branded as "terrorist" in February 1998, and their rigid demands for independence, the Americans were reluctant to be seen as the KLA's air force, should they intervene through air strikes.<sup>445</sup>

It was only when it became clear that the status quo was leading to a massive humanitarian disaster that the West decided to re-engage in its attempt to end the crisis. The aggressive nature of the FRY offensive, involving the military, paramilitary and interior police, led to high numbers of Albanian refugees and internally displaced civilians, who had been forced to leave their homes. Throughout the summer of 1998, tens of thousands of Albanians in Kosovo became refugees, as an estimated 300 villages were emptied. In August alone, according to the UN High Commission for Refugees, 100,000 Kosovo Albanians were forced to leave their homes, bringing the total number of displaced within a range of 250,000-300,000.<sup>446</sup> 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. The Serbian authorities claimed to be eliminating KLA terrorist strongholds and supply lines bringing weapons in from

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<sup>443</sup> The FRY, however, was always careful to point out that Albanians were only one group amongst many in Kosovo and that the FRY vision of autonomy was based on equal rights for all of Kosovo's ethnic and religious groups, not what they termed "Albanian dictatorship."

<sup>444</sup> Boyer, Kirk, and Young, *War in Europe*.

<sup>445</sup> Interview with US Secretary of Defence William Cohen, in *Ibid*.

<sup>446</sup> Although it should be noted that the majority of refugees found shelter with friends and relatives in other towns and that only a small percentage were left homeless. Cited in Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.40.

Albania, but the integration of the KLA within the local population and the indiscriminate nature of the offensive led to what one German diplomat called “an empty country, a wasteland.”<sup>447</sup>

In addition to the human cost, the hollow language of 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>448</sup> This statement, though simple, bore a certain reality that directly 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 images became unbearably painful would it be impossible for the West to ignore the situation in Kosovo.

To provide assistance to the Kosovo Albanians and to regain credibility, 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 23 and 24 September, respectively. At the UN, diplomats had attempted to pass a resolution to deal with the FRY counteroffensive for over one month. The main sticking point in passing a resolution came from Russian and Chinese representatives, who were reluctant to pass any strong measures against the FRY – especially any that referred to the use of force. The final agreement did

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<sup>447</sup> Cited in Ibid.

<sup>448</sup> Barton Gellman, “Slaughter in Racak Changed Kosovo Policy,” *Washington Post*, 18 April, 1999, A1.

not refer to enforcement but instead called for a ceasefire, withdrawal of forces from civilian areas, stronger international monitoring, refugee return, unfettered access for humanitarian organisations and increased negotiation towards a political solution. The NATO measure put the organisation one step closer to military action through a limited phased air campaign warning code named Operation Allied Force, although it was not a commitment to action.<sup>449</sup>

The FRY summer offensive from late July to late September 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 disciplined nature of the offensive and the limited Western media access was relatively mild. Although there were images of refugees and destroyed villages, such footage lacked the shock factor following the massacres of early March. Table 7-2 summarises the changing aspects of Western policy regarding Kosovo between the second and third phases of the timeline under review.

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<sup>449</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, pp.42-44.

**Table 7-2: Change in Western Policy Aspects Between Phases 2 and 3**

	Phase 2	Phase 3
<b>Strategic Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kosovo autonomy (meaningful self-administration)</li> </ul>	
<b>Tactical Policy A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serb/Albanian dialogue</li> <li>• FRY to withdraw forces</li> <li>• Red Cross/humanitarian groups access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serb/Albanian dialogue</li> <li>• Ceasefire/withdraw forces from civilian areas</li> <li>• Permit stronger international monitoring regime</li> <li>• Refugee return/humanitarian group access</li> </ul>
<b>Tactical Policy B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arms embargo</li> <li>• Senior official's visa restrictions (threatened)</li> <li>• Moratorium on government credit/investment (threatened)</li> <li>• US revokes February concessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement previous sanctions (including those threatened)</li> <li>• Warning of NATO air campaign</li> </ul>

As table 7-2 shows, tactical Western policy did change between the second and third phase, due largely to events on the ground in Kosovo relating to the fighting and its implications for the civilian population. While no unexpected and dramatic media images surfaced over the third phase, the humanitarian situation deteriorated quite dramatically. As a result, the West, while keeping its strategic policy and its desire for dialogue to achieve this end consistent, strengthened its tactical policies. In terms of tactical policy A, the West demanded a ceasefire and military withdrawal from the FRY, along with facilitation of refugee returns and humanitarian organisation access. It also sought to establish a more robust international monitoring regime than the KDOM. To make its demands more compelling, the West took a critical step in its tactical policy by formally introduced the possibility of military force for the first time by way of a NATO activation warning. As the events during the third phase demonstrated, the West was willing to move policy even when the CNN effect was not a factor, but in a slower and more meticulous fashion, marked by the fact that it took over one month of negotiating for a UN resolution to be finalised.

#### **Phase 4 – 28 September to 27 October**

The images from the aftermath of the Gornje Obrinje massacre of 26 September delivered unexpected and highly emotive images to the West from Kosovo for the second time during the civil war. These images dominated Western television screens and newspapers from 29 September to 2 October and led to an unprecedented degree of coverage. Upon receiving the news in late September, an emergency NSC meeting was called in Washington. Whereas Albright had

previously been alone in supporting force as a solution for ending the crisis, there was now much wider support for this approach, and other NSC members who had been reluctant about military intervention were now more favourable to the option. At the meeting, the NSC reached a pivotal decision – if Milosevic did not withdraw his forces as called for by the UN Resolution 1199, the US would use military force through NATO.<sup>450</sup> To get the message to Milosevic, Holbrooke was sent to the FRY for intense negotiations that lasted nine days. To make the threat more credible, NATO took the unprecedented step of issuing an Activation Order (ACTORD) on 13 October, for a limited and phased air campaign against the FRY that had a 96-hour deadline for initiation.<sup>451</sup> All 16 NATO members, including final holdouts such as France, Germany and Italy, agreed upon this measure.

The Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement 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 24 October 1998, and included a ceasefire, withdrawal and a robust international monitoring regime. The monitoring system, referred to as the Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM), was established to ensure compliance with UN resolutions and to supervise elections for Kosovo self-government, which were to be held within nine months of the agreement.<sup>452</sup> After the agreement, several hundred international monitors and a

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<sup>450</sup> Boyer, Kirk, and Young, *War in Europe*. While the NSC was ready to take the necessary steps to go forward with this position, it ran into resistance trying to convince the US congress to support such an initiative. This was made even more complex by the fact that the House of Representative's Judiciary committee had just announced impeachment proceedings against Bill Clinton.

<sup>451</sup> NATO, "Statement to the Press by Secretary General Following Decision on ACTORD."

<sup>452</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, pp.48-49.

number of humanitarian and other international organisations entered Kosovo and provided sought-after relief to displaced Kosovo Albanians, who either returned home or were given shelter elsewhere. This effort averted the potential mass starvation that was feared with the onset of the winter and normalised life for most of the displaced. FRY authorities, for the most part, withdrew to their pre-March levels, leading NATO to report that substantial compliance on withdrawal, in line with international demands, had been achieved by late October.

### **Policy Shift after the Gornje Obrinje Massacre**

There was clearly a shift in Western policy before and after the images of Gornje Obrinje appeared in Western media in late September 1998. During September, while Western policy had become more aggressive towards ending the Kosovo conflict, as demonstrated by the passage of the aforementioned 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 24 September 1998, the activation warning took NATO "to an increased level of military preparedness...the use of force will require further decisions by the North Atlantic Council."<sup>453</sup> This was, as its name suggested, largely a warning. Western nations at this stage were prepared to raise the level of rhetoric, but were not seriously ready to engage militarily. Many of NATO's members in Europe, especially France, Germany and Italy, insisted that an explicit UN mandate was necessary for any military action over Kosovo.<sup>454</sup> This reluctance to move beyond words

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<sup>453</sup> NATO, *Press Statement*, "Statement by Secretary General following the ACTWARN decision," Vilamoura, Portugal, 24 September, 1998, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p980924e.htm>.

<sup>454</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.45.



was also buoyed by the FRY's announcement that they had defeated the KLA and were withdrawing troops from Kosovo.<sup>455</sup> This move, which was announced 28 September as an attempt to appease the West, seemed to have had some impact. In an interview on the possible withdrawal, US Secretary of Defence Cohen, for example, was positive on the FRY announcement and stated that meeting the UN demands would negate any possibility of military action. He even suggested that the KLA needed to reduce its talk of war and engage in negotiations to end the conflict.<sup>456</sup>

Whatever relief the FRY declaration may have had, however, was quickly reversed by the Gornje Obrinje massacre and its media images and framing, which led to notable tactical policy shifts, as highlighted in Table 7-3:

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<sup>455</sup> CNN News, "U.S. Warns Milosevic: Follow through on Troop Withdrawal," *CNN.com*, 28 September, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9809/28/kosovo.02/>.

<sup>456</sup> *Ibid.*

**Table 7-3: Change in Western Policy Aspects Between Phases 3 and 4**

	Phase 3	Phase 4
<b>Strategic Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kosovo autonomy (meaningful self-administration)</li> </ul>	
<b>Tactical Policy A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serb/Albanian dialogue</li> <li>• Ceasefire/withdraw forces from civilian areas</li> <li>• Permit stronger international monitoring regime</li> <li>• Refugee return/humanitarian group access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serb/Albanian dialogue</li> <li>• Elections for self-administration (within 9 months)</li> <li>• Accept terms of UN resolution (as incorporated in Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement)</li> </ul>
<b>Tactical Policy B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement previous sanctions (including those threatened)</li> <li>• Warning of NATO air campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain previous sanctions</li> <li>• Implement Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement including robust monitoring regime (KVM)</li> <li>• Activation order for NATO air campaign</li> </ul>

As Table 7-3 highlights, the West made three notable tactical policy shifts after the Gornje Obrinje massacre. The first of these related to tactical policy A. Whereas the West had hoped to achieve Kosovo self-administration through the promotion of dialogue between the two parties, the realisation was setting in at this stage that the two sides, or at least elements within them that held real power, were more interested in fighting. This was particularly the case with the KLA, which had no interest in the West's political solution of autonomy with the FRY. As a negotiated solution seemed a long way off, at best, Western policy began to fill in some of the steps that would be necessary for the fulfilment of its strategic policy goal. Key amongst these were elections for Kosovo self-administration, which the West hoped to implement sometime in the middle of 1999 under the supervision of the KVM. The second key tactical policy change, relevant to both tactical policy A and B, related to the implementation of the Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement, which was highlighted by a strict international monitoring regime, as envisioned under the KVM. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the West was ready to seriously threaten force for the first time to push the FRY to implement its tactical policy A. In past phases, the West had always put diplomacy ahead of military action as a solution to the Kosovo crisis. In the post-Gornje Obrinje environment, however, for the first time since the beginning of the civil war in March, the West proposed support for military action as the leading choice. This new policy conviction was manifested in NATO's Activation Order (ACTORD) of 13 October, which was a dramatic shift in policy in the direction of military intervention.

### Western Decision Making and the Media

In the US, the news of the Gornje Obrinje massacre, as mentioned, led to an emergency NSC meeting.<sup>457</sup> This meeting, according to several sources, was a key turning point in building support amongst the NSC for a more aggressive Kosovo policy. Albright, who had previously been a lone advocate of military action, now had a strengthened position in light of the recent images from the massacre. The presence of the images placed NSC members who had previously not supported a military option in a difficult position, and created an environment susceptible to policy change. According to Richard Holbrooke, who specifically mentioned the role of media images during the NSC meeting, “The [*New York 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>458</sup>

Hoolbrooke’s recollection was corroborated by Albright, who was strengthened with renewed vigour in her position regarding Kosovo. Describing the same meeting, she wrote in her memoirs:

On September 30, we held a meeting of the Principals Committee in the White House Situation Room. On the table in front of us was a photograph from that morning’s New York Times. In the center of the photo was the image of a dead body, skeletal in appearance, mouth open, seeming to issue a last silent cry. The body was one of eighteen women, children and elderly awaiting burial in the

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<sup>457</sup> Members present included Secretary of State Albright, National Security Adviser Sandy Berger, Defence Secretary William Cohen and special envoy Richard Holbrooke.

<sup>458</sup> Interview with Richard Holbrooke, in Boyer, Kirk, and Young, *War in Europe*.

Kosovo town of Gornje Obrinje... That morning, as I looked at the photo and read the accompanying story, I thought again of my vow not to allow a repeat of the carnage we had witnessed in Bosnia.<sup>459</sup>

When asked by a reporter about whether stories of the Gornje Obrinje massacre were as bad as reported, she countered, "Its very bad, and you can't make up photographs."<sup>460</sup> Sandy Berger also acknowledged the significance of the Gornje Obrinje incident, explaining that for the United States, the gruesome massacre represented a breach in the "atrocities threshold."<sup>461</sup>

Even the FRY government seemed to be aware of the incredible damage caused by the media reports and images from Gornje Obrinje. In an unprecedented attack on the media for what they claimed as a distortion, the Serb-dominated government blasted foreign media for aggravating the situation, stating:

The Federal Government pointed out that the situation in Kosovo and Metohija is particularly aggravated by the international pressures and orchestrated anti-Serb media campaign. In the wake of unverified information put forward by foreign media on the alleged crimes and grave sites in the villages of Golubovac, Lipovac and Gornje Obrinje... The Federal Government at the same time deplores that the international community has in such a strong and threatening manner responded to unverified information...<sup>462</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary* (New York: Miramax Books, 2003), p.388.

<sup>460</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Secretary of State Madeleine Albright Remarks on Kosovo*, 5 October, 1998.

<sup>461</sup> Cited in Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.44.

<sup>462</sup> Federal Government of Yugoslavia, *Press Statement*, 2 October, 1998.

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 with greater vigour in the days following the massacre. On 1 October, for example, shortly after the first images of the massacre reached the US, 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 so that the innocent civilians will not continue to be slaughtered...I have a letter signed by 18 of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle calling on the President to issue immediate air power with NATO allies to stop the carnage...The time for military strikes is now.<sup>463</sup>

By early October, however, despite the White House decision to push the military option, there was still strong opposition to such an approach in the US Congress.<sup>464</sup> Many members opposed military force due to their concern over entrenchment in another country's internal struggles and over the lack of vital national interests in Kosovo. In an important meeting between the Administration

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<sup>463</sup> *Crisis in Kosovo*, Remarks by House Representative Eliot L. Engel, 105th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 144 (1 October, 1998): H 9212.

<sup>464</sup> According to Senator Don Nickles, the US Senator from Oklahoma, "the administration gave most Members of the Senate a briefing yesterday, but they have a lot of work to do. They have a lot of work to do if they are going to convince the Congress, if they are going to convince the American people. They have a lot of levelling with the American people as far as the expense, as far as the obligation, as far as what the next step is after the first phase." *Kosovo*, Remarks by Senator Don Nickles, *Congressional Record* 144 (2 October, 1998): S 11330.

and Congress on 1 October, the Clinton team made a case for military intervention, but many in Congress remained unconvinced that this option was wise and anything more than an emotional reaction to the atrocity. Even some opponents, however, seemed to be aware of the role of the media. On 2 October, House Representative David Skaggs, who opposed a policy of military intervention, acknowledged the relationship between media reports and support of military action, stating, "Mr. Speaker, recent reports of atrocities against Kosovo civilians by Serb security forces are certainly appalling...It is entirely understandable why many people would therefore support military intervention by the United Nations or by NATO with US leadership."<sup>465</sup>

Similar sentiments soon followed in the Senate. On a debate on Kosovo on 6 October, clear links were again made between media images from 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...The images broadcast this week are a sombre reminder of very similar pictures that came from places not far from Kosovo – places like Mostar and Tuzla in Bosnia...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>466</sup>

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<sup>465</sup> *On Kosovo*, Remarks by House Representative David Skaggs, 105th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 144 (1 October, 1998): H 9190.

<sup>466</sup> *Violence in Kosovo*, Remarks by Senator Mike DeWine, *Congressional Record* 144 (6 October, 1998): S 11530.

On 8 October, Senator Paul Wellstone from Minnesota again raised the issue of Kosovo, making a similar link, saying, “Unless immediate action is taken to forestall a humanitarian tragedy, we may soon see even more disturbing and gruesome pictures from Kosovo.”<sup>467</sup> On 12 October, Senator Tom Daschle of South Dakota followed a similar theme when he said,

Within the last several weeks our newspapers have been filled with accounts of atrocities committed by Milosevic’s units against scores of unarmed civilians...If air operations and missile strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are necessary to force Milosevic to the negotiating table, the United States and our NATO allies should demonstrate that we are prepared to pursue that option...Its time for the world to say no to the torture and slaughter of innocent civilians in Kosovo.<sup>468</sup>

### **Phase 5 – 28 October 1998 to 14 January 1999**

The Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement solved the short-term humanitarian problems that most concerned the West. The agreement was flawed, however, because it was made between NATO and the FRY and, to its peril, largely ignored the KLA.<sup>469</sup> As Milosevic had feared while negotiating the agreement with Holbrooke, the KLA had no incentive to comply with the ceasefire. Instead, it took advantage of the shifting power structure left by the FRY military withdrawal to recapture territory lost during the summer offensive. According to General

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<sup>467</sup> *Developments in Kosovo*, Remarks by Senator Paul Wellstone, *Congressional Record* 144 (8 October, 1998): S 11901.

<sup>468</sup> *Kosovo*, Remarks by Senator Tom Daschle, 105th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 144 (12 October, 1998): S 12436.

<sup>469</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, pp.50-59.



Agim Ceku, the KLA's Military Leader, "The cease-fire was very useful for us, it helped us to get organised, to consolidate and grow."<sup>470</sup> This perceived favouritism would have long-term consequences for the conflict that would lead the Serbian side to re-examine its attempts to appease the West, which it increasingly saw as one sided and against Serb interests.

The international outrage that followed the Drenica and Gornje Obrinje massacres were certainly not lost on the KLA, who seemed to understand the power of the CNN effect in forwarding their cause. Canadian General Michel Maisonneuve of the OSCE monitoring force, who was stationed in Kosovo at this time, has since been one source to confirm that the KLA was well aware of the consequences of provoking FRY authorities. According to the General, "If they [FRY authorities] were hit by something they would retaliate with disproportionate force... That's something I always used to say to the KLA – why do you do these things, you're provoking them and they're going to retaliate on defenceless people."<sup>471</sup>

Attempts to draw the FRY authorities into reprisals were common over this period. With the large international monitoring presence in Kosovo starting in mid November, the tactics of the KLA were now transparent and recorded by those on the ground. According to General Klaus Naumann, Chair of the NATO military Committee, "Ambassador Walker stated in the NAC that the majority of the violations were caused by the KLA."<sup>472</sup> Such tactics led the US State Department in November and December to raise the issue on at least two

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<sup>470</sup> Interview with Agim Ceku, in Little, *Mortal Combat*.

<sup>471</sup> Cited in McAuliffe and Bartlett, *The Road to Racak*.

<sup>472</sup> Interview with General Klaus Naumann, in Little, *Mortal Combat*.

occasions in press releases that condemned the KLA. In the first press release on 10 November, the KLA was condemned over the abduction and murder of two Serbian policemen in Kosovo.<sup>473</sup> On 18 December, a press statement described the kidnapping and execution of a Serbian mayor in Kosovo as an act of "savage brutality."<sup>474</sup> Perhaps anticipating Serb retaliation, both statements warned against such an outcome, stating, "Provocations from one side do not justify violence in return," and "retaliation for violence by another party is unacceptable."<sup>475</sup> By the end of December, the Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement was unravelling, as Milosevic openly accused the United States of backing terrorists because it blocked UN Security Council resolutions that referred to the KLA as terrorists.<sup>476</sup> The situation was further inflamed by a KLA attack on a tavern in the Serb dominated Kosovo city of Pec, killing six, including five teenagers.<sup>477</sup> According to State Department spokesman James Rubin, "Killing postmen or killing Serb civilians in cold blood – those are terrorist acts that we do believe wrong and unfortunately that was what the KLA was pursuing at the time."<sup>478</sup>

The increased violence was challenging the credibility of the Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement, and even international monitors had by now come under

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<sup>473</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Office of Spokesman Press Statement by James P. Rubin*, "Situation in Kosovo," 10 November, 1998.

<sup>474</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Office of Spokesman Press Statement by James P. Rubin*, "Situation in Kosovo," 18 December, 1998.

<sup>475</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Office of Spokesman Press Statement by James P. Rubin*, 10 November, 1998, and U.S. Department of State, *Office of Spokesman Press Statement by James P. Rubin*, 18 December, 1998.

<sup>476</sup> CNN News, "Milosevic: U.S. Backs Kosovo 'Terrorists'," *CNN.com*, 16 December, 1998, <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9812/16/kosovo.01/>.

<sup>477</sup> Kosovo Albanians claimed that this was in reprisal for the killing of 31 KLA members who were ambushed along the Albanian border by the FRY army. Ibid.

<sup>478</sup> Interview with James Rubin, in Little, *Mortal Combat*.

attack.<sup>479</sup> On the day of 15 January, a meeting of the NSC Principals Committee took place in the White House basement to discuss Kosovo.<sup>480</sup> Albright believed that the situation was deteriorating and that the time had come to toughen the policy by adding a political component that sought a settlement. The other members, while also frustrated, did not support a more forceful policy, believing it to be too risky. Leading the opposition was William Cohen, who was reluctant to engage in another Balkan conflict with no clear end in sight for any required troop deployment.<sup>481</sup> In the end, a 13-page classified Kosovo strategy was approved, that was informally referred to as “Status Quo Plus.”<sup>482</sup> The “Status Quo Plus” document suggested minor changes at both tactical A and B levels to enhance the Holbrooke- Milosevic agreement, but nothing that could seriously risk escalating tensions. To improve the situation on the ground, the paper suggested enhancing the security of the KVM monitors with helicopters and bodyguards, training Albanian policemen, and beginning the planning for the promised Kosovo election. All of these suggestions, of course, would need Milosevic’s tacit approval.<sup>483</sup> The proposed changes outlined in the policy document were largely cosmetic. 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>484</sup> Albright

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<sup>479</sup> On the very day of the Racak incident, 2 monitors were shot and wounded in a different part of Kosovo. See CNN News, “At Least 15 Rebels Killed in Renewed Kosovo Fighting.”

<sup>480</sup> Attending the meeting were Sandy Berger, Madeleine Albright, William Cohen, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Henry Shelton, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency George Tenet, and all their top aides. Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.70.

<sup>481</sup> Ibid.

<sup>482</sup> This paper has also been referred to as “October-plus,” Ibid., pp.70-71.

<sup>483</sup> Ibid.

<sup>484</sup> It is also important to note that 15 January 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 on this day as a diversion tactic.

was reported to be frustrated after this decision, stating, “We’re like gerbils running on a wheel.”<sup>485</sup>

### **Phase 6 – 15 January to 14 February**

On the same day that the NSC Principals were meeting in the White House, a massacre was unfolding in the Kosovo village of Racak that would set in motion a chain of events leading to the NATO bombing of the FRY 68 days later. For the third time in less than a year, the aftermath of a gruesome massacre of civilians was broadcast on Western media channels.<sup>486</sup> More than anything else, the images exposed the failings of existing Western policy, which appeared inadequate and misguided. If future images of this nature were to be avoided, the status quo policy seemed in need of radical transformation. According to one assessment, Racak was “the culmination of a period of fumbled foreign policy decisions by an administration that had seemed to sleepwalk through the previous 12 months of the Kosovo Crisis. Racak cast that period in a sharp light.”<sup>487</sup>

Television images from the aftermath of the Racak massacre were transmitted faster to the West and in more graphic detail than previous massacres. This was due in part to the fact that the FRY troops pulled out of the village on the same day they conducted their activities, allowing the KLA to take over and invite the world to see their people’s horror. The incident also drew faster and more

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<sup>485</sup> Gellman, “Slaughter in Racak.”

<sup>486</sup> It should be noted that the FRY authorities claimed that many “terrorists” were amongst those killed in all the three incidents. However, media framing in the West largely focused on the civilian side of the casualties.

<sup>487</sup> The Observer, “Inertia in Washington: How the Peace Was Lost,” *The Observer*, 18 July, 1999, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Kosovo/Story/0,2763,207923,00.html>.

unequivocal blame against the Serbian side than any other. This was perpetuated by the fact that William Walker, the head of the KVM, arrived on the scene the next day and declared the incident an atrocity, stating he would not “hesitate to accuse the government security forces of responsibility.”<sup>488</sup>

After the Racak massacre, a wide range of Western government institutions condemned the incident. As the Kosovo crisis had protracted over the previous year, an increasing number of Western institutions had become involved in the conflict, and were quick to condemn what all believed to be an atrocity. Over the two weeks immediately following Racak, a number of important meetings took place in the United States and amongst Western powers. Racak had deemed the status quo inadequate and the means the West would use to attempt to solve the problem would be revealed two weeks after the incident at a Contact Group meeting on 29 January.<sup>489</sup> At that meeting, it was decided that the parties to the conflict would be summoned to a “peace” conference that would be held in Rambouillet, France. The conference was intended to allow the disputing parties to hammer out their differences in a period of up to two weeks before reaching agreement.<sup>490</sup> This was a similar approach to that of the Dayton Accords, which had proven effective in Bosnia. In practice, however, some fundamental elements of the agreement were non-negotiable, making this agreement more of an imposed solution than a negotiation.

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<sup>488</sup> Cited in Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.64.

<sup>489</sup> Although its central ideas were planned in the State Department within a few days of Racak.

<sup>490</sup> Contact Group, *Statement by the Contact Group*, London, UK, 29 January, 1999.

### Policy Shift after the Racak Massacre

There is perhaps no clearer example of policy shift over the entire period under study than after the Racak massacre. According to Boyer, “Within days the political landscape did indeed change. Racak was decisive.”<sup>491</sup> It became clear after Racak that even an enhanced version of the status quo was not enough. A leading American newspaper described the NSC decisions of 15 January most succinctly by characterising them as “obsolete at birth.”<sup>492</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. In developing this new approach, an idea from US NATO Ambassador Alexander Vershbow involving the creation of an international protectorate in Kosovo, by force if necessary, was recognised as a central element.<sup>493</sup> The new policy, in essence, contained four elements:

- 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>494</sup>

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<sup>491</sup> Boyer, Kirk, and Young, *War in Europe*.

<sup>492</sup> Gellman, “Slaughter in Racak.”

<sup>493</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.71.

<sup>494</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. See *Ibid.*, p.72.

- Force parties to sign agreement with a credible ultimatum threatening force for non-agreement.<sup>495</sup>

The policy shift was officially initiated during another NSC Principals meeting on 19 January 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>496</sup> The next day Clinton signed off on the new policy.

The major shift in policy involved forcing the conflicting sides to agree to an interim settlement. Previous policy that attempted to encourage and coerce the two sides to come together and negotiate on their own settlement had proven ineffective. For months, Christopher Hill, the US Ambassador to Macedonia, had been engaged in intense shuttle diplomacy. However, by January 1999, he was no closer in making progress than he had been the previous summer when diplomacy began.<sup>497</sup> Previous attempts to threaten force were now perceived as problematic because they were not attached to any particular political plan. In explaining the new policy to UK Prime Minister Tony Blair two days after it was agreed upon in the United States, Clinton emphasised the importance of this point, stating, “If we do military action without a political plan, we will have a problem.”<sup>498</sup>

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<sup>495</sup> In reality, the ultimatum to agree or face military action would only be applied to the FRY. It was inaccurately assumed that the Albanian side would agree to the solution through the threat of withdrawing assistance.

<sup>496</sup> Gellman, “Slaughter in Racak.”

<sup>497</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.64.

<sup>498</sup> Gellman, “Slaughter in Racak.”

Agreeing on an action plan, in many ways, was the easy part. The difficult part involved convincing the US Legislature and sceptical European allies to back the plan. Racak, however, had a galvanising impact across the political horizon, and potential barriers that were rigid had clearly softened. Albright seemed to realise this but knew that she only had a limited amount of time to push for a new initiative. According to one of her advisors, “Whatever threat of force you don’t get in the next two weeks you’re never getting, at least until the next Racak.”<sup>499</sup>

In terms of convincing NATO allies to support the new policy, some reservations had to be overcome. The first related to the aftermath of any bombing campaign. Europeans wanted US troops as part of the implementation force and, to this end, the US privately agreed to provide troops to assist European allies enforce the Kosovo protectorate. In February, the US publicly made this commitment during Clinton’s weekly radio address to the nation. Second, some European allies were concerned that bombing the Serb side with no penalty for the Albanians for non-compliance would be uneven and allow the KLA to exploit the situation as they had done during the Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement. To address this concern, it was agreed that NATO action would occur only with Albanian agreement to the interim settlement; if the Albanians did not agree, the FRY would not be bombed.<sup>500</sup> Besides making some adjustments to the policy to address these concerns, the European allies were also supportive of the policy change. Table 7-4 highlights the main policy changes between phases five and six:

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<sup>499</sup> Ibid.

<sup>500</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, pp.73-74.



**Table 7-4: Change in Western Policy Aspects Between Phases 5 and 6**

	Phase 5	Phase 6
<b>Strategic Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kosovo autonomy (meaningful self-administration)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autonomous Kosovo protectorate based on interim settlement</li> </ul>
<b>Tactical Policy A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serb/Albanian dialogue</li> <li>• Elections for self-administration (within 9 months)</li> <li>• Accept terms of UN resolution (as incorporated in Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend international conference and sign interim settlement</li> </ul>
<b>Tactical Policy B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain previous sanctions</li> <li>• Implement Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement including robust monitoring regime (KVM) with some enhancements</li> <li>• Activation order for NATO air campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ultimatum threatening force if Serbs do not sign settlement</li> <li>• Withdraw support if Albanians do not sign settlement</li> <li>• Enforce settlement with international implementation force</li> </ul>

As Table 7-4 shows, the Racak massacre set off significant Western policy change on Kosovo. At the strategic level, the West now sought to create an autonomous Kosovo protectorate that would be secured by an international force. This was a notably different goal and much larger commitment by the West than what might have been imagined the previous year when autonomy along the lines of the 1974 Yugoslav constitution that Milosevic removed was sought. The West would now be committed to Kosovo and likely so for many years to come. At the tactical level A, regarding what was expected of the parties on the ground to reach the strategic policy, the previous policy was almost completely discarded. The new focus had moved to pressuring the parties to attend an international conference and signing an interim agreement, largely as envisioned by the West with little room for negotiation. Finally, at the tactical policy B level, the credible threat of force that had initially been threatened in October would be used once more to force compliance at the conference from the Serbian side. In contrast to the October agreement that had ignored the KLA, the West this time demanded their agreement as well, assuming that the threat of withdrawing support would be enough to gain their agreement. To implement this interim settlement, the West planned to send a large military force that would, in effect, occupy Kosovo for a number of years.

### **Western Decision Making and the Media**

In the US and Europe, Racak and its media images and framing seemed to play an important role in influencing foreign policy decision-making. The process by which the new Kosovo policy was developed and approved, from an American perspective, involved essentially five steps:

- 1) Development of new policy by Albright and the US State Department;
- 2) Approval by the US National Security Principals;
- 3) Approval by the US President;
- 4) Approval by US Congress (in the case of war); and
- 5) Approval by other NATO members.

At each step along the chain of approval, there is evidence showing that the media influenced a shift in the political landscape and enabled a policy of military intervention to be approved. While the State Department under Albright was in favour of a military solution for some time, the Racak massacre dramatically strengthened its short-term bargaining position, and gave it a window of opportunity to push its position forward. According to Albright, “That still something like Racak could happen I think was really energizing to all of us to say we can’t go on like this, this requires a larger plan.”<sup>501</sup> That plan was presented several days later to the National Security team, where Albright had little resistance in pushing for the new policy. According to National Security Advisor Sam Berger, who was present at this meeting, “Racak was so brutal that I think there was...a much clearer sense that we had to take action.”<sup>502</sup> The new policy also did not have any opposition by the President, who approved the proposal the next day and then engaged on a campaign to sell the policy to European allies. A similar sentiment was also present in many European capitals.<sup>503</sup> For example, in

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<sup>501</sup> Boyer, Kirk, and Young, *War in Europe*.

<sup>502</sup> Ibid.

<sup>503</sup> Although it should be noted that a number of minor differences would remain even into the Rambouillet Conference, such as what role the UN would play and its level of authorisation. In the end, it was decided to seek UN endorsement rather than authorisation for KFOR. Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.80.

Germany – 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>504</sup> Later, he admitted that Racak “became the turning point for me,” and war the only answer.<sup>505</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. This is why earlier demands for the introduction of a resolution by certain members had largely been ignored.<sup>506</sup> There was a remarkable shift, however, amongst many previously opposing members of Congress after the Racak incident. According to Joseph Biden, an influential member in the Senate on foreign policy issues,

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 galvanised public opinion in favour of some Western action.<sup>507</sup>

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<sup>504</sup> Cited in *Ibid.*, p.75.

<sup>505</sup> Worthington, “The Hoax That Started,” p.C6.

<sup>506</sup> Many members of the US Congress, particularly in the Republican Party, were highly critical of Clinton’s foreign policy. They were particularly sceptical of Balkan policy, which had promised to withdraw US troops from Bosnia after only one year of deployment. Congress was also in the middle of the Presidential impeachment process, and was suspicious of potential executive attempts to use external conflict to shift attention.

<sup>507</sup> Joseph R. Biden, “Foreword,” in *The Kosovo Conflict: A Diplomatic History through Documents*, ed. Philip E. Auerswald and David P. Auerswald (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000), p.xiv.

In the immediate aftermath of Racak, there was a reinvigorated sense of outrage in the US Legislature. Describing images he had witnessed on television, House of Representative Steny Hoyer said several days after the Racak massacre,

...Ambassador Walker called it genocide, which truly it was, a crime against humanity – people lying on the ground, children, women shot at close range, in their faces and in the backs of their heads...Mr Speaker, we focus on a lot of things in America, but we need to focus on the fact that we are the leader. And in that position we have a responsibility to come together with the rest of Europe to make sure that genocide has a consequence, that genocide is stopped, and people are saved.<sup>508</sup>

The main Congressional debates that showed that the political ground had clearly shifted towards military intervention took place in March before the NATO bombing began. During these debates, it was apparent that Racak and other images of atrocity and suffering played a significant role in promoting this shift, as members of Congress often referred to them as part of their rationale for supporting US military action through NATO. While these debates occurred outside the 16 January to 15 February timeframe, their content, in relation to the CNN effect, will be reviewed under this phase because they link more closely to the post-Racak sentiments that were stalled by a final attempt at diplomacy at Rambouillet.

The first of these debates occurred in the House of Representatives on 11 March. At stake was House Concurrent Resolution 42 regarding the use of US Armed

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<sup>508</sup> *America Must Ensure That Genocide Is Stopped*, Remarks by House Representative Steny H. Hoyer, 106th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 145 (19 January, 1999): H 252

Forces as part of a NATO peacekeeping operation implementing a Kosovo peace agreement.<sup>509</sup> This ten-hour marathon session involved arguments from dozens of House Representatives both in favour of and against the use of US peacekeepers in Kosovo. Those in support often claimed to have been swayed by media images of Racak and other Kosovo tragedies. In one of the first comments supporting intervention, Congressman David Bonior of Michigan brought up Racak, stating,

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of January, at Racak, Serbian special police shot at least 15 ethnic Albanians including elderly people and children...Why would Milosevic do anything but stall, not agree to a peace agreement, if the United States Congress says in a vote later today, if this rule passes, that we, in fact, will not deploy troops? We will be giving him the green light, and we will be seeing more Racaks.<sup>510</sup>

Later in the session, Congresswoman Jackson-Lee of Texas made an emotional appeal in favour of intervention, describing how the American people had been touched by the plight and suffering of the Kosovo Albanians:

There is not one that has not watched the bloodshed, has seen the reports of massacres, seen the untold graves that have been discovered, there is not one American that does not realize that we hold a very privileged position in this world. It is one where others look to us...Despite the seriousness of this conflict there are those who oppose the use of troops. I wonder if those who are opposed

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<sup>509</sup> It should be noted that this debate was made more complex and controversial due to the fact that it took place in the latter stages of the Rambouillet Conference, when the final outcome was not determined. Many members of Congress, as a result, raised questions as to the appropriateness of the measure, given its potential to damage the negotiations. *Peacekeeping Operations in Kosovo Resolution*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 145 (11 March, 1999): H 1179-250.

<sup>510</sup> *Ibid.*, Remarks by House Representative David E. Bonior: H 1182.

to the use of troops are paying attention to the daily reports of atrocities, as some 2,000 people have been killed.<sup>511</sup>

Many of the images and stories from television also went beyond the collective atrocities and attempted to emotionally connect with the Kosovo Albanians, making them easier to understand and relate to for the average Westerner. Florida Congressman Alcee Hastings described one such example:

Last night on ABC News, seven little boys stood without their mother and father in Kosovo who had done nothing but go somewhere to look for food. I stand here to say that I am committed with those seven children in the hopes that somewhere along the way we can provide what is necessary for peace and stability through our efforts in the NATO alliance to ensure that they grow up and, yes, become just as free as all of us in this great country.<sup>512</sup>

At 10:00 pm, after a full day of debate, a vote was taken in the House of Representatives that passed Concurrent Resolution 42 in support of US Peacekeepers in Kosovo: 218 in favour, 205 against, 10 abstentions.

In the Senate, the major debate on the question of supporting Kosovo military intervention occurred on 23 March, literally hours before NATO bombers were to begin their mission. Unlike the resolution in the House, final attempts at diplomacy had already failed, and military intervention was imminent.

Concurrent Resolution 21 authorised “the President of the United States to

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<sup>511</sup> Ibid., Remarks by House Representative Sheila Jackson Lee: H 1207-08.

<sup>512</sup> Ibid., Remarks by House Representative Alcee L. Hastings: H 1236.

conduct military air operations and missile strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).”<sup>513</sup>

Media images clearly seemed to play a role in the decision making of some lawmakers during this debate, as manifested by their comments. In one example, Paul Wellstone recalled a story he had read in the *New York Times*, and referred to Racak and other related images in making his case for military intervention. According to the Senator,

As we all know, Milosevic has already carried out numerous massacres and other atrocities in Kosovo, including the killing of more than 40 ethnic Albanian civilians in the village of Racak in January. Right now, there are tens of thousands of refugees on the move in Kosovo. These refugees are facing very basic problems of survival. They lack shelter. They need blankets and stoves. The fighting has knocked out the electricity and water supplies. There are people right now huddling in cellars, and in unfinished houses, with their families. According to an account in the *New York Times*, people who are refugees themselves are giving shelter to refugees. One family is giving shelter to 80 people...It is almost certain that we will soon be hearing more stories of massacres and displacements, of women and children and elderly men being summarily executed, and of further atrocities...I find it hard to stand by and let Milosevic continue with his relentless campaign of destruction.<sup>514</sup>

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<sup>513</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)*, 106th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 145 (23 March, 1999): S 3110-19.

<sup>514</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)*, Remarks by Senator Paul Wellstone, 106th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 145 (23 March, 1999): S 3113.



Senator Barbara Mikulski of Maryland, another supporter of Concurrent Resolution 21, was also cognisant of the images from Racak in her support of military action:

Reports from last night indicate that further humanitarian catastrophes are imminent. Serbia is moving aggressively to overrun and drive thousands more ethnic Albanians from their homes. The Serbs have deployed 40,000 army and police units in Kosovo. Over the past weekend, over 10,000 Kosovo Albanians were forced to flee their homes fearing for their lives. And for good reason: a brutal Serbian attack on the village of Racak in January resulted in the death of 45 civilians. Some of my colleagues have argued that we should consider military action only if further humanitarian atrocities occur. We cannot wait for genocide to occur before we act.<sup>515</sup>

Concurrent Resolution 21 was passed in the US Senate on 23 March with 58 supporters, 41 opponents, and 1 abstention. Although its passage was not mandatory to commence Western military action over Kosovo, it provided a critical endorsement for the Clinton administration, indicating broad national support for the government's policy. At all levels, it seemed, media images were mentioned as a factor influencing decision-makers to support the military intervention.

### **Phase 7 – 15 February to 24 March**

The Rambouillet conference dominated the period between mid-February and the beginning of the NATO intervention. To some observers, the conference was

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<sup>515</sup> Ibid., Remarks by Senator Barbara A. Mikulski: S 3116.

really a prelude to war, as the West attempted to impose conditions that would almost certainly be rejected by the FRY, including foreign troops on Serbian soil. Rambouillet subsequently received much criticism for being too one-sided in favour of the Kosovo Albanians, offering no carrots to the Serb side and no effective sticks against the Albanian side.<sup>516</sup>

In attending the conference, organisers assumed that both parties implicitly agreed to a 26-point plan that was presented. This plan was the latest draft of Chris Hill's 3-year interim settlement. Some of its leading principles included self-government for Kosovo, democratically elected institutions, respect for human rights, and an end to violence. While both sides agreed to these points in principle, they disagreed on their specific implementation. The Kosovo Albanians sought to gain political rights in the short term and the right for outright independence in the long term, while the FRY argued that Albanians were only one of many ethnic groups in Kosovo. From the FRY position, the autonomy granted to Albanians after 1974 led to a dictatorship by this majority ethnic group, and they opposed going back to a similar arrangement. The thrust of their position was that all ethnic groups should be treated equally, including minority groups in Kosovo, like Serbs, Turks, and Roma. Due to the diverse ethnic nature of the FRY delegation, it was called Belgrade's "rainbow coalition."<sup>517</sup> This difference in interpretation, in a way, was only the smaller problem at Rambouillet. The larger problem related to the security aspects of the agreement, as NATO and the Albanian side insisted on an international force led by NATO to

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<sup>516</sup> Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, p.84.

<sup>517</sup> *Ibid.*, p.79.

implement the settlement on the ground in Kosovo, while the FRY made it clear that they would never accept such an outcome.

After two weeks, neither side agreed to the demands of the settlement. What was particularly embarrassing for Western powers was the refusal of the Kosovo Albanian delegation to sign, as it was their cause for which they had risked their political capital. The Albanians were concerned about demands for KLA demilitarisation and insisted that a referendum on the final status of Kosovo be conducted at the end of the three-year period, knowing full well that the Albanian majority would endorse independence. To push the Albanians to sign, Albright personally joined the talks at Rambouillet and made it clear to the Albanians that failure to sign would lead to the withdrawal of Western support for their cause. Although the majority of the delegation agreed to sign, a 29-year-old KLA leader named Hashim Thaci, who was elected as the leader of the delegation, refused. To buy time, the Kosovar delegation asked for an extension to consult their people. To accommodate this request, the deadline was extended to 15 March, when the conference was to reconvene in Paris. Over this time, the West effectively pressured Thaci and the Albanian delegation to sign the agreement. Significantly, however, it also presented the Albanians with a carrot that would alleviate their major concern – a final settlement after the three-year interim period of the agreement that the Albanians could interpret as a vote on

independence.<sup>518</sup> With this concession, the Albanian side finally signed the agreement on 18 March, three days after the conference reconvened. The Serbs, for their part, continued to resist pressure to allow foreign troops into the FRY and even hardened their position in the political side of the agreement, altering 70 percent of the text in a counter-offer.<sup>519</sup> Table 7-5 summarises the key changes in Western policy in Phase seven, based on an assessment by policy aspect:

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<sup>518</sup> The actual text read, "Three years after entry into force of this Agreement, an international meeting shall be convened to determine a mechanism for a final settlement for Kosovo, on the basis of the will of the people, opinions of relevant authorities, each Party's efforts regarding the implementation of this Agreement, and the Helsinki Final Act, and to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of this Agreement and to consider proposals by any Party for additional measures." Interim Agreement for Peace and Self-Government in Kosovo, 23 February 1999. Cited in *Ibid.*, p.86.

<sup>519</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.77-84.

**Table 7-5: Change in Western Policy Aspects between Phases 6 and 7**

	Phase 6	Phase 7
<b>Strategic Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autonomous Kosovo protectorate based on interim settlement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autonomous Kosovo protectorate based on interim settlement</li> <li>• Final status meeting in three years</li> </ul>
<b>Tactical Policy A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend international conference and sign interim settlement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign interim settlement</li> </ul>
<b>Tactical Policy B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ultimatum threatening force if Serbs do not sign settlement</li> <li>• Withdraw support if Albanians do not sign settlement</li> <li>• Enforce settlement with international implementation force</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ultimatum threatening force if Serbs do not sign settlement</li> <li>• Withdraw support if Albanians do not sign settlement</li> <li>• Enforce settlement with international implementation force</li> </ul>

Realising that it was unlikely to risk its political capital by abandoning the Kosovo Albanians, as threatened, Hashim Thaci correctly called the West's bluff by refusing to sign the interim settlement at Rambouillet. This move, in the end, paid a fantastic dividend for the Kosovars in the form of a major concession tantamount to a vague promise of Kosovo independence. Whereas the West had always refused to entertain the idea of Kosovo independence both before and after the start of the Kosovo civil war, it now found itself pressured to concede this point to win Albanian's support and prevent its credibility from unravelling. Though subtle in form, hidden in the text of a document, this concession represented an important change in the West's strategic Kosovo policy. It also showed, in line with the findings in the fourth phase, that not all shifts in policy during the prelude to the Kosovo military intervention were related to the CNN effect. Other tactical aspects of the West's foreign policy remained consistent with the sixth phase.

The acceptance by the Albanian side and rejection by the FRY brought the West to the position that many critics subsequently suggested was Albright's ultimate aim ever since Racak – a NATO military intervention in Kosovo on the side of the Albanians. In the final days before the air campaign began, a last-ditch effort was made to pressure Milosevic to accept the Rambouillet agreement. But this attempt again failed, as the Serbian leader still refused to budge on the issue of foreign troops anywhere in the FRY. According to Richard Holbrooke, who was sent on this final mission to present the West's terms, "There was an air of resignation to him, and we sat alone in this big, empty palace, surrounded by these inherited Rembrandts and other art left over from earlier regimes...You're absolutely clear

what will happen when we leave?...And he said, very quietly... 'Yes. You'll bomb us'.<sup>520</sup>

Once it became clear that military action was inevitable and foreign policy became one of war, the images that had pushed the West towards intervention changed their role and became instruments for the promotion of official policy through the propaganda effect. These images were also evoked on many occasions over the 78 days of bombing, along with new ones from the mass Kosovar expulsions and refugee camps along the borders of Kosovo, which collectively played an important role in maintaining public Western support for the intervention.

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<sup>520</sup> Boyer, Kirk, and Young, *War in Europe*.

## Conclusion

Despite reaching its first decade as an area of study, globalization is still a relatively new subject for research at the beginning of the twenty first century. While much of the 1990s literature focused on the subject in relation to the fields of economics and sociology/cultural studies, the onset of the 1999 NATO-led war over Kosovo demonstrated that globalization was also increasingly relevant in the domain of warfare, especially in regard to its alleged transformation. Beginning with the 1991 Gulf War and through to the Kosovo conflict, a number of innovations often associated with globalization were clearly changing the spatio-temporal dimensions of war. Some of these novelties, such as global positioning system-based guided weapons, satellite imagery and cyber-warfare, were important aspects of the battlefield and battlespace itself. Other advancements, however, impacted the way wars were presented to and understood by the societies participating in them. As modern war is a social activity, transformations in this latter aspect could no doubt be just as critical as the battle itself in determining the means by which a war is executed and its potential outcome.

This dissertation has attempted to bridge the gap between the fields of globalization and war by assessing the impact of globalization on war. It has done this by reviewing one specific case study of this relationship in the late 1990s – the impact of the CNN effect, as a manifestation of globalization, on the prelude of the Kosovo military intervention. This concluding chapter contains three sections: the first summarises the main findings of the dissertation's seven



chapters; the second addresses the main questions put forward in the introduction; and the third suggests areas of future research that could provide additional insights on the findings of this study.

## **Review of Chapters**

This study was divided into two sections. The first was primarily theoretical, while the second was largely empirical, involving a case study. In the first section, three subjects critical to this dissertation were introduced, analysed and linked over four chapters: globalization, the CNN effect, and war, respectively. These areas traditionally entail relatively distinct bodies of literature and, at first glance, may appear incongruent. However, given the vast array of impacts that globalization is alleged to have on war and the impossibility of comprehensively covering all of them, the CNN effect was considered to be an effective bridge by which some of globalization's alleged impacts on war, represented by third-party military interventions, could be operationalised and assessed.

The first chapter developed a particular definition of globalization through a unique approach and then reviewed additional factors that could provide further conceptual clarity. This method was based on reviewing the globalization literature to identify some of its leading shortcomings in relation to attempts to define the concept. These deficiencies were then identified as criteria that a more rigorous definition of globalization had to meet. The three criteria derived from the literature were novelty, empiricism, and globality, and based on these, a definition of globalization with two main components was developed. The first involved the recognition of novel processes of interconnectedness involving new

levels of reach, density, speed and frequency. The second related to an ontological transformation of time and space perception to new global frames of reference. After developing this definition of globalization, the first chapter reviewed the causes of globalization, distinguished the process from its content, and then assessed the role of fragmentation in the process. This last section suggested that globalization and fragmentation were part of the same process, not opposing forces as widely believed. Globalization, as such, could not be fully explained without acknowledging its inherent processes of relativisation, based on the cultural characteristics of particular localities influenced by its encroachment.

The second chapter introduced and defined the CNN effect, and described how it could be understood as a manifestation of globalization. This link made the CNN effect a useful instrument for operationalising globalization, which by itself was an abstract and overarching concept. The CNN effect, it was argued, was a tangible manifestation of globalization as it met the three criteria outlined in chapter one. In terms of novelty, the transcontinental news networks behind the CNN effect represent a novel means of news-gathering and dissemination, with empirically verifiable advancements in reach, density, speed and frequency. More importantly, however, these networks enabled globality, the third criterion of globalization. This globality, however, is relativised based on culturally bound interpretations, referred to in the media literature as framing, favouring certain interpretations over others.

The third chapter assessed how the CNN effect can be demonstrated, by first reviewing leading approaches in the literature and then developing a new means

for validation, referred to as the challenging CNN effect model. This model, which incorporates the strengths of existing methods, requires three media and two government criteria to be met as the basis for evidence in support of the CNN effect. On the media side, factors required are media access to a zone of conflict or human suffering, unexpected and emotive images, and sympathetic framing towards a particular party that are presented as victims, making official policy appear ineffective or misguided. On the government side, the two requirements are changes in government policy immediately after incidents meeting the media criteria for a CNN effect and comments by policy decision makers linking such potential policy changes to media images and framing. In providing evidence in support of these two latter points, four research methods were employed, referred to as the quantitative, coding, policy substance and linkage tests.

The CNN effect, of course, is not purely an instrumental process, but is influenced by a number of macro factors that shape the likelihood of its emergence. These include the political culture of the country where the media is based, the geopolitical context in which it operates, the political costs associated with potential military interventions and the degree of political commitment a government has to its official policy. Finally, the chapter concluded by reviewing the indexing hypothesis and hegemonic theory. While the findings of these research approaches to date see little potential for independent media influence, as put forward by the CNN effect thesis, it is argued that this outcome is partially a function of the limited methods employed by researchers, and a lack of attention to the cultural dimension.

The fourth chapter assessed the impact of the CNN effect on war by using one interpretation of the Clausewitzian trinity to identify the different areas that the CNN effect is likely to impact in relation to war. According to Clausewitz, war is a social activity involving three pillars: the people, the military and the government. As such, the CNN effect, if it is a factor, will influence the people through public opinion, the military through its tactics and strategy, and the government through its diplomacy and foreign policy. In considering how the CNN effect influences foreign policy – the key area of assessment in this dissertation – the chapter distinguished between policy formulation and implementation, policy process and substance, and between different aspects of foreign policy. It also assessed when different media effects are likely to influence policy in the context of a third-party military intervention.

The second section of the dissertation built on the theoretical framework presented in the first and assessed the CNN effect during the prelude to the 1999 NATO intervention over Kosovo. Before initiating the case study, the historical background and the macro factors influencing the likelihood of the CNN effect were outlined. These circumstances, based largely on the time and place in which the crisis occurred, made Kosovo susceptible to a potential CNN effect. In terms of place, Kosovo was in the former Yugoslavia and under the control of the Slobodan Milosevic regime – a government already vilified in the West for past behaviour. In terms of time, the Kosovo civil war erupted at a time in which the West perceived itself as relatively secure from major threats to its security and vital interests. Had the events occurred during the Cold War or after 11

September 2001, the potential of a CNN effect would have likely been much weaker.

The fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of the dissertation used the challenging CNN effect model outlined in the third chapter to assess the CNN effect on Western foreign policy regarding Kosovo during the period between 1 January 1998 and 24 March 1999. The fifth chapter, which focused on the media criteria for a CNN effect, identified the massacres of the Drenica region (28 February – 7 March 1998), Gornje Obrinje (26 September 1998), and Racak (15 January 1999), as incidents meeting the criteria. The territory where each of these incidents occurred was accessible to journalists in the immediate aftermath of the massacres, allowing them to capture images that were unexpected and emotive. These images, consequently, were framed in a sympathetic manner to the Kosovo Albanians, who were identified as victims, and thus challenged existing Western policy, making it appear ineffective and misguided.

The chapter next assessed the significance of the incidents versus the importance bequeathed on them by the media, to determine if the events or their coverage was key. In all three cases, it found that the events were relatively insignificant to the overall death and destruction that occurred during the Kosovo civil war. Whereas the massacres, by one measure, were the basis of almost half of all Kosovo television coverage over the period, they represented less than 8% of the Kosovo Albanian deaths and less than 3% of villages destroyed. As such, their salience was largely a function of the fact that the media captured them, not because the events were critical to the crisis, making the media the variable of significance.

The fifth chapter also found that there was an “accumulating effect” in Kosovo’s media coverage, as the media gave more prominence to Kosovo as the massacres repeated and policy moved closer to war.

The sixth and seventh chapter turned to the second part of the challenging CNN effect model and reviewed the government criteria during the prelude to NATO intervention. The sixth chapter assessed the period in its entirety and employed the quantitative and coding tests. The seventh chapter divided this period into seven phases, and used the policy substance and linkage tests to seek evidence supporting the CNN effect. Overall, the two chapters found substantial evidence supporting the CNN effect in the aftermath of the three massacres in Kosovo. They also highlighted the multi-causal nature of policy change in Kosovo, which was driven by other factors besides the CNN effect.

In the sixth chapter, the quantitative test highlighted clear spikes in government activity in the periods immediately after the massacres. In the two-week period after these three massacres, for example, which only accounted for nine percent of the total timeline, 22 percent of all government actions took place. In the four-week period afterwards, which covered 19 percent of the period, 37 percent of government actions were recorded. In the coding test, framing, blame and the propensity for intervention were monitored in Western government documents over the study’s timeline. The framing of events began with a significant degree of neutrality in early 1998, as Western governments attempted to represent the perspectives of both sides or remain neutral. In the aftermath of the massacres, and as the timeline moved closer to war, however, framing became much more

pro-Albanian. The same trends were detected in the assignment of blame.

Although blame for the violence was initially assigned more evenly between the FRY and KLA, it increasingly focused solely on the Serbian side after the massacres and as events drove closer to war. A similar pattern was discernable regarding the propensity for intervention, as documents initially made no mention of a military option, then mentioned it as a last resort if diplomacy failed, and then openly threatened it unless the FRY agreed to the West's terms.

In the seventh chapter, the policy substance test identified notable changes in the West's Kosovo policy in all three of the periods immediately following incidents meeting the media criteria for the CNN effect. After the Drenica massacres, a policy that had largely favoured conciliatory measures towards the FRY dramatically shifted emphasis towards sanctions in order to achieve its aims of fostering dialogue between the two sides and achieving meaningful Kosovo autonomy. After the Gornje Obrinje massacre, policy was dramatically strengthened with a NATO activation order that involved the credible threat of force for the first time and a strict international monitoring force. After Racak, which recorded the most dramatic policy shift of the entire period, changes again took place at tactical levels. But this time, for the first time since the start of the Kosovo civil war, an important change in the West's strategic policy was also made. This involved support for a Kosovo protectorate as a means of achieving Kosovo autonomy. As it had now become clear that the conflicting sides on the ground were no closer to reaching agreement through dialogue than at the beginning of the civil war, Western policy, in essence, decided to force the parties to comply with its resolution, a compromised remedy which neither side desired.

Finally, through the linkage test, the seventh chapter also showed evidence connecting policy decision making with media images and framing in the aftermath of the Kosovo massacres, based on the comments of key policy decision makers who made such connections in their comments and statements.

### **Insights on Dissertation Questions**

In the introduction of this dissertation, the following five questions were outlined:

- 1) What is the impact of globalization on war?
- 2) What insights does this study provide on globalization?
- 3) How does the CNN effect operate?
- 4) What is the impact of the CNN effect on foreign policy decision-making?
- 5) Did the CNN effect play a role in the NATO decision to intervene militarily over Kosovo?

This section of the conclusion addresses these questions in reverse order, beginning with the Kosovo case study and moving to the first question. This order is employed because it is from the case study that insights on the more theoretical questions are derived. For each question, this section first highlights some of the main findings from the dissertation and then elaborates on how these might add insights to the existing literature on the subject.



### **The CNN Effect and the Prelude to Kosovo Intervention**

The evidence reviewed in this dissertation's case study demonstrates that the CNN effect, as defined and qualified in this dissertation, influenced NATO's decision to intervene militarily in Kosovo. In reaching this conclusion, the dissertation used a model established in the third chapter for qualifying cases of the CNN effect.

This model was based on meeting five measures from which evidence in support of the CNN effect could be derived. Over the fifteen months before the NATO intervention, three specific incidents involving massacres of Kosovo Albanians met these five conditions. Each incident opened a window of opportunity in which policy shifted incrementally towards military intervention.

Since the end of hostilities, a number of diplomats have dismissed the notion that the media influenced Western policy in the period before the intervention.

Alexander Vershbow, the US Ambassador to NATO at the time, for example, has stated, "I don't think it [media] made a big difference...I think from the outset...my government was seized by the political and regional consequences [of the crisis]...and with protecting our investment in Bosnia."<sup>521</sup> A detailed review of policy just before and immediately after each incident, however, seems to contradict this assertion, as the following summary of policy before and after each incident shows.

The Drenica massacres occurred between 28 February 1998 and 6 March 1998, with the largest massacre in the village of Prekaz on 5 and 6 March, in which the

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<sup>521</sup> Interview with Alexander Vershbow, cited in Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, p.145.

Jashari family was eliminated. Only one week before the outbreak of violence, Robert Gelbard, the US Special Representative to the FRY, travelled to Pristina and Belgrade, where he made a number of concessions to the FRY for its cooperation over Bosnia. He also explicitly called the KLA a terrorist organisation. While the West sought more autonomy for Kosovo, the concessions were clearly another move towards the normalisation of relations with the FRY that began in 1996. Only two weeks later on 9 March 1998, however, the US was at the forefront of reintroducing new sanctions, while withdrawing the concessions it had offered earlier. A review of the period between these two policy moves reveals that only one major event in Kosovo occurred - the Drenica massacres.

A similar policy shift occurred between late September and mid October 1998 after the Gornje Obrinje massacre. The latest Western policy shift on Kosovo before the massacre was formalised on 23 and 24 September, through UN Security Council Resolution 1199 and a NATO activation warning (ACTWARD). These actions, which resulted from weeks of negotiations, represented a strengthening of the policy position against the FRY, in comparison to policy during July and August. Yet within two weeks of the Gornje Obrinje massacre, this already-strengthened stance was again escalated by a NATO activation order (ACTORD) on 13 October, making air strikes imminent unless the FRY pulled troops back and agreed to international monitoring. In reviewing the activities over the period between the NATO activation warning and activation order, only one incident clearly stands out – the Gornje Obrinje massacre and

reactions to it. In fact, the genesis of Hoolbrooke's shuttle diplomacy, which was eventually backed up with the activation warning, was the emergency NSC meeting called in the United States the day after images of Gornje Obrinje reached the West.

Perhaps the starkest example of policy shift in relation to media images and framing occurred after the Racak massacre of 15 January 1999. On that very day, unaware of the events almost 5,000 miles away, the NSC was meeting in the basement of the White House to discuss Kosovo. Despite protests by Albright for a tougher policy, the decision was made to largely maintain the status quo, with only minor revisions to the existing policy. Only four days later, however, Kosovo policy experienced the most dramatic shift towards war since the beginning of hostilities ten months earlier, adopting a position that envisioned a Kosovo protectorate secured by NATO peacekeepers – a policy that would be enforced by the military if necessary. At the 19 January meeting, Albright found that her policy proposal, a formula that would have been considered outrageous by her NSC colleagues just four days before, faced little resistance.

Perhaps what was most striking about these three incidents and the policy shifts that followed them was their relative insignificance to the overall death and destruction in the Kosovo civil war. As mentioned earlier, these incidents accounted for less than 8 percent of deaths and 3 percent of villages destroyed over the period under review. Yet by one measure, they accounted for 48 percent of media coverage and 38 percent of government actions. Clearly, the media images and framing of these incidents made events that might otherwise be

relatively ordinary in the context of such a conflict stand out and be extraordinary in their consequences for policy influence.

Despite the role of the CNN effect as an influencing variable on policy, other factors and drivers were also certainly important. There can be no doubt that the political and regional issues that Alexander Vershbow and others have mentioned were also key. In fact, the findings of this dissertation's case study show that the CNN effect was only one factor pressuring policy towards intervention. Other variables relating to the actual fighting in Kosovo and its consequences on civilians also contributed. These other drivers, which garnered limited or no media coverage, were the basis for more traditional government-driven actions that, in some cases, were followed by media coverage. One example of this occurred in late May to mid June 1998. At the beginning of this period, Yugoslav forces that had shown restraint over the previous two months to appease the West, found the KLA gaining strength and taking control of territory in Kosovo, particularly around the Albanian border that had become a supply line for arms. In response, FRY forces launched a counteroffensive to retake KLA positions. This campaign, however, which only garnered scant media coverage, led to a strong government reaction involving NATO air exercise "Determined Falcon" on the borders of Kosovo. This NATO action received significant media coverage and was a clear example of the media taking its queue from official government action.

In the literature on the Kosovo civil war, and especially the West's road to intervention, little is mentioned regarding the CNN effect in the shifting of policy

towards war.<sup>522</sup> The literature that deals with the role of the media focused largely on its propagandist character after the decision to intervene and during the NATO air campaign. This literature is largely critical, arguing that the media failed to question government policy, being too supportive and compliant.<sup>523</sup> Of the three massacres that this dissertation identifies as crucial to policy shift, only the last one at Racak is identified in the literature for its significant role in pushing policy towards intervention. But even on Racak, the literature did not indicate that it was significant largely because of the way it was presented and framed by Western media. Focus in the literature is on the event itself, which, as shown, was relatively insignificant in the overall crisis.<sup>524</sup>

### **The CNN Effect and Foreign Policy**

Examination of the fifteen-month period before NATO intervention in Kosovo confirmed the competitive nature of foreign policy decision-making, as suggested by the bureaucratic model of foreign policy analysis. In terms of the West's foreign policy options in relation to the FRY, at one end of the spectrum was the possibility of full normalisation of relations. The West began this period close to this policy position. At the other end of the spectrum was a position of full support for Kosovo Albanian independence, likely requiring military force for its implementation. The West ended this period closer to this position. So what

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<sup>522</sup> This case study relied extensively on original documents from the period (press statements/releases, newspaper articles). The majority of the literature on the Kosovo war focused on the period of the NATO intervention itself (the 78 days of bombing), not its prelude. Two good sources that did cover the period of this dissertation's case study at some depth were Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society* and Daalder and O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*.

<sup>523</sup> One publication that criticises the West, in general, and the media in particular is Philip Hammond and Edward S. Herman, eds., *Degraded Capacity: The Media and the Kosovo Crisis* (London: Pluto Press, 2000).

<sup>524</sup> Racak by itself represented only about 2% of the total deaths and less than 1% of the total destruction during the civil war.

caused the change? How did the most powerful alliance in the world shift policy so quickly along this range, and did the CNN effect play a role? This dissertation provides evidence that supports the conclusion that the CNN effect did play an important role on this path of policy change. After the Drenica area massacres, Madeleine Albright desired a tougher policy against Serbia. At that stage, however, she found herself pushing against a mountain of resistance both in the United States and Europe. In the United States, opposition against military intervention was nearly unanimous at both the NSC and Congress. The same was true in Europe amongst NATO allies, where the military option was never on the table in early discussions over the Kosovo crisis. Over the next year, however, each CNN effect incident, along with more traditional government-driven actions based on events from the conflict zone, continually strengthened the intervention option, gradually moving policy towards this end of the policy option spectrum. After images from the Gornje Obrinje massacre surfaced, Albright garnered the approval of the NSC and some key NATO members for bombing, while resistance in Congress remained strong. After the Racak images, however, most resistance amongst the levers of power both in the US and Europe temporarily weakened, allowing Albright to push decisively for the intervention option.

In assessing the periods when policy moved closer towards intervention due to the influence of recent media images and framing, it is important to note that they were based on temporary windows of opportunity created within an emotional climate. Albright and her team of advisors seemed cognisant both of this reality and of the fact that if policy were not pushed forward during such occasions, it could be lost as the emotions surrounding events evaporated. After Racak, for

example, they realised that the galvanizing effect of the massacre would not last long; as one advisor stated: “Whatever threat of force you don’t get in the next two weeks you’re never getting, at least until the next Racak.”<sup>525</sup>

The post Racak period was reminiscent of the post-Srebrenica period, when a sense of frustration with the failings of existing policy allowed opportunities for those proposing a tougher, more interventionist, policy to gain bargaining power and push their agenda. Just as Racak gave Albright the leverage needed to push for military intervention in Kosovo, Srebrenica gave Anthony Lake weight to press for a tougher US Bosnia policy in July 1995.<sup>526</sup> The policy became the basis for the bombing of Bosnian Serb positions several months later.

Furthermore, the climate created during such periods often pushed politicians and institutions to using rhetoric that would lock them on a path they might not have endorsed in less passionate times. Once they were associated with these new positions, however, concern over maintaining credibility meant that they could not retreat, even at the risk of putting themselves in an endgame that made confrontation unavoidable. In some cases, such outcomes could have been reactionary, with unforeseen consequences. At other periods, however, the outcomes may very well have been a deliberate and calculated tactic to gain advantage over rivals in the competitive policy environment. According to an Albright aide, there was a conscious effort to “lead by rhetoric,” after the Drenica massacres, in order to bring NATO allies, the American public, and most

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<sup>525</sup> Gellman, “Slaughter in Racak.”

<sup>526</sup> Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News*, p.83.

important, other members of the NSC, on side.<sup>527</sup> Not surprisingly, Albright's statements at this time created anxiety in the Pentagon and White House.

According to a colleague, Sandy Berger was particularly concerned that Albright was promising more than the President was willing to deliver.<sup>528</sup>

Regarding the relationship between images leading to the CNN effect and official policy, the case study demonstrated that certain images could take on a chameleon-like quality, shifting from a challenge to official policy to propaganda supporting official policy, once policy changed. The Racak images, for example, challenged official policy (which was Status Quo Plus on 15 January 1999) when they emerged on 16 January 1999. Once the NSC and President Clinton endorsed the new tougher policy, those same images became the propaganda instruments for selling the policy to the American public and sceptics in Congress. On 19 March 1999, several months after Racak, for example, Clinton referred to the massacres in powerful rhetoric, stating,

We should remember what happened in the village of Racak back in January – innocent men, women and children taken from their homes to a gully, forced to kneel in the dirt, sprayed with gunfire – not because of anything they had done, but because of who they were...Our firmness is the only thing standing between them and countless more villages like Racak...Make no mistake, if we and our allies do not have the will to act, there will be more massacres.<sup>529</sup>

Finally, this dissertation demonstrated the CNN effect's influence on foreign

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<sup>527</sup> Gellman, "Slaughter in Racak."

<sup>528</sup> Ibid.

<sup>529</sup> William Jefferson Clinton, *Presidential Press Conference*, Washington, DC, 19 March, 1999.



policy to be multi-faceted, often having a greater impact on tactical aspects of policy than strategic, in the context of third-party military interventions. In chapter four, policy was segmented into three aspects – strategic, tactical A, and tactical B. Strategic policy could be determined by answering the question: What end(s) is the policy trying to accomplish? Tactical policy A could be established by answering the question: What must the parties on the ground do to reach the end(s) of the strategic policy? Tactical policy B related to the actions of the external parties and could be identified by answering the question: What must we (the external third parties) do to push the parties on the ground to implement tactical policy A? In chapter seven, the West's policy was reviewed based on these classifications over the fifteen-month period before the launch of NATO air operations against the FRY. Over this period, which was segmented into seven distinct phases, tactical policy A and B each changed during four of the phases, while strategic policy changed in two. In relation to the three periods immediately following events meeting the media criteria for the CNN effect, both tactical policy A and B changed each time, while strategic policy changed only once after the Racak massacre. Based on this case study, there is evidence to suggest that the CNN effect's influence on foreign policy most often impacts tactical aspects, with strategic aspects, which tend to be more entrenched, only changing with repeated exposed episodes of policy implementation failure.

Throughout the 1990s right up to the Racak massacre, the West's strategic Kosovo policy had always been to re-establish Kosovo autonomy, in line with the autonomy that Milosevic took away in 1989. To attain this end, the West encouraged the parties on the ground to negotiate in order to reach a settlement.

Throughout the first ten months of the Kosovo civil war, the West continued to hope that the two sides could somehow reach an agreement on their own. After the Drenica and Gornje Obrinje televised massacre aftermaths, the West continued to push for the same end, while changing the tactical aspects of its policy. After the images and framing from the Racak massacre, however, it became apparent that the strategic policy itself was insufficiently defined and inadequate in scope. Without a more comprehensive overhaul of policy, including its strategic aspects, it was widely believed that more Racaks were inevitable. As such, a revised policy had to incorporate what the two parties could not achieve on their own – a political plan. This plan would be based on an interim settlement devised by the West that included a Kosovo protectorate, which would be implemented and safeguarded by force, if necessary.

### **Insights on the CNN Effect**

This dissertation has focused primarily on a novel understanding of the CNN effect, termed the “challenging effect,” and identified a novel means of qualifying cases of this effect through five criteria. The case study on the prelude to the Kosovo intervention also revealed insights on the pattern by which this effect operates. Two insights, in particular, are worth highlighting at this stage. The first relates to the pattern by which events meeting the media criteria for the CNN effect impact government actions, referred to as the “double-hump” in the dissertation. This pattern involved two successive spikes of government activity, as demonstrated in graphical format in chapter six. The first hump dealt largely with government reactions in the form of condemnations of the incident, while the second related to attempts at imposing a solution. After the Drenica massacres,

for example, the initial hump over denunciations was followed by a solution calling for Serbian troop withdrawals and negotiations between the two sides. This was backed up by a series of threatened sanctions that emerged at a 9 March Contact Group meeting. After the Gornje Obrinje massacre, the attempted solution was the cease-fire and monitoring regime incorporated in the Holbrooke-Milosevic Agreement of 13 October 1999. This was backed up by the threat of NATO air strikes. After the Racak massacre, the solution was an interim settlement based on a Kosovo protectorate under NATO guard. This was again backed up by the threat of NATO force, which was realised once the FRY rejected the imposed solution at Rambouillet. Each attempted solution became tougher than the previous, requiring greater concessions from the Serbian side. The failure of each solution was marked by the onset of the next massacre, which symbolised the previous policy's inability to solve the problem.

The second important insight that this case study demonstrated was that the CNN effect can have an accumulating character, becoming more important to the media and powerful to the government over an extended period with repeated episodes of government policy failure, as manifested by media portrayals. In terms of its growing importance to the media, over the fifteen-month period under review, each of the three massacres drew greater media attention than the previous, as demonstrated by the prominence it garnered as the leading story. Although after the first massacre in Drenica, only 19 percent of coverage on American television was the leading story, by Racak, this figure had increased to 70 percent. Also, media framing over these three incidents became increasingly pro-Albanian, increasing from 41 percent to 86 percent. To American audiences, the Kosovo

civil war was being presented as a crisis that was growing in importance while increasingly becoming the fault of one party – the Serbs.

In terms of its accumulating impact on government activity, several indicators suggest that each massacre made the Kosovo crisis more significant to Western governments. One simple measure that illustrated this trend, of course, was the rising incidence of Kosovo-specific government activity. By totalling all Kosovo-specific government actions, as defined in this dissertation, during the one-month period after each massacre, there was clearly a growing trend, which grew from 17 actions after the Drenica massacre to 30 after Racak. More significant, however, was the degree by which the West was willing to risk using military force to solve the Kosovo problem. The use of force is the ultimate price any state can pay for political objectives. An increase in the propensity to use force, therefore, is a strong proxy of the importance bequeathed on an issue. A comparison of the period reviewed in the case study, especially after each massacre, shows an increasing willingness to employ military force. After the first massacre, Western states were clearly not prepared to seriously consider force. After the Gornje Obrinje massacre, force was considered strongly, although somewhat half-heartedly, as much opposition was still present in a number of NATO member states, including the United States. After Racak, willingness to use force increased significantly as much of the opposition diminished. Another factor that further increased the likelihood of military confrontation and demonstrated the West's growing willingness to risk such an outcome was the escalating demands sought from the FRY government. After Drenica, the West demanded only a withdrawal of certain FRY forces and negotiations for a political

settlement. After Gornje Obrinje, demands for troop withdrawal and a political settlement were accompanied by a 2,000-strong OSCE monitoring regime. After Racak, the Rambouillet Accords stipulated an interim political settlement and full military withdrawal in addition to NATO peacekeeping forces in Kosovo. Additionally, Chapter VII, Appendix B, point 8 of the accords 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. This shall include, but not be limited to, the right of bivouac, maneuver, billet, and utilization of any areas or facilities as required for support, training, and operations.<sup>530</sup>

Some analysts interpreted the inclusion of this point as a *causa belli*.

The accumulating aspect of the CNN effect on a particular issue, which in this dissertation was the Kosovo crisis, also provides a useful insight on research methodology in this area. Much of the case study based research on the CNN effect compares media coverage to policy over relatively short periods, such as several weeks or months. As this case study demonstrates, however, while incremental policy changes are detectable in short episodes, significant shifts, including those involving strategic policy, often take much longer to unfold. Furthermore, the accumulating nature of the CNN effect suggests that repetitive episodes can increase the pressure for policy change. This argument challenges

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<sup>530</sup> *Interim Agreement for Peace and Self-Government in Kosovo, Rambouillet, France, 23 February, 1999.*

much of the conventional thinking on this issue, which suggests a growing numbness to human suffering with repeated exposure of such images.

### **Insights on Globalization**

As a manifestation of globalization, the CNN effect, as applied in this case study, confirms some of the hypotheses outlined earlier in the dissertation regarding globalization. Two points in particular are worth re-emphasising. First, globalization, as manifested through global media networks, often involves the presentation of the same images in different parts of the world. But far from creating homogeneity, as some neoliberal globalization theorists assumed, such images led to a diversity of interpretation and a much more intricate process of global relativisation. A classic case of media images having an effect different from their intended purpose, due to a false assumption of interpretive homogeneity, took place during the Drenica area massacres in early March 1998. As FRY forces fought and killed the Jashari family, they allowed Serbian television to film some of the fighting, destruction, and corpses, believing it would demonstrate their strong position versus rebel leadership, whom the Serbs labelled “terrorists.” A few days later, FRY officials organised a tour of the Drenica area for foreign journalists to again show their route over the KLA. But these images had a very different effect and interpretation in the West from how they were perceived in Serbia. Whereas the Serbs characterised the corpses as terrorist fighters challenging law and order, the West viewed them as primarily civilian victims who sought basic human rights.

At a more conceptual level, this case study also demonstrated that globalization, as manifested through the CNN effect, is not merely a descriptive device, but an independent explanatory variable beyond those forces that caused its emergence. To elaborate, it is important to look at the factors behind globalization and its manifestations, such as the CNN effect. In the first chapter, four drivers of globalization were identified. These included two structural determinants – rationalism and capitalism – and two agency drivers – technological innovation and regulation. Global media networks, such as CNN, as outlined in the second chapter, were created by a combination of these structural and agency factors. But the effects of such networks, such as those outlined in the case study of this dissertation, cannot be explained by those factors that caused the emergence of globalization and global media networks. They can only be explained by the new phenomena, free of the factors that contributed to their emergence. Thus, this study has put forward the case that globalization can be an independent explanatory schema and not just a descriptive one, as some assessments of globalization have suggested.

### **Globalization and War**

This dissertation's primary question sought to understand the impact of globalization on war. Given globalization's vast array of manifestations, the CNN effect was the vehicle chosen to assess this relationship. War, of course, is not only a battle between fighting units, but as Clausewitz and others have written, also a social activity that requires the support of the people, government and military. In the civil war between FRY forces and the KLA from late February 1998 to late March 1999, two battles raged. The first was the actual fighting on

the ground; the second, which ultimately proved to be more important, was for the hearts and minds of outsiders. By gaining outside intervention, the KLA hoped to tilt the balance of power against a stronger FRY force on the ground.

Kosovo Albanian insurgency against stronger Serb rule was not unique to the last decade of the twentieth century. When Serbia conquered Kosovo from the Ottoman Empire in the First Balkan War of 1912, there was strong resistance against Serbian conquest by the Albanians inhabitants who desired to join Albania. Subsequent fighting and slaughter ended with tens of thousands of Kosovo Albanian dead. In both world wars, Serbs and Albanians, who mostly fought on opposing sides, took opportunities to exact revenge on each other for past atrocities. After Tito's partisan forces defeated Nazi occupation, Albanian insurgency based in the Drenica area lasted until 1951.

By the late 1990s, the Kosovo Albanians found themselves in unique historical circumstances, some relating to their place and time. The Yugoslav state, which had contained a diversity of nationalisms for forty years, was disintegrating. The Albanians' historic adversaries who had been suppressing them for most of the previous century, as a result of their recent tactics in other breakaway Yugoslav republics, were vilified by the world's major Western powers. These same powers were in a unique period of their own recent history, perceiving no major threats to their survival. In addition to all these circumstantial factors, the Kosovo Albanians, through various manifestations of globalization, were now connected with the outside world in unprecedented ways. If only they could showcase their struggle to the world, many believed that outsiders might intervene. Initial



attempts at gaining international sympathy through pacifist resistance were largely ignored, setting the groundwork for the KLA's rise. The KLA promised to deliver what Rugova and his non-violent approach had not – international attention for the Kosovo Albanian cause.

As the previous sections of this conclusion argued, the CNN effect, amongst other factors, gradually shifted Western policy towards military intervention during the Kosovo civil war. Although controversial, some analysts have since suggested that these media-focussed massacres were not merely beneficial coincidences for the Albanian cause, but part of a deliberate strategy by the KLA to draw the West into their struggle. Some comments by Albanian and KLA leadership have even validated this argument. According to Dugi Gorani, a Kosovo Albanian negotiator at Rambouillet, "The more civilians were killed, the chances of international intervention became bigger, and the KLA of course realised that. There was this foreign diplomat who once told me 'Look, unless you pass the quota of five thousand deaths you'll never have anybody permanently present in Kosovo'."<sup>531</sup> According to Hashim Thaci, the KLA's political leader, "Any armed action we undertook would bring retaliation against civilians. We knew we were endangering a great number of civilian lives."<sup>532</sup>

The suggestion that the KLA sought the deaths of the very people it was trying to liberate is considered an outrageous suggestion by some and a conspiracy theory by others.<sup>533</sup> While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to resolve this issue,

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<sup>531</sup> Interview with Dugi Gorani, in Little, *Mortal Combat*.

<sup>532</sup> Interview with Hashim Thaci, in *Ibid*.

<sup>533</sup> Bellamy, "Kosovo and International Society," p.118.

its possibility provides some useful insights into how this manifestation of globalization has changed the calculations of warfare under certain contexts, creating a new battle in the midst of a larger war. In this new type of battle, the actual outcome of the fight is not as important as the perceptions framed by the outside world's media. In the Drenica attack on the Jashari compound, the FRY summer offensive (which included the Gornje Obrinje massacre) and the battle in Racak (which preceded the massacre), the KLA was badly outgunned and soundly defeated by the FRY. Yet in each case, the military defeat became a political victory. In fact, the more one-sided the defeat, it seemed, the greater the political mileage derived by the Albanian cause. If, for example, large numbers of Serb soldiers were killed in any of these incidents, the case for a massacre would have certainly been more difficult to sustain.

In traditional guerrilla warfare, ambushes aim to draw adversaries into situations that place them at a disadvantage. In battles involving a potential CNN effect, the goal is to draw an adversary into positions that increase their odds of committing actions that might tarnish their image. As Dugi Gorani has suggested, "With Racak, and with lots of others, the Serbs were playing into KLA hands."<sup>534</sup>

Whether Racak and other massacres were intentional traps or not, the Serbs, to their peril, seemed naïve and barely cognizant of the battles over Western media images and framing, which they were badly losing. The increased transparency of war in a globalized age means that armed forces of the twenty first century, unlike armies in wars of previous times, must be wary of committing detrimental acts before the cameras. This is particularly true for middle or weak powers fighting

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<sup>534</sup> Interview with Dugi Gorani, in Little, *Mortal Combat*.

domestic insurgency, whose battles may be susceptible to outside intervention under the right context.

In terms of the implications of the CNN effect for the incidence of war, the geopolitical context, as mentioned, is important. In periods of high perceived security threats, such as in the post-9/11 era, perceived strategic interests will likely dominate decision-making and interventions will be largely determined by these calculations. But in times when world powers do not perceive major threats to their security, there could actually be an increase in international wars due to the CNN effect and local wars become internationalised with the entry of outsiders. If belligerents know that the world is watching, however, it may make wars less bloody and more in line with the laws of war and just war principles, and this, in the long run, could lead to a decline in the incidence of war.

### **Further Research**

As stated in the introduction of this dissertation, there are a number of limitations to a study of this nature due to some of the grand topics it sets to address such as globalization and war. This is why the goal of the dissertation on those subjects is limited to providing insights. In order to address some of these questions further beyond this dissertation, there are several areas of research that would likely prove very useful. For brevity, this section will only suggest three areas of potential future research.

First, in order to gain a greater appreciation of the CNN effect on war, particularly in the context of Kosovo, one useful exercise would be to extend the case study to

the time of the NATO intervention itself. As other studies have shown, media coverage during a military intervention often changes significantly once forces from the country in which the media originates enter the war. Although the likelihood of propaganda overtaking the CNN effect is more likely, the impediment effect is a legitimate CNN effect that can also arise in such contexts. It would, therefore, be very useful to extend this case study into the 78 days of bombing in order to study the relationship between these two media effects and how they might compete with each other.

Another useful research program would involve applying the model used in this case study to other military interventions in the 1990s to assess commonalities and discernable trends. Although the case study in this dissertation provided useful insights on the CNN effect and other related questions, it is difficult to distinguish how much of the insights gained were relevant only to the Kosovo case and what aspects could be drawn into a larger theory. The closest other intervention that might be a suitable candidate for such analysis is Bosnia. For additional insights, this research approach, or an amended version of it assessing other media effect, might also be extended to more traditional wars such as the Gulf War, or humanitarian interventions such as those that occurred in Somalia, Rwanda/Zaire and Haiti. This study could even be extended to US led wars in the post 9/11 era, such as campaigns in Afghanistan or Iraq.

Finally, to gain a better understanding on this dissertation's central question, it would be of great benefit to review the impact of other manifestations of globalization on war beyond the CNN effect. As the literature on the relationship

between globalization and security studies, including warfare, is just beginning to emerge, such a study could provide much needed insight to this increasingly important issue in international affairs.

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## **Appendix A: Government Sources Coded**

Total N=161

### ***Contact Group (N=11)***

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## **Appendix B: Framing, Blame and Propensity for Military**

### **Intervention Before and After The Kosovo Massacres**

#### ***Assessment of the Drenica Massacres***

In reviewing the Western government response in the four-week periods preceding 1 to 28 February and after 1 to 29 March, a notable shift both quantitatively and qualitatively is clearly manifest.<sup>535</sup> A summary of these actions (quantitative and qualitative) over these periods is provided in Table AB-1:

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<sup>535</sup> Quantitative refers to the total number of government actions – measured by the total number of press government press releases/statements on Kosovo (based on the definitions in chapter six) – while qualitative refers to the government actions that can be coded (based on the coding schemes from chapter six.)

**Table AB-1: A Review of Western Government Actions Before and After the  
Drenica Area Massacres (1 February to 29 March, 1998)**

<b>Pre-Massacre Time Period</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>	<b>Post-Massacre Time Period</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>
1-28 Feb./98	4	3	1-29 March/98	17	11

<b>Framing</b>	<b>Pre-Massacre</b>		<b>Post-Massacre</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Pro-Albanian Framing	0	0%	6	55%
Both Positions Represented	2	67%	1	9%
Pro-Serbian Framing	1	33%	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%	4	36%
<b>Blame</b>				
Full Blame Albanians	0	0%	0	0%
Majority Blame Albanians	0	0%	0	0%
Both Sides Blamed	2	67%	1	6%
Majority Blame Serbs	1	33%	6	35%
Full Blame Serbs	0	0%	4	24%
No Side Blamed	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Propensity for Intervention</b>				
No Military Option Mentioned	3	100%	10	91%
Military Option in Background	0	0%	1	9%
Clear or Imminent Military Threat	0	0%	0	0%

Qualitatively, significant changes were apparent in the areas of framing and blame, with little notable change regarding the propensity for intervention. In terms of framing, two of the three documents before the Drenica massacres attempted to incorporate both positions, while one was pro-Serbian – the only such document in the entire set of documents assessed in this study. Afterwards, a clear majority of six out of 11, or 55 percent, of the documents were pro-Albanian, one statement (nine percent) took on both frameworks while four (36 percent) were neutral, incorporating no discernable framework. This was roughly in line with the overall framing pattern of the 15-month conflict preceding NATO intervention, which pegged the framing at 50 percent pro-Albanian, 11 percent both frameworks, one percent Pro-Serb, and 38 percent neutral.

In terms of blame, the four-week period preceding the massacre recorded both sides being blamed on two out of three occasions and the Serb side receiving the majority of the blame in one document. After Drenica, a significant portion of the blame was placed on the Serbian side. Besides one document blaming both sides, the remaining documents either placed the majority of blame on the Serbs (six out of 11, or 55 percent) or all of the blame on them (four out of 11, or 36 percent).

There was little mention of military intervention at this stage in the crisis; no documents in the pre-Drenica massacre period mentioned it as a possibility, while only one out of 11 documents in the four-week period afterwards mentioned it, doing so only in the background of diplomacy.

***Assessment of the Gornje Obrinje Massacre***

In reviewing the quantitative and qualitative changes in Western government actions before and after the Gornje Obrinje massacre, a clear change in the level of activity and perspective taken regarding the conflict is discernable.

Quantitatively, in the month before the images of the massacre first appeared, there were 11 government actions, nine of which could be qualified. After the massacre, these numbers jumped to 28 and 19, respectively. The month of September had already been a particularly busy month due to actions at the UN and NATO, but this high level of activity was dwarfed by activity in October, following the images of the Gornje Obrinje massacre. A summary of these actions – quantitative and qualitative – over these periods is provided in Table AB-2.

**Table AB-2: A Review of Western Government Actions Before and After the Gornje Obrinje Massacres (30 August to 25 October 1998)**

<b>Pre-Massacre Time Period</b> 30 Aug. –	<b>Total</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>	<b>Post-Massacre Time Period</b> 27 Sept. –	<b>Total</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>
26 Sept./98	11	9	25 Oct./98	28	19

	<b>Pre-Massacre</b>		<b>Post-Massacre</b>	
<b>Framing</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Pro-Albanian Framing	9	100%	16	84%
Both Positions Represented	0	0%	0	0%
Pro-Serbian Framing	0	0%	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%	3	16%
<b>Blame</b>				
Full Blame Albanians	0	0%	0	0%
Majority Blame Albanians	2	22%	0	0%
Both Sides Blamed	5	56%	1	5%
Majority Blame Serbs	2	22%	2	11%
Full Blame Serbs	0	0%	12	63%
No Side Blamed	0	0%	4	21%
<b>Propensity for Intervention</b>				
No Military Option Mentioned	1	11%	2	11%
Military Option in Background	6	67%	10	53%
Clear or Imminent Military Threat	2	22%	7	37%

Qualitatively, there was no shift towards the Albanian framework as the framing was already pro-Albanian in September. In the four weeks before the Gornje Obrinje massacre, all nine documents were pro-Albanian. In the four weeks after the massacre images, 16 out of 19 documents were pro-Albanian (84 percent), although the other three were neutral by not referring to any framing.

The quantitative results showed a much clearer shift in the area of blame. In the four weeks prior to the massacre, two documents (22 percent) blamed both parties for the conflict, five (56 percent) placed the majority of the blame on the Serbs, while two placed all the blame on the Serbs. After the massacre, there was a dramatic shift as one document (five percent) placed the blame on both parties, two documents (11 percent) put majority blame on the Serbs, while an overwhelming 12 documents (63 percent) said the Serbs were fully to blame. This was by far the strongest condemnation of the Serbs to date in the conflict and represented a level of agitation by the West against the Serbs not seen since the height of the Bosnia conflict in the late summer of 1995. During this period, there were also four documents (21 percent) that were neutral in their blame.

In terms of the final qualitative metric – the propensity for military intervention – there was again a strong shift towards action on the Albanian side of the conflict. In the four weeks before Gornje Obrinje, one document (11 percent) did not refer to military intervention, six documents (67 percent) mentioned it in the background, while two documents (22 percent) referred to it as an imminent threat. In the four weeks afterwards, however, these numbers shifted to two (11 percent), ten (53 percent) and seven (37 percent) documents, respectively. Never

before had there been such a clear threat that force was imminent and the primary choice unless its execution was stopped through as a FRY military pullback.

A review of the Western government documentation immediately after the images of the Gornje Obrinje massacre reveals a large shift in the level of activity from an already busy period, but perhaps much more importantly, it reveals a dramatic shift in assigning blame and threatening military action at levels not seen before in Kosovo. It is important to remember that the massacre, while tragic, was largely insignificant numerically as there had already been 800 reported deaths in the conflict by this time. However, most of the others killed were not presented to the world in such a shocking manner.

*Assessment of the Racak Massacre*

In terms of the quantitative and qualitative shifts in Western government action before and after the incident, a strong transformation was evident. Quantitatively, the strongest shift in activity in the entire conflict was recorded after Racak. After October, the Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement, despite its shortcomings, had brought a sense of relative calm to the region. Given the West's sympathies for the Albanian position, violations by the KLA, which accounted for the majority of cease-fire violations, were largely ignored. As a result, the West became disengaged, assuming that any major return to arms would likely wait until the beginning of spring. Whereas in the four weeks before Racak, only four Western actions had occurred, there were 30 actions in the four weeks following the incident. Of the four actions before Racak, all were documents that could be qualified, and of the 30 after, 27 could be qualified. A summary of these actions (quantitative and qualitative) over these periods is provided in Table AB-3.



**Table AB-3: A Review of Western Government Actions Before and After the  
Racak Massacre (20 December 1998 to 13 February 1999)**

<b>Pre-Massacre Time Period 20 Dec./98 -</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>	<b>Post-Massacre Time Period 17 Jan. -</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>
16 Jan./99	4	4	13 Feb./99	30	27

	<b>Pre-Massacre</b>		<b>Post-Massacre</b>	
<b>Framing</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Pro-Albanian Framing	1	25%	19	70%
Both Positions Represented	0	0%	1	9%
Pro-Serbian Framing	0	0%	0	0%
Neutral	3	75%	8	30%
<b>Blame</b>				
Full Blame Albanians	0	0%	0	0%
Majority Blame Albanians	0	0%	0	0%
Both Sides Blamed	1	25%	5	19%
Majority Blame Serbs	2	50%	6	44%
Full Blame Serbs	1	25%	4	22%
No Side Blamed	0	0%	0	15%
<b>Propensity for Intervention</b>				
No Military Option Mentioned	3	75%	10	37%
Military Option in Background	1	25%	16	59%
Clear or Imminent Military Threat	0	0%	0	4%

Qualitatively, there was also a clear shift in perspective, especially in regard to framing and the propensity for military intervention. On the issue of framing, one in four documents issued by the West before Racak was pro-Albanian, while three were neutral. This is not surprising since the West was attempting to be seen as even-handed over this period and the KLA was recognised as the main cease-fire violator. After Racak, the framing took a strong turn towards the Albanian position, as 19 out of 27 documents, representing 70 percent of the total, were pro-Albanian. All eight of the remaining documents were neutral. The shift from 25 percent to 70 percent pro-Albanian framing showed a significant change the West's attitude.

There was a less recognizable change with regard to blame, as percentages before and after were similar. Before Racak, one of the four documents blamed both sides, two placed the majority of blame on the Serbs, while one placed it all on the Serbs. After Racak, five out of 27 documents, or 19 percent, blamed both parties; four, or 14 percent, were neutral in blame; 12, or 44 percent, placed majority blame on Serbs; and six, or 22 percent, placed all the blame on the Serbs. This relative consistency could have been because the West decided that the best course of action was to engage in negotiations in Rambouillet, which necessitated a need to appear more neutral.

Regarding the propensity for military intervention, there was again, as with the last massacre in late September 1998, a shift towards proposing strong action against the FRY. Before Racak, three of the four relevant documents did not mention any military option, while only one only mentioned it as a background

option. The relatively passive nature of these documents reflect the fact that there was a noticeable reduction of tensions between the West and FRY in the period after the Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement, and the underlying hope by the West that militarism was in decline in the region. During the four weeks after Racak, the mood in this regard changed dramatically, and the possibility of military intervention became a feasible option once again. Of the 27 documents of this period, 10 documents, representing 37 percent of the total, did not mention the military dimension; 16, or 59 percent, did so in the background of diplomacy; while one, or four percent, described it as the primary choice.