Kosovo Essay, Research Paper

Kosovo U.S. Involvement in Kosovo War has been waged in the Balkans for thousands of years. Yugoslavia has been divided, reunited, divided again, undergone wars and been through depressions. Each country within the Yugoslavia region has experienced hardships due to a failing economy, poor leadership, and civil wars. In the past few years, a major upheaval in the political structure and the disputes concerning land between the different religions and ethnicity’s has caused a civil war. The country and ethnic group of this recent dispute is Serbia and Kosovo. The Albanian Kosovars want their independence from Serbia, while the Serbs consider Kosovo the location in which their cultural and ethnic identity is placed. The United States became involved in the Balkan conflict in the end of 1998 (”Kosovo” 1). U.S. involvement in Kosovo is making matters worse for the innocent people of Kosovo. Kosovo, a small area in the center of the former Yugoslavia, is playing an important role in the Balkan conflict. In the summer of 1998, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) decided to launch a guerilla warfare attack on Serbia in attempts to liberate themselves and gain their cultural rites. The President of Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic, is refusing to allow Kosovo to break away from Serbia without a fight. Kosovo is a site of great emotional significance to the Serbs; it is the site of a historic defeat by the Ottoman Empire in the 14th century. From this defeat, Kosovo became the cradle of Serbia’s cultural and ethnic identity. Milosevic began an ethnic cleansing campaign in which he killed thousands of ethnic Albanians. NATO forces, as well as the United States, began stepping in in the winter of 1998. The United States made a cease-fire contract with Milosevic, which ended in the early months of 1999 (1). The United States believes that it is benefiting Kosovo by intervening. Many diplomats are saying that U.S. involvement in Kosovo is helping the Albanians because it is stopping the ethnic cleansing by Milosevic. Another argument for U.S. involvement is that the air strikes against the Serbs will dampen their spirits and attacks against the Albanians. A third argument for U.S. involvement is that it will stop from drawing in other surrounding countries into the war. (1) The first argument for U.S. intervention is easily refuted. The U.S. diplomats believe that the U.S. is benefiting the situation in Kosovo by intervening. The US’s main goal in Kosovo is to stop the ethnic cleansing conducted by Milosevic. The manner in which the U.S. is trying to resolve this conflict is wrong. The U.S. began bombing villages and towns in which ethnic Albanians live. This drove out the Albanians and forced them to immigrate to other countries. It seems that the United States believes that ethnic cleansing is wrong, but bombing innocent people is acceptable (Landlay 1). The Serbs are using the NATO air raids as a way to kill the ethnic Albanians. The Albanians are being used as shields as the NATO forces bomb the Serbs. On one occasion, in the city of Kamena Glava, five hundred Albanian men were killed (”Atrocity”5). The Serbs are using NATO forces against what they are fighting for. U.S. involvement in Kosovo would be more welcomed if they weren’t killing innocent people and instead, helping them come to a peaceful resolution between the two areas. However, the air strikes against Serbia are believed to be Clinton’s goal for protecting U.S. investors and exporters. Although the humanitarian tragedies of Kosovo are in the foremost eye of the public, U.S. economic interests are in foremost eye of the government (Landlay 2). The second argument for U.S. intervention can also be refuted. Air strikes are proven to be ineffective in winning a war. This fact has been proven many times in other wars such as World War II and Vietnam. On the contrary, however, air strikes often stiffen the will to resist, as was the case in World War II with the German citizens. The Serbs, as history has predicted, have intensified their aggressions against the Kosovar Albanians. This has caused even more Albanians to flee from Kosovo. The Serbs spirits are far from becoming damp. If, once again, history prevails, Serbia, the country with the most passion, and the most at stake, will defeat the United States and NATO, the stronger power. This was shown in history through the American Civil War and Vietnam. Serbia is fighting in defense of its sovereign territory, which involves the highest stakes for which a nation can fight for. If Serbia loses Kosovo, it will also be losing its cultural and national identity. The Serbs are showing no signs of defeat, nor signs of lost faith, lost perseverance, or lost hope. The air strikes are only putting more conviction in the Serb fighting and increasing aggression against the people the air strikes were intended to help, the Albanians (Layne 5). The third argument for U.S. involvement in Kosovo has little validity. The major reason for the U.S. to become involved in Kosovo was so that other surrounding countries would not become involved in the conflict and it would not escalate. However, in the past couple of weeks, the opposite has happened. Russia has become involved, allying with the Serbs, and China has done the same. Russia gave the United States an ultimatum stating that if the U.S. sends in ground troops, then a nuclear war will be waged. The other countries surrounding Kosovo and Serbia, such as Macedonia and Albania, are also being dragged into the middle of the conflict due to the massive amounts of Albanians escaping from Kosovo. These surrounding countries are not prepared to become involved due to there economic as well as social state at this time. There are other countries that are starting to become involved as well, such as Canada and England. U.S. involvement has not prevented other countries from becoming involved, but rather encouraged or lead in outside involvement (Brown 2). Many people are questioning the reasons for U.S. and NATO involvement in Kosovo. It seems as if they are only intervening for their own benefits. Many more people have died in the past due to conflicts in the Balkan region, and neither force stepped in to help resolve it. A common theory is that NATO will greatly benefit from Kosovo if it becomes detached from Serbia. NATO will benefit from this because Kosovo is in a prime area in which a base for NATO forces would allow them to “keep tabs” on the area. To the Serbs, U.S. involvement is seen strictly as a way for president Clinton to make his time in office memorable militarily as well as historically, and help to cover up his sex and money scandals (Thompson, 1). The Kosovo conflict is growing with each day. New information is being given and different countries are becoming involved. The countries that are involved need to finish what they have already started. Nobody knows what the future will hold for the people of Kosovo. In the upcoming weeks and months, many decisions will be made, and history will be written.