

Beslan School:

Militant Islam Hijacks the Chechen Separatist Movement?

Dodge Billingsley

Documentary film producer and director, Combat Films and Research



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In fall 1997, Dodge Billingsley entered Chechnya and became a guest of warlord Shamil Basayev, who now has a \$10 million reward on his head as Russia's most wanted man. The reward is for information leading to the "neutralization" of Basayev and separatist former Chechen president Aslan Maskhadov. Billingsley will explore the role Islamic militants have played in Chechnya against Russia, which he says has added an entirely new dynamic "since the polarizing events of 9/11." His company, Combat Films and Research (CF&R), has just completed *Beyond the Border*, a series of film films and a panel discussion for the Kennedy Center that begins airing on KBYU on 22 September at 9:00 P.M. (see program details online at <http://byunews.byu.edu/release.aspx?story=archive04/Sep/beyond>). CF&R completed both "Swift & Company K:3/25 Marines Engage in West Africa," in and "Virgin Soldiers" in



2003. In fall of 2001, Billingsley spent several months working in Afghanistan close to the battle for Mazar-i-Sharif, documenting the experience with director Paul Yule in "The House of War." He was also one of only two foreigners on hand at the prisoner revolt that took the life of CIA agent Mike Spann. Billingsley returned to Afghanistan just months following the Mazar-i-Sharif uprising, this time with U.S. allied troops during Operation Anaconda, as chronicled in "Close Combat Attack Apaches: D-Day Operation Anaconda." Having produced and directed documentaries on location from the United Arab Emirates to Africa and from Abkhazia to China, Billingsley continues to be involved in the conflicts plaguing the world. He received a bachelor's degree in history from Columbia University and a master's degree in war studies from London's King's College.