

Lobbying as strategic communication in practice: The crown of the separatist movement on Kosovo and Metohija



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Abstract:

Strategic communication is one of the expressions of the soft power and represents an instrument in the political and security achievement of national interests. One of the strategic communication forms is lobbying. Potential lobbying of foreign policy is significant, as it could be realized through direct military intervention for support of interest group goals. The paper presents gained results of interest representation of Albanian interest groups regarding U.S. foreign policy as support of the achievement of the separatists' goal in the form of the Republic of Kosovo. Using content analysis and conclusions synthesis, the paper presents results that indicate effective and productive effects of applied interest representation strategy. It is suggested that base of common interest should focus on political, economic and security interests, and institutional preconditions for effective lobbying of U.S. institutions. Conclusions indicate that organized and strategically planned lobbying approach to U.S. institutions can bring very good results.

Keywords: strategic communication; ethnic interest groups; lobbying; U.S. foreign policy; Kosovo

1. INTRODUCTION

Strategic communication is a planned and comprehensive activity of the organizational entity, which aims at achieving a successful and efficient interaction with the environment. Some of the elementary forms of strategic communication carried out in the function of supporting the highest national goals, are propaganda, public diplomacy, and interest communications or lobbying (Mitrović 2019). Lobbying is a communication act, which aims to influence the decision-maker per our own goals and interests. Whether it is influencing the legislature or supporting the state in terms of positioning in foreign policy relations, lobbying is carried out by using and implementing programs and communication strategies with the support and use of all appropriate communication tools (Mitrović 2015: 13).

By its very nature, lobbying in one part is a communication process of exchanging information, but also of influencing and exerting pressure on the legislator. Among the used techniques are the organization of mass campaigns aimed at public opinion formatting, broadcasting analyzes and commentary regarding a particular issue, using „commissioned experts“, P. R. campaigns to portray the „good“ face of an organization that is a beneficiary of lobbying activity, launching of negative information regarding the opposing party, classical propaganda instruments and use of spin.

In general, according to primary areas of activity, lobbying can be divided into political and corporate lobbying. Both types can have implications for issues of national defense and security importance. Lobbying within politics through all of the above forms can have a direct impact, both on the structuring of the executive and legislative branches, and on the legal framework, and through its influence on public policies it has a significant impact on the broadest spheres of life, public opinion and the

general state of the nation. In the area of foreign policy lobbying, a special place has the influence of different interest groups (corporate, ethnic, non-governmental) on decisions regarding the use of „hard“ instruments of state power (Mitrovic 2017a: 107-120). In the scope of that, it could be analyzed by strategic lobbying of Albanian ethnic interest groups on U. S. foreign policy (Mitrovic 2017b).

The precondition of lobbying evaluation will be offered in the brief genesis of Albanian aspiration to independence, which is the main motive for the lobbying of separation of Kosovo. The Albanians who live out of Albania, in Western Balkan neighboring countries have a long history of struggle against prevailing rulers and neighbors. Activities became intensively since the late nineteenth century and late twenty century finished with separatist rebellion and nesting of „Republic of Kosovo“. Albanians desire for expansion is easy for understanding because Albanians had no state until the establishment of Albania in 1912 (Mannullaku 1975; Malcolm 1998). This paper analyzes the case of Albanian ethnic group, which by using of possibilities of a United States political system and compared aims with U.S. administration, can achieve its goal – engagement of U.S. hard power for its separatist objectives. First will be analyzed genesis of Albanian rebellion in SFRY in 80s and genesis of separatist activities in 1998-98. Also, briefly will be explained the geopolitical arena of that time as well as some specific conditions in Clinton's presidency. The suggestion is that the Albanian interest group in the U.S. recognize the possibility to influence U.S. Administration during president Clinton's mandate to achieve their long-lasting goal – separation from Serbia.

It is no intention of this paper to analyze the profound historical aspect of Albanian-Serbian relations, but using a specific form of strategic communication in form of advocacy or lobbying in achieving national interests. In favor of that aspect, the paper will illustrate just late acts of separatist aspiration.

2. BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF KOSOVO REBELLION IN THE 80S UNTIL MID-90S

In their work, Koktsidis and Dam (2008) recognize that the interethnic relations between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo – Metohija¹ within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) which are in close relation with after come separation of Kosovo, deteriorated sharply after the student riots at the University of Pristina in 1981. Hundreds of Albanian students were joined by thousands of factory workers, miners, and farmers, shouting „Kosovo - Republic!“ and „We want a Unified Albania!“ (Koktsidis-Dam 2008: 162). Since then, until 1999 and open rebellion, Kosovo and Metohija experienced two decades of constant rebellion and different political and extremist movements of Albanians.

In 1989, Slobodan Milosevic ended the autonomous status of Kosovo and Vojvodina within Serbia, which was granted by the communist's Tito Constitution from 1974. This act was recognized as underprivileged action against Albanians on Kosovo, which by then comprising up to 85% of Kosovo's two million people. They start to established a new grievance and acts of revolt. In response, a moderate LDK established an underground government with its parallel institutions. Initially, the LDK called for the creation of the autonomous Kosovo Republic within a reformed Yugoslavia. In September 1990, however, the former Kosovo Assembly proclaimed a „Sovereign Republic of Kosovo.“ The boots on the ground for secession were Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) which approached the stage in 1996. KLA pursued their aim through wellprepared rebellion, limitations and mistakes by rivals, cheap weaponry from Albania, effective guerrilla, crackdown sparking large-scale revolt, learning from mistakes and support from NATO and the West (Koktsidis-Dam 2008: 164-171).

In their activities, KLA used a dominantly terroristic tactic during 1997 and in 1998, the KLA killed and kidnapped a number of police officers as well as Serbs, Turks, Romas, and for them „not loyal Albanian“ civilians². Numerous bomb attacks on police stations, check points and vehicles and also on civilian objects (private houses, markets, restaurants, cafes, etc.) were carried out by the KLA. So, many countries marked the KLA as terrorist organizations. Also, the KLA terrorist acts were expressly con-

demned by the U.N. Security Council (Resolution 1160, 31th of March 1998) (SMIP 1998; Gaćinović 2008). Initially, the U.S. government also qualified the KLA as a terrorist organization. But, in the first half of 1998, the KLA was removed from the list of terrorist organizations and started enjoying the assistance and considerable support from the U.S. Administration (Craig 1999).

On Kosovo, KLA intensively carried terror in purpose to provoke as the possible most significant reaction of the Yugoslav government. The aim was to use an inadequate response from the Yugoslav Army and police as a pretense for foreign military intervention. In favor of that goal, from the start of 1999 until the 24th of March (the beginning of the NATO intervention), the KLA terrorists committed 559 attacks (322 on police and 237 on civilians). They killed 124 persons (104 civilians), wounded 253 persons (of which 156 civilians) and kidnapped 57 people (Blic 1999: 9). That U. S. policy was not substantial in the Kosovo quest, illustrate the debates in Senath and Congress (Corn 2001). Furthermore, in May 1999, Congress voted in ration 427 to 2 against the declaration of war to Yugoslavia. For this reason various prominent individuals and groups in the USA filed a lawsuit against Bil Clinton with the claims that he was waging an illegal war (Yoo 2000). Nevertheless, Clinton's Administration remained on course of action again international law supporting separatist and terroristic, challenging faith in peaceful politics (Krivokapić 2019).

Question is how this terroristic movement, introduce support in Clinton's administration? The suggestion is that success was founded upon lobbying of U.S. institutions in favor of achievement mutual interest of administration and ethnic interest group. In the next chapters of paper, it will be elaborated on U.S. foreign policy lobbying scene, possible mutual interest of Clinton's administration and Albanian lobbying group, as well as implemented lobbying strategy.

3. U.S. FOREIGN POLICY LOBBYING SCENE

Lobbying in the U.S. is a legitimate, organized, and socially accepted activity based on the Constitution and its amendments. Relations within the lobbying scene are regulated by the Lobbying Disclosure Act (Lobbying Disclosure). The process of U.S. foreign policymaking is layered and non-linear. U.S. foreign policymaking takes place in the complex interaction of numerous state bodies: the President and his cabinet, the Department of State, the Pentagon, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the National Security Council (NSC). Besides, U.S. public opinion has a particular influence, so foreign policy decisions are implemented with strong public relations campaigns.

Foreign governments and nations have represented their interests in the United States since the early 19th century. After the WW2, an intense period of influence on U.S. foreign policymaking began: European governments lobbied for the adoption of the Marshall Plan; during the decolonization period, the nascent states advocated U.S. political and financial support; during the 1970s, it lobbied for the abolition of U. S. trade protectionist measures, etc. In contemporary foreign policy relations, foreign governments are lobbying the United States in two ways: „low politics“, where the fields of economy, trade, relations development, etc. are primarily represented; and areas of high politics, where security, crisis, and military interventions are prevalent (Ness 2000). U.S. foreign policy is primarily focused on the fulfillment of identified and projected own national interests (Adler-Haas 1992), with intonated economic interests (Hall 1989). Groups that have financial power and interests outside the U.S. are exerting pressure on the U.S. administration to influence foreign policy that is aligned with their corporate interests (Moravcsik 1997). In his work, Keohane (1984) provided arguments for validating the theory of the influence of the neoliberal political economy on international political relations, and Snyder (1991) linked defense policymaking to corporate entities, the relationship is based on deep shared, economic and political interests. According to Trubowitz (1998), the imperative of steady economic growth and the struggle for regional and global economic dominance have a significant influence on the formulation of U.S. foreign policy. In their research based on a comparative analysis of U.S. foreign policy impact causes, Jacobs and Page (2005) concluded that influencers, whether coming from outside-abroad or internal entities, were organized into three groups: neoliberal organi-

zations, knowledge-based institutions (so-called epistemic organizations) and pressure-based groups based on electoral-voting potential and public opinion.

The basic form of organizing political interest groups in the United States is the Political Action Committee (PAC), with its advanced types of Super PAC³ and Leadership PACs. All branches of industry, services, civil society organizations, associations, associations, and individual corporations are hired through PAC in the political arena, and in most cases by multiple candidates, mostly both Democratic and Republican parties (TCRPa). Also, some organizations are based on Section 501 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code (U.S. Code). Model 501 (c) organizations (TCRPb) are, by law, a nonprofit organization, declared politically inactive, and do not have to report their donors.

Political Action Committees that lobby for foreign and defense policy is located in a sector of interest groups called Ideological/Single-Issue. Certain ethnic interest groups in the United States are highly organized and base their influence on the size and organization of the population they rely on, while foreign governments are most actively lobbying through registered PACs. Corporate political influences on U.S. foreign policy are also very present, such as the creation of an environment for intervention in Iraq in 2004 (Miller 2004), noting that the results of the intervention are consistent with the operating profits of U.S. companies (Pratap 2004). By law, foreign companies with branches in the U.S. are allowed to form political action committees.

Representatives of interests represented through U.S. foreign policy action methods are:

- Naturalized Americans, organized into ethnic groups that promote the interest of their origin country intending to influence U.S. foreign policy toward it.
- Professional PR, advocacy companies, and political action committees engaged in running a public relations campaign, developing cultural and friendly relations, public diplomacy, etc.
- Official diplomatic representatives, through the development of relationships at all levels (twinning of cities, regions, institutional integration etc.).

The overriding goal of establishing such relations is primarily economic. It provides the basis for obtaining privileged nation status in trade-economic and investmenteconomic ties with the U.S. Interests also include military assistance and the provision of special security assistance, emigration policy, avoiding sanctions and reducing or increasing the presence of the U.S. Armed Forces in some parts of the world.

Naturalized Americans or members of ethnic groups hold a particular concern for U.S. foreign policy. Unique interest is for U.S. engagement in a specific region or country which correlate with their origin. The ethnic lobby group is not just the oldest foreign policy pressure group but also the most influential. In significant ways, ethnic groups are often tied to foreign country lobbies and those groups that directly lobby the American government on behalf of another nation (McCormick 2012: 68). The power of ethnic lobbying groups is in (1) their ability to provide votes in critical areas, (2) their ability to make campaign contributions to office-seekers, and (3) their ability to organize and lobby on vital issues (McCormick 2012: 72).

4. ANALYZES OF MUTUAL U.S. ADMINISTRATION – ALBANIAN INTEREST

The process of lobbying of the Albanian interest group towards the USA has emerged, developed, and resulted in conditions of significant historical and geopolitical trends that came with the collapse of the USSR were aligned the internal frustration of the military and industrial complex in the USA due to the possible reduction of the military budget. Also, it was imperative for the necessity to address the continued need existence of NATO. This environment allowed the U.S. administration to open its

institutions to the performances of groups that aimed, among other things, at disintegrating the SFRY and establishing more states⁴. There are indicators of the influence of Croatian and Muslim interest groups that enabled the creation of internationally recognized states of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, significant attention is drawn to the activities of interest groups from the Albanian national entity in the U.S. In doing so it is necessary to analyze the motives and mutual interests of the U.S. and the Albanian interest corps in the process of lobbying for the secession.

Geopolitical interests are, among other things, defined by setting goals that reflect the importance of the nation in international relations. Since the early 1990s, the Interesting Performance of the Albanian Corps in the United States has been predominantly oriented towards the national issue and the settlement of the „Albanian Question“ in the Balkans, with a pronounced religious orientation, and less prominent ideological and political characteristics. The general cohesive idea in organizing the appearance of the Albanian interest group (Ragaru & Dymi 2004) is the realization of a project that, as a top goal, aims at unifying all the territories in the Balkans inhabited by the Albanian population into one country.

From the U.S. point of view, the perception of the Balkans and Eastern Europe is possible through the affirmation of the Grand Strategy. The same concept was used in connection with the description of U.S. appearances in Kosovo in the late 1990s. Also, in the context of attempts to clarify the reasons for U.S. interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq in the early 21st century (Feaver 2009). According to Gray (2007: 186), the Grand Strategy „defines the purposeful engagement of all the state’s potential in securing the security of society, and it is important to emphasize that not only military potentials are considered“. The model of implementation of the U.S. Grand Strategy in the mid-1990s, under President Clinton’s term (1993 to 2001), is according to Trubowitz (2011: 120-127) also referred as „low-risk“ or „missile diplomacy“ strategy and is strongly marked by the emergence of expansionist interests by U.S. economic entities and international corporations. The ideological basis for acting towards Yugoslavia must also be sought in the previous declared strategic orientations of the U.S. foreign policy approach to Eastern Europe (NSDD-54, 1982). In the early 1990s, the integration of most Eastern European countries into the EU and NATO began. But Yugoslavia almost overnight became synonymous with the last „bastion of communism“, from the position of a counter-element to Soviet influence in the West (NSDD-133, 1984[33]) by the United States and the most powerful states of Europe, first of all, Germany and Great Britain (Chossudovsky 2003). It should be considered that „Serb-Albanian relations, as well as the Kosovo-Metohija problem, historically-geopolitically, were not just an internal, local and current issue“ (Stepić 2007: 459), and that Albanians’ aspiration for Kosovo’s secession aligned with the U.S. geopolitical interests, natural joint appearance, both during and after the rebellion and military intervention led against Yugoslavia. Last but not least, it is important to remind that in time of starting Operation Allied Force, president Clinton just stepped out from the impeachment process and desperately needed some action to prove itself as a strong leader (Kutz 2013). Yugoslavia, which was devastated with economic sanctions and already marked as a „bad guy“ and in comparison, to the U.S. and NATO had small Army, was an excellent choice for muscle proofing. With effective mass media campaigns, which were focused on justifying intervention as a humanitarian, Clinton’s administration succeeded in intervening U.S. public in supporters of intervention and legitimization of Kosovo separation as a, not legal, but legitimate aim (Entman 2003).

Economic interests can be observed from many aspects, among which are undoubtedly the mineral resources located in the territory of Kosovo. Namely, one year before the intervention and the onset of the violent secession of Kosovo from Serbia, New York Times commentator Chris Hedges (1998) cited the potentials of mines in northern Kosovo, stating that it was a multi-million-ton reserve of lead, zinc, cadmium-rich metals, gold, and silver. Also, it is necessary to mention the Kosovo’s potentials in coal reserves, which represents the most critical reservoir of fossil energy in Serbia. Lignite reserves in the Kosovo area by several U.S. agencies, including the CIA, have been estimated at 8.3 to 10 billion tonnes. It is interesting that the chairman of *Envidity*, a Canadian energy company that explores Kosovo’s lignite coal deposits and produces synthetic fuel, is General Clark, former commander of NATO forces in Europe who led the war against Serbia (Brunwasser 2012). Also, these reports pro-

vide assessment of minerals reserves totaling about 21.5 million tonnes of lead, zinc and silver ore, in quantities economically viable for exploitation. Besides, at least 1.7 million tonnes of bauxite are listed, the Feronikl complex with about 14 million tonnes of ore containing about 1.3 percent nickel and 0.07 percent cobalt, followed by about 2.8 million tonnes of magnesite and 1.7 million tons. Kosovo's coal, natural gas, and metal reserves are estimated to be worth a total of five hundred billion dollars ([Intermagazin 2013](#)).

Immediately after the intervention, in August 1999, the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) took over the administration of Kosovo, and the International Crisis Group published a report on the Trepca mine, with instructions that UNMIK should take over the Trepcha as a matter of urgency. After being taken over it was handed over to management by *Morrison Knudsen International*, which later joined *Raytheon Engineering and Construction*, one of the most potent energy groups in the world, an influential and lobbying organization that has significant investments and business arrangements. With U.S. Government in the field of defense ([Flounders 2000](#)). Also noticeable is the lobbying activities of U.S. ambassadors in Kosovo connected with the involvement of the U.S. firm Bechtel Corporation in the construction of more than \$ 1 billion in road infrastructure in Kosovo ([Lewis et al. 2014](#)).

Albanian economic interests can also be seen through the privatization of companies in Kosovo. Privatization is being carried out at the Kosovo based on the controversial decision of the U.N. Special Envoy for Kosovo, Michael Steiner, in 2002. This decision allowed that most of the property, capital, and facilities located in Kosovo, which are the property of the Republic of Serbia can be privatized, mainly by the Albanian diaspora ([Petrovic 2006](#)). It is estimated that Serbia claims \$ 12.5 billion on the assets of the companies in Kosovo (around 1.358 objects) and the obligations of the Development Fund ([Petrovic 2006: 298](#)).

Examples of direct corporate lobbying in privatization are also evident. Telco AG, Liechtenstein company, in 2009, hired a US-based lobby company, the *Rhoads Group*, to secure corporate profits by concluding a contract with the Republic of Kosovo regarding an intermediary role in the sale of the telecommunications sector in Kosovo ([Balkan Insight](#)). The overriding goal of an engaged lobbying firm was to prevent another interested, competing, U.S. telecommunications companies from this arena. The leading lobbyist in this process was Shon Sullivan, who worked from 1995 to 2003 in various parts of the state administration, including key institutions in the U.S. Department of State and Defense. In 2001, he was appointed Political Advisor to the NATO Force Commander in Kosovo and later served as the High Representative of the NATO Secretary General in Serbia. Two most interested companies were a company of former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and of James Pardew, the Clinton-era special envoy to the Balkans ([Brunwasser 2012](#)) with the first finishing the deal.

Another example of corporate lobbying is the appearance of *Bechtel*, a U.S. construction giant. *Bechtel Corporation* is known for its lobbying appearances that have directly influenced U.S. foreign policy, and more specifically, interventionist. One of the main protagonists of this corporation's interests is George Shultz, former Secretary of State of the U.S. and also former Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. The organization began its international appearance in close cooperation with the CIA during the 1940s, and it is connected with millions of jobs in conflict areas around the world, such as in Iraq, Bolivia, the Philippines, India, etc. In the Balkans, they have been recognized for their involvement in highway construction in Croatia, Kosovo, and several projects in Albania. This firm has hired *Van Scoyoc Associates*, a lobbying firm of the Kosovo Government, „on the highway and other infrastructure issues“, and as a result of its successful performance, multi-billion-dollar deals were signed in Kosovo. In front of *Van Scoyoc Associates* was Mark Tavlarides, who played a significant role in the foreign policy of U.S. President Clinton, especially in matters of support to become independent of „Kosova“ and the strengthening of relations between Greece and Turkey to the „young Republic of Kosovo“.

5. ALBANIAN LOBBYING STRATEGY TOWARD U.S. ADMINISTRATION

About 214.000 Albanians are officially registered in the U.S., while some estimates indicate that between 250 and 500.000 Albanians live in the U.S. ([Nedelkoska-Khaw 2015](#)). The Albanian national corps began its political positioning in the U.S. based on political anti-communist emigration in the early 1950s ([Ragaru-Dymi 2004](#)). With the fall of communism in Albania, the activities of the Albanian national corps focused primarily on national unification goals, with the first project of separating Kosovo from Serbia ([Vickers 1999](#)). In the USA, there are many Albanian interest organizations, and it could be listed as an ethnic-based⁵ lobbying group.

The most influenced ethnic Albanian organization in the U.S. is the National Albanian American Council (NAAC), which is a crucial institution for establishing political support in the U.S. institutions in connection with the project of secession of Kosovo from Serbia, has a dominant role in achieving the goal of Greater Albania. Also, the NAAC actively pursued the collection of material and financial resources, and the mobilization, equipping and sending of young Albanians from the United States to Albania, from which they became involved in the operations of the KLA in Kosovo ([Mastrolilli 1998](#)).

Albanian leaders contacted the Washington Group (member of Ketchum Public Relations, which is part of the Omnicom Group-one of the world's leading communications companies. During the period of a year and a half (beginning of 1998-end of July 1999), Government of Kosovo was their client. Main task of this engagement was gaining the sympathy and positive attitude of world public opinion, especially in the West. Specific-operational tasks were: spreading news, information and images of the conflict on Kosovo, providing appointments for the Albanian leaders hosting in the world's leading media or participating in major political events, gaining mass media attention, establishing contacts with US senators and important politicians of the United Nations, representatives of NGOs and institutions, articles placement and comments in the media on alleged Serbian crimes in Kosovo", sending readers' letters of false readers and overloading mail addresses of major editorial offices and public figures, lobbying among various public figures to support the Kosovo Albanians and even publishing texts in the Serbian media. At that time Washington Group was operated by Susan Molinari, former editor of very influential newscasts CBS, later powerful Republican congressmen, with a wide array of contacts in the world's media and political structures.

Some of the features of the lobbying performance of the Albanian interest group are:

- *continuity in action to achieve the set goal.* Namely, Kosovo owes much of its self-proclaimed independence in 2008 to Albanian long-term and persistent lobbying, with continuity of action and diversity of lobbying instruments applied from the mid-1980s ([Sputnik International](#)). Albanian American Civic League lists some of the lobbying activities as:
- launch of petitions and debates, adopting resolutions in U.S. Congress (1986, 1987);
- organizing protests (in front of U.N. headquarters and the White House, 1988);
- expanding the support base allying (winning the support in Australia for „liberating Kosovo from Serbian occupation“ 1990);
- forming expert groups (Interparliamentary Group for Kosovo in Luxembourg, 1991);
- creating support for participation in international conferences (Helsinki Commission, 1991);
- cessation of U.S. aid to Yugoslavia and the opening of the sanction's regime (1991);
- the presentation of Ibrahim Rugova to President Clinton (1994);

- the establishment of support for Turkey's independence in Kosovo (1994);
 - creation of conditions that can be seen as forms of pressure for conducting military aggression against Yugoslavia (from 1994 to 1999);
 - public defense of the KLA image before Congress (1998);
 - advocating against the Holbrook-Milosevic deal, (1998);
 - presenting the idea of an independent Kosovo before E.U. institutions (1998);
 - support the recognition of the self-proclaimed independence of Kosovo (2004-2008) ([AACL](#));
- *engaging in professional lobbying firms.* The Government of Kosovo has continued the involvement of professional firms in lobbying U.S. institutions even after declaration of independence. The lobbying agreement with Patton Boggs was signed in 2011. It included the services of „advising on legal and representation interests related to expanding bilateral and multilateral relations” and „creating the conditions for investment and trade opportunities for Kosovo, as well as fundraising and foreign programs for the needs of Kosovo” ([Collaku-Marzouk 2012](#)). Patton Boggs Foreign Policy advisor Frank Wiesner served as Special Representative to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for the 2005 Kosovo status talks and played a significant role in self-proclaimed independence in 2008. Furthermore, in mid-2016, Kosovo signed a continuation of a \$ 600,000 (annual) contract with *Podesta Group*, one of the most influential lobbying firms in the United States. The head of this company is Tony Podesta, a brother of John Podesta, former Cabinet Chief of President Clinton during his presidential term. The agreement of Kosovo's engagement of Podesta Group covers activities in the areas of „research and analysis of key issues of interest to Kosovo”, as well as „advisory influence on U.S. policies, activities in Congress and executive bodies creating the U.S. political scene; keeping in touch with members of Congress and their staff, as well as with executive agencies, media and non-governmental organizations” ([Collaku-Marzouk 2012](#)). Also, from 2011 to 2013, the Podesta Group was engaged in advocacy for the Government of Albania ([Likmeta 2016](#));
- *lobbying from his organization* (in house lobbying) through the actions of formerly former U.S. Congressman Joe DioGuardi, the first Albanian elected to Congress, but also through the appearance of Albanian officials, and political representatives in Congress and the U.S. Senate who are declared lobbyists for the Albanian national question. Since his first election to Congress in 1984, Joe DioGuardi is actively lobbying for the rights of Albanians living in the Balkan countries: Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Presevo Valley (southern Serbia) and Kamara (northern Greece). For over twenty years, the organization has worked with leading U.S. Congressional Foreign Policy Executives, including Congressman Ben Gilman, Henry Hyde, Tom Lantos, Dana Rohrabacher, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Senators Charles Schumer, John McCain, Joe Biden (current president of the USA), Bob Dole, and Claiborne Pell ([AACL](#));
 - *lobbying the media* has been a dominant activity in preparing the public in the U.S. regarding the „necessity” of armed intervention against Yugoslavia. The Serbs were portrayed as xenophobic fascists who caused the humanitarian crisis on Kosovo. A broad media campaign was conducted to establish public support, with every rational, independent analysis aggressively attacked and discredited ([Stone 2005](#); [Perić 2019](#));
 - *influence of think tanks* and official academic structures, giving legitimacy to military intervention, building on quasi theories about the continuity of Albanian suffering due to „Serbian nationalism and dogmatic Marxism that conditioned the anti-Albanian mood in Kosovo” ([Lydall 1989: 199](#)). This appearance of intellectual and academic work made it easy for the public in the United States, but also in Western Europe, to move beyond military intervention, especially since Yugoslavia had a

negative connotation, as the last socialist economic system in the Western Balkans region (Pilger 2004);

- *the creation of alliances* and the support of other interest groups is manifested by the successful animation of part of the influential Jewish ethnic interest group, primarily through the public appearance of authorities such as Nobel laureate Eliezer Wiesel. Namely, in the media appearances, Wiesel sought to establish a direct link between the alleged crimes of Serbs against Albanians and atrocities against Jews in Nazi Germany, calling for intervention with the explanation as „if the U.S. intervened in Germany in 1938, no concentration camps would be established”. The Guardian reported that the final death toll during the so-called „massacre” and ethnic cleansing conducted by Serbia against Albanians was below 3.000. At the same time, an international forensic team found that the total death toll was around 2.100 and that it cannot say with certainty who the perpetrator of the killings was. After examining over 100 reported possible locations of mass graves, it was determined that there were no human remains in them (Steele 2000). However, stone already has been rolled. In strong support of undocumented but constantly repeated myth of the „bloodthirsty Serbs”, one of significant role had Hillary Clinton, the wife of former U.S. President Bill Clinton, later Senator and Secretary of State. As a prominent representative of the Albanian lobbying performances, she active participation of Eliezer Wiesel in several media outlets, with the primary goal to create a picture in public opinion which will link authorities in Yugoslavia with Germany before World War II, and the Albanian as a Jews in Germany during the same period (Kutrtzman 1999);

- *the absence of counter-measures* by the opposite side. The fact is that during intense lobbying against their interests, the response of the Serbian pressure groups in the USA is absent. Specifically, Lindsey states that „The Serbian lobby had no influence on U.S. policy toward the Balkans during the 1990s” (Lindsay 2004: 145). Also, it is noticeable that there is a continuity in the inactive approach to this problem since the Republic of Serbia is the only country from the territory of the former SFRY that did not hire professional lobbying firms to represent its foreign policy interests in the USA (Veterans Today).

In short, the performance of the Albanian lobby corps has all the characteristics of a keen interest in appearing in the process of influencing U.S. foreign policy, which can be analyzed according to the model of lobbying strategy (Mitrović 2015: 63):

- direct and indirect communication using all available communication tools;
- long-term relationship development, forming alliances, and broad coalitions;
- longlasting design of a strategically driven process, zero tolerance for the possible response of the opposing party;
- engage all available resources to achieve the goals;
- engaging national associations and groups with common points of interest, professional lobbyists, media, scientific, and other experts as „witnesses” of their interests;
- mobilization of the broadest base of supporters, based on a sense of belonging to a larger, more meaningful social goal.

6. CONCLUSION

As Ahrarri (1987) noticed, four factors grant success to ethnic groups in lobbying U.S. foreign policy. First, the group must press for a policy in line with U.S. strategic interests. Second, the group must be assimilated into American society yet retain enough identification with the mother country so that

this foreign policy issue motivates people to take some political action. Third, a high level of political activity is required. Fourth, their groups and movements should be politically unified. Referring to the analysis above, the Albanian National Lobby Corps fits entirely into a definition.

Albanian ethnic lobby, although small, has succeeded in achieving its goal of legitimizing separatist goals and separating Kosovo from Serbia as a big step in possible future unification with Albania. It should be emphasized that the preconditions for the existence of the lobbying scene and the regulated rules made it possible to achieve this goal. Namely, Serbia remained utterly inactive in the sense of lobbying its interest. It can also be observed that the Albanian lobby efforts are characterized by persistence, perseverance, identification of common interests with the U.S. administration, and a very flexible approach. Also, it is noted that material and business interests are the main motivating actors for key people in President Clinton's administration, and Albanian lobbyists were ready to reconcile their interests with theirs.

Based on the analysis of the activities of ethnic lobbying groups, it can be concluded that a relatively small community, organized and with clearly set strategic goals, can have an impact on U.S. foreign policy. The characteristics and conditions of influence on U.S. foreign policymaking are, in principle, as follows:

- the United States has elaborated legislation and procedures regarding all forms of interest representation;
- there are prerequisites for pursuing activity in the U.S. lobbying arena, open to all interested stakeholders;
- it is necessary to create a strategic interest performance, long-term planning, and targeted action.

Considering all of the above, we conclude that the future-oriented nation should strive for an offensive and concerted approach to centers of world power, which can influence the realization of national interests and a better and stronger position in international relations.

Endnotes

¹The name Metohija derives from the Greek word μετόχια, meaning „monastery estates“ which is related to vast territory in the region that was owned by the Serbian Orthodox Church (Kola 2003:47). The term „Kosovo and Metohija“ was in official use since in 1945-1968 period, (Bennett 1995), when the term „Kosovo“ became the official name of the province as a whole. In 1990, the new changing the official name of the province back to the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija (Krieger 2001).

²In 1998, the KLA organized more than a thousand attacks on Kosovo and killed more than 300 people (of which one half were police officers and soldiers and another half were citizens), wounded over 600 people (more than 400 policemen, 106 soldiers, and 162 citizens) and kidnapped 230 people. The victims were not only on the Serbs but also members of other ethnic communities, including the Albanians who did not support or cooperate with the KLA (Glas javnosti 2001).

³This new form of economic and political engagement has existed since 2010 and is the dominant way of supporting political candidates in the United States. Super PAC organizations are not allowed to provide direct financial support to candidates, but invest money in the implementation of candidate support activities. There are no limits on the number of funds they can raise and spend on election campaign activities. Super PAC is obliged to submit financial statements that state donors and reports on realized expenses. For example, in U.S. presidential election, approximately 2.400 Super PAC have cash flow over a billion of U.S. dollars.

⁴According to research, during the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, from 1991 to 2002, 157 contracts were signed with lobbying firms from the United States concerning individual national or state interests, which in 90 cases concerned the dissolution and complete disappearance of Yugoslavia. Apart from the Albanian ones, Muslim and Croatian international groups have a strong presence. One example is the realization that one of the most engaged public relations firms lobbying for Croatia's interests, Ruder Finn, charged up to \$ 100,000 a month for individual separate contracts relating to specific political interests (Beham 1997).

⁵Some of the most active professional and political Albanian organizations in the U.S. are Albanian American Medical Society, Albanian-American Freedom House, Albanian-American Development Found, Albanian-American Lawyers, Albanian American National Organization, Albanian American Civic League, Albanian American Woman's Organisation, Albanian-American Enterprise Fond and Medi (Albanian Media Group).

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Лобирање као стратешка комуникација у пракси - круна сепаратистичког покрета на Косову и Метохији

Сажетак:

Стратешка комуникација је један од израза меке моћи и представља инструмент у политичком и безбедносном остварењу националних интереса. Један од стратешких облика комуникације је залагање или лобирање. Потенцијално лобирање спољне политике је значајно, јер може да резултира директном војном интервенцијом за подршку циљевима интересних група. То се и десило Савезној Републици Југославији 1999 године када је била жртва НАТО агресије, предвођене Сједињеним Америчким Државама. Рад представља резултате организованих албанских интересних група у вези са покушајем утицаја на спољну политику САД за добијање подршке у циља отцепљења од Републике Србије и успостављање тзв. Републике Косово. Употреба аналитичке методологије кроз синтезу закључака указују на ефективне и продуктивне стратегије које су употребиле организације и вође косовских Албанаца у периоду од две деценије, али и потом. Рад приказује технике, методе и главне актере у процесу лобирања америчких институција за отцепљење Косова и Метохије од Републике Србије. Закључци указују на то да потенцијали организованог и стратешки планираног приступа лобирању институцијама САД могу донети успеха за сепаратистички покрет.

Кључне речи: стратешка комуникација; етничке интересне групе; лобирање; спољна политика САД; Косово