

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 1994

CONTACT: CLARKSON HINE
(202) 224-5358

LIFT BOSNIA ARMS EMBARGO

DOLE'S BIPARTISAN SENSE-OF-SENATE AMENDMENT CALLS ON PRESIDENT TO LIFT ARMS EMBARGO, ALLOW BOSNIANS TO DEFEND THEMSELVES

THE SIEGE OF SARAJEVO BEGAN ON APRIL 6, 1992, AND SINCE THAT TIME, THE WORLD HAS WATCHED WITH HORROR AS THE CITIZENS OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA HAVE BEEN SYSTEMATICALLY TERRORIZED, DRIVEN OUT OF THEIR HOMES, AND MURDERED BY THE TENS OF THOUSANDS.

THE LEADERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAVE FAILED TO RESPOND ADEQUATELY OR EFFECTIVELY TO THIS BLATANT AND BRUTAL ACT OF AGGRESSION AGAINST A U.N. MEMBER STATE.

SANCTIONS WERE IMPOSED AGAINST SERBIA IN MAY OF 1992. BUT, BY THE SUMMER OF 1992 -- WITH ABOUT 65% OF BOSNIA UNDER SERBIAN OCCUPATION -- IT BECAME CLEAR THAT HARD LINER SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC AND SERBIAN-BACKED IRREGULAR FORCES WOULD NOT RESPOND TO ECONOMIC OR DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE BY THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. HOW DID THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY REACT TO SERBIAN INTRANSIGENCE? -- BY BOLDLY MOVING FORWARD WITH MORE RESOLUTIONS, MORE SPEECHES, AND MORE DIPLOMATIC HAND-WRINGING.

INDEED, THE ONLY REAL U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION WAS UNDERTAKEN BY THE CLERKS WHO TYPED AND PHOTOCOPIED NUMEROUS PAGES OF RESOLUTIONS AND REPORTS. SURE, A NATO "NO-FLY ZONE" EXISTS, "SAFE HAVENS" HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED, AND AIR STRIKES ARE A POSSIBILITY -- BUT ONLY IN THEORY, IN U.N. AND NATO DOCUMENTS.

IN THE FALL OF 1993, WHEN IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT THESE PAPER THREATS WOULD FAIL TO DO THE TRICK, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY REDEFINED THE WAR IN BOSNIA AS A CIVIL WAR -- TURNING A BLIND EYE TO SERB AND CROAT SUPPORT OF IRREGULAR FORCES, AND TO THE PRESENCE OF REGULAR YUGOSLAV ARMY AND CROATIAN ARMY UNITS IN BOSNIA. FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS THE EUROPEANS AND UNITED NATIONS, THROUGH THEIR ENVOYS, LORD OWEN AND THORVALD STOLTENBERG, HAVE BEEN PRESSURING THE BOSNIANS TO SURRENDER AND SIGN A DEAL LEADING TO A THREE-WAY DIVISION OF BOSNIA -- WHICH WOULD REWARD SERBIA WITH 50% OF BOSNIA, SUBMIT TO CROATIAN CONTROL 17.5%, AND LEAVE THE BOSNIAN GOVERNMENT IN CONTROL OF ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF THEIR ORIGINAL TERRITORY.

LET'S FACE IT, THE EUROPEANS NEVER HAD THE RESOLVE TO TAKE ON THE SECOND-RATE FORCES DIRECTED BY BELGRADE. AND, THE U.N. LACKED THE WILL TO USE FORCE IN EVEN IN LIMITED WAYS -- TO FACILITATE THE DELIVERY OF FOOD TO STARVING BOSNIANS OR TO IMPLEMENT THE SO-CALLED "SAFE HAVENS" RESOLUTIONS. THE FACT IS THAT ANY THUG WITH A GUN CAN STOP A U.N. CONVOY.

BUT, PUTTING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S LACK OF COURAGE AND PRINCIPLE ASIDE, WHAT IS MOST EGREGIOUS AND INDEFENSIBLE IS THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS MAINTAINED AN ARMS EMBARGO ON THE BOSNIAN GOVERNMENT. IN EFFECT, THE WORLD HAS SAID, "WE WON'T DEFEND YOU AND WE WON'T LET YOU DEFEND YOURSELF. YOUR ONLY OPTION IS TO SURRENDER." AND SO, THE TRIGGER-HAPPY TERRORISTS IN THE HILLS AROUND SARAJEVO CAN TARGET A SCHOOL, A HOSPITAL OR A PLAYGROUND AND KNOW WITH ALMOST COMPLETE CERTAINTY THAT THEY NEED NOT FEAR ANY REPRISALS -- THEY CAN SLAUGHTER INNOCENT CHILDREN AT PLAY WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE.

I CANNOT FORGET THE PICTURES SHOWN THIS WEEK ON CNN OF BLOOD-SOAKED SNOW WHICH ONLY MOMENTS EARLIER HAD BEEN THE SCENE OF CHILDREN SLEDDING. WHAT IF THESE HAD BEEN PICTURES OF PARIS OR LONDON? WOULD THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL CLAIM THAT THE BRITISH AND FRENCH DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO DEFEND THEMSELVES? IS THE RIGHT TO SELF-DEFENSE LIMITED TO THE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL?

I AM DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED THAT BOTH THIS ADMINISTRATION, AND THE PREVIOUS ONE, FAILED TO ASSERT THE LEADERSHIP NECESSARY TO

(more)

MOVE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TOWARD POLICIES AND ACTIONS THAT WOULD LET THE BOSNIANS, AT THE VERY LEAST, DEFEND THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR HOMES.

PRESIDENT CLINTON, WHEN HE WAS A CANDIDATE AND THROUGH THE EARLY MONTHS OF HIS PRESIDENCY, PUBLICLY SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF LIFTING THE ARMS EMBARGO. UNFORTUNATELY TO DATE, PRESIDENT CLINTON HAS NOT USED THE TREMENDOUS INFLUENCE OF HIS OFFICE TO BUILD SUPPORT IN FAVOR OF THIS OPTION.

NEVERTHELESS, I BELIEVE IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO DO THE RIGHT THING. I BELIEVE THAT IN LIGHT OF GROWING FRUSTRATIONS WITH THE INEFFECTIVE U.N. PEACEKEEPING OPERATION IN BOSNIA, ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY HAS PRESENTED ITSELF TO REVISIT THE ISSUE OF LIFTING THE ARMS EMBARGO. CITIZENS IN COUNTRIES SUCH AS CANADA, WHO HAVE SENT TROOPS TO JOIN UNPROFOR IN BOSNIA ARE BECOMING WEARY OF A SITUATION WHERE THEIR TROOPS ARE ESSENTIALLY SITTING DUCKS; PUBLIC SENTIMENT IS GROWING TO PULL UNPROFOR FORCES OUT. THE ADMINISTRATION IS RIGHT TO OPPOSE THE INTRODUCTION OF U.S. GROUND FORCES INTO BOSNIA TO IMPOSE A PEACE SETTLEMENT AS HAS BEEN URGED BY THE FRENCH. BOSNIA IS NOT A COLONY, IT IS A MEMBER STATE OF THE UNITED NATIONS WITH RIGHTS UNDER THE U.N. CHARTER, INCLUDING, UNDER ARTICLE 51, THE RIGHT TO SELF-DEFENSE. BUT, OPPOSING BAD IDEAS IS NOT ENOUGH. THE U.S. MUST ASSERT LEADERSHIP IN SUPPORT OF A NEW COURSE OF ACTION.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR THE ADMINISTRATION TO PUSH AGAIN FOR LIFTING THE U.N. ARMS EMBARGO. AND, THE FIRST STEP SHOULD BE THE UNITED STATES LIFTING ITS EMBARGO ON THE BOSNIAN GOVERNMENT. BY PROVIDING ARMS TO THE BOSNIANS WE NOT ONLY IMPROVE THEIR ABILITY TO DEFEND THEMSELVES, BUT ASSIST THEM IN THE PROTECTION AND DELIVERY OF CRITICALLY NEEDED HUMANITARIAN AID CONVOYS.

CLEARLY THE PRESIDENT IS FOCUSED ON HIS DOMESTIC AGENDA, BUT LIFTING THE U.S. EMBARGO AND PRESSING FOR THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL TO DO THE SAME WILL NOT REQUIRE A GREAT DEAL OF THE PRESIDENT'S TIME -- JUST A FEW PHONE CALLS TO PRIME MINISTER MAJOR, PRESIDENT MITTERAND AND, OF COURSE, PRESIDENT YELTSIN -- WHO HAS BEEN STAUNCHLY SUPPORTED BY PRESIDENT CLINTON AND THE U.S. CONGRESS -- TO THE TUNE OF 2.5 BILLION DOLLARS THIS YEAR ALONE. INDEED, SUCH ACTION WILL BE A BIG STEP TOWARD THE JUST RESOLUTION OF THIS TRAGIC WAR IN A MANNER THAT DOES NOT INVOLVE A MASSIVE COMMITMENT OF U.S. RESOURCES -- TO INCLUDE U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL.

THEREFORE, IN THE HOPE OF URGING THE PRESIDENT TOWARD THIS COURSE OF ACTION, I AM OFFERING THIS AMENDMENT, TOGETHER WITH SENATORS LIEBERMAN, LUGAR, MOYNIHAN, HELMS, D'AMATO, AND BIDEN. IT STATES THAT IT IS THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD TERMINATE THE U.S. EMBARGO AGAINST BOSNIA, PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 51 OF THE U.N. CHARTER, AND PROVIDE MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA UPON RECEIPT OF SUCH A REQUEST.

THIS AMENDMENT IS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME LANGUAGE THAT WAS PASSED BY THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE DURING ITS MARKUP OF THE FOREIGN AID AUTHORIZATION BILL -- A MODIFICATION OF THE BILL I INTRODUCED LAST YEAR, S. 1044. IT IS ALSO SIMILAR TO LANGUAGE PASSED LAST YEAR IN THE HOUSE, BASED ON THE HYDE COMPANION BILL TO S. 1044.

I URGE MY COLLEAGUES TO SUPPORT THIS MEASURE. THE LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO IS LONG OVERDUE. WHAT IS AT STAKE IN BOSNIA IS NOT JUST BOSNIA, BUT THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER.

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Remarks delivered on Senate floor, approximately 3:45 PM ET.