

## Students admit ignorance about situation in Kosovo

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"I don't care that much about it, honestly. I watch it and follow it, but it has no effect on me."

The news doesn't affect some students simply because they don't watch the news.

"We don't watch the news that much. We really don't know much about current events at USC [either]," business sophomore Alice McKie said.

Business sophomore Beth Toles also offered a reason why some students aren't knowledgeable about current events.

"They don't have the time," she said. "Between classes, studying and working, there just isn't the time."

"We just kind of have time to briefly glance over *The Gamecock* because it's free. Other newspapers you have to pay for, and we don't even get to look at [the conflict] that much in-depth."

Even some of those who take time to learn what's going on and look at it in-depth are having problems figuring out exactly what the situation is.

"Most people don't know what's really going on over there," business sophomore Jason Wade said.

"We were talking about it in government class. If government students don't know about it, I doubt anybody else does."

Business freshman Zach Erwin said he doesn't have a lot of information about the situation.

"I know there's something going on over there, that's about it," he said.

"I heard one of our planes got shot

down. I don't understand it. I have no clue what's going on."

Erwin was also unaware of the fact that more than one soldier had been taken hostage.

"I doubt a lot of people know about [the hostages]," he said.

The one instance in which students interviewed said they'd pay more attention is if they had a friend or family member involved somehow.

"If I knew somebody over there, I'd definitely pay a lot more attention like I did in the Gulf War," Toles said.

Liberal arts freshman Ashanti Friets admitted she doesn't understand everything that's going on but makes a point to watch the news. Friets also has an uncle in the Navy who is stationed in the region.

"He didn't want to go, and he didn't know why," he said.

"But they told him to go, so he goes. He's only 20."

Psychology freshman Tavra Johnson showed concern, as well.

"The majority of my friends know about it," she said.

"[But] I don't understand the real reasons we're really over there. I just don't think the U.S. needs to lead the strikes everytime."

And Cerefice, for one, thinks that as the NATO operation in Kosovo continues, that's just the question that will arise.

"If it starts to drag out too long, that's when things will get messy," Cerefice said.



## Three U.S. soldiers face Serb trial today

by Patrick Quinn  
Associated Press

**KUMANOVO, Macedonia** — The three U.S. soldiers had patrolled the hills and valleys between Macedonia and Yugoslavia many times. But their familiarity with the rugged, ill-defined border didn't keep them from being captured.

In recent weeks, some inhabitants had begun to show anger toward the patrols, as their mission official turned from peacekeeping to military reconnaissance.

Still, Staff Sgts. Andrew A. Ramirez, Christopher J. Stone and Spc. Steven M. Gonzales preferred to travel the rough roads, through small villages and forests, across streams and goat trails, in their wide Humvee than pull guard duty at base camp.

"It was boring in the camp, and out there it was quiet and peaceful," said Tim Baker, a photographer for *Stars and Stripes*, a newspaper for U.S. troops.

Baker spent time with the three soldiers and other members of their unit Tuesday in the mountains along the border with Kosovo, a province of Yugoslavia's republic Serbia.

Yugoslav military officials and NATO offered conflicting information Thursday about the exact location of the U.S. soldiers when they were seized by Serb forces.

A Yugoslav army announcement said the three soldiers, missing since Wednesday afternoon, were captured in Yugoslavia. NATO said it was un-

clear exactly where they were at the time.

Ramirez, Stone and Gonzales were part of a U.S. Army contingent that had been assigned to a U.N. monitoring force sent to Macedonia in 1993.

Last month, however, China vetoed an extension of the U.N. force, and part of the group — the 4th Cavalry Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division — was attached to a 12,000-member NATO force assembled in Macedonia in case of a peace agreement in Kosovo, where ethnic Albanian rebels are battling Serbs for independence.

They changed their white peacekeeping vehicles for military green, and that changed everything. Many of those who live in the area are either ethnic Serbs or Macedonian nationalists furious over NATO military strikes on their neighbor and the presence of foreign troops on their soil.

"You go through these very small farm villages," Baker said. "It was tense. When they drove the white [U.N.] cars, it was no problem. Now they are green, and they are getting stones and dirty looks even though it is the same guys."

During the patrols, a Humvee might sometimes split off from other vehicles in the patrol to go around a small hill. That happened with the three soldiers, somewhere near the border village of Penince. NATO said they reported being surrounded and under small-arms fire before losing radio contact.

Military and civilian sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the three might have been attacked by Serb



Staff Sgts. (left to right) Andrew A. Ramirez, Christopher J. Stone and Steven M. Gonzales pictured Thursday on Serbian television.

farmers who live on the Macedonian side and then turned over to Yugoslav forces just across the border. Most of the U.S. Army vehicles that operate here carry Global Positioning Systems, which can pinpoint location to within a few yards.

But Macedonia and Yugoslavia contest exactly where the border runs in that area, which is near the Monastery of Prohorpincki.

After their last call for help, NATO forces here launched a massive search-and-rescue effort that continued through the night, on the ground and in the air

with helicopters and a C-130 transport plane.

But it would have been easy to hide the Humvee among the tree-covered hills. As dawn broke, helicopters could be seen flying over the Kumanovo area. Throughout the night and early morning, NATO officials here expressed the hope they would be found.

That stopped when they were seen bruised and beaten on Yugoslav television.

"I can confirm that search has now been called off," said British Col. Robin Clifford, chief spokesman for NATO forces in Macedonia.

## Albania accepts waves of new Kosovar refugees

by Brian Murphy  
Associated Press



Special to The Gamecock

**FIER, Albania** — Kosovo refugees smoke donated cigarettes and stare idly across the street at a bright orange travel agency sign promoting buses to Greece and ferries to Italy.

"If it looks

impossible to return home, then I am not going to stay in Albania and cry forever. I'm moving on," said Adnan Shoshi, a 30-year-old carpenter from the southwestern Kosovo city of Djakovica, who arrived Wednesday in Fier.

Such talk makes officials very nervous in Italy and Greece, the two European Union nations in the direct path of the ethnic Albanian exodus from Kosovo, a province of the Yugoslav republic Serbia where 90 percent of the population was ethnic Albanian.

Yugoslav forces have reportedly been driving ethnic Albanians out of Kosovo.

But Albania, with dire poverty and a highway network that resembles

muddy footpaths in some places, claims it is in no position to handle the humanitarian crisis alone.

EU nations, led by Italy and Greece, have promised money and supplies.

"As we've seen in other refugee crises, however, it's not always easy to keep refugees in one place," said Marion Hoffmann, deputy representative of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Athens, Greece.

A widespread disbursement of the refugees also sends a clear signal that most will never return.

Refugees speak of Serb officials seizing passports and other documents.

NATO claims Serbs are also destroying birth and marriage records

that could prove someone's right to live in Kosovo. For Kosovo, such an outcome could be seen as a victory for alleged Serb "ethnic cleansing" campaigns.

Other officials, especially in Macedonia and Albania, suggest richer NATO members waging the airstrikes should shoulder more of the refugee burden. Aid officials have said food supplies for the Kosovo refugees are dangerously low.

"We all have a responsibility for the refugees. ... Our country is facing a really difficult situation," said Albanian Prime Minister Pandeli Majko

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The Gamecock is inviting any member of the Carolina community to write a letter of 250 words or less to welcome Lou Holtz to campus.

- Letters will be edited for content, libel and length.
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- Name and phone number are required for letters to be published.

### Write Lou a Question!

Questions will be randomly selected. One lucky question or letter writer will have an opportunity to get a picture with Lou!

Turn questions/letters into RH 333 or e-mail them to [gcked@sc.edu](mailto:gcked@sc.edu)

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