

*Bob Dole*



**NEWS**

**U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS**

**FROM:**

**SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*  
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## **LIFT BOSNIA ARMS EMBARGO**

### **DOLE/LIEBERMAN AMENDMENT REQUIRES TERMINATION OF U. S. ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST BOSNIA**

Yesterday the President announced a new initiative to broaden the use of NATO air power to protect U.N. declared safe havens in Bosnia. In my view, such a move is welcome and long overdue. However, the President's initiative did not include an effort to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnians.

President Clinton said that he still favored lifting the arms embargo, but did not believe that our allies would support such a move. Nothing will change that unless America takes the lead -- and that is why I am offering bipartisan legislation to lift the embargo today. I might add that the President said that he was "encouraged" by support in the Congress for lifting the embargo.

#### **Strengthen President's Hand with Allies**

Indeed the Congress is already on record in support of lifting the arms embargo -- not just the U.N. embargo -- but unilaterally lifting the U.S. embargo. The Senate overwhelmingly adopted a Sense of the Senate Amendment I sponsored in January calling on the President to unilaterally lift the U.S. embargo against Bosnia; the vote was 87-9 in favor. Earlier this week the House-Senate Conference on the State Department Authorization Bill adopted this measure as a Sense of Congress.

It seems to me that now is the time to strengthen the President's hand by letting the British, the French and the Russians -- who have objected to lifting the embargo on Bosnia -- know that the U.S. Congress fully supports going it alone if necessary because this embargo has no legal basis and is unjust.

#### **Legal vs. Illegal Embargoes**

Administration officials have said that the United States should not act unilaterally because such action could unravel support for other U.N. embargoes -- such as that against Iraq. The arms embargo against Bosnia is not analogous to the embargo against Iraq. First, this arms embargo was established against Yugoslavia -- a country that no longer exists. Second, extending the arms embargo to Bosnia violates Bosnia's fundamental right to self-defense -- a right that is incorporated in Article 51 of the U.N. Charter. Finally, aggression was waged against Bosnia, while Iraq was the aggressor against Kuwait. The arms embargo against Bosnia -- unlike the legal embargoes against Iraq, Serbia or Libya -- is illegal, in addition to being unjust.

#### **Mandates Termination of U.S. Embargo**

And so I rise to introduce an amendment which goes further than my earlier amendment and mandates a termination of the U.S. arms embargo against Bosnia. The amendment simply states that the President shall terminate the U.S. arms embargo of the Bosnian government upon receipt from that government of a request for assistance in exercising its right to self-defense under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. This language was taken from S.1044, a bill I introduced, together with the distinguished Senator from Connecticut, Senator Lieberman, last year. I am pleased that Senator Lieberman is cosponsoring this amendment today, as well, together with Senators Lugar, Mack, McCain, Levin, Feingold, Hatch, Dorgan, and others. In addition, the amendment prohibits the enforcement of the U.N. embargo against Bosnia. The amendment also includes a provision which states that nothing in this amendment shall be interpreted as authorization for the deployment of U.S. Forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina for any purpose.

(more)

### Best Way to Avoid U.S. Ground Troops

There are those in the Senate who have grave concerns about the possible deployment of U.S. ground forces -- the so-called slippery slope argument. Well, in my view, the best way to ensure that U.S. forces will not be sent on the ground to fight this war for the Bosnians is to lift the embargo and give them the means to fight it themselves.

For two years now, the Bosnians have been unable to defend their citizens against the destruction and slaughter that has come to be known as "ethnic cleansing." And so, officials of the Bosnian government have been forced to plead to the international community for the protection of their people.

### What the Bosnians Want

Yesterday, I received a letter from the Bosnian Prime Minister, Haris Silajdzic, in which he said, and I quote, "and while we would prefer to defend our own people against this brutal aggression, rather than ask for help from the United States and NATO, we do not have the means to defend ourselves due to the U.N. arms embargo on Bosnia-Herzegovina." The Bosnian Vice President, Ejup Ganic, emphasized that point when I met with him yesterday. He said that the tragic situation in Gorazde may not have occurred had the Bosnians had anti-tank and other defensive weapons. We have the men, he said, but not the arms. In my view, it is not our place to deny the freedom-seeking Bosnians the right to self-defense.

President Clinton hinted that if his initiative did not succeed in convincing the Serbs to halt their aggression and come to the negotiating table, that the allies may be persuaded to change their minds. My question is why wait any longer? The war in Bosnia has gone on for two years now. How much longer must the Bosnians wait to exercise their right to self-defense? How many more chances are we going to give the Bosnian Serbs who already occupy 75% of Bosnia? And when is the international community going to abandon its neo-colonial approach in which the world decides what is right for Bosnia and the Bosnians have no say?

### U.S. Leadership

It is high time to lead our allies to the right position -- the position that President Clinton supports -- and that is lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia. A vote in favor of this amendment will strengthen the President's position by letting our allies know that the Congress is serious and supports the United States going it alone if there is no other way to persuade them.

Yes, the allies have troops on the ground, but they always have the option of withdrawing them at any time. Let's put aside the excuses and lead the way. I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment.

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\*\* Remarks delivered on the Senate floor, approximately 11:50 AM.

#### " UNITED STATES ARMS EMBARGO OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA.

(a) Prohibition . - Neither the President nor any other member of the Executive Branch of the United States Government shall interfere with the transfer of arms to the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(b) Termination . - The President shall terminate the United States arms embargo of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina upon receipt from that government of a request for assistance in exercising its right of self-defense under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

(c) Definition . - As used in this section, the term 'United States arms embargo of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina' means the application to the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina of -

(1) the policy adopted July 10, 1991, and published in the Federal Register of July 19, 1991 (58 Fed. Reg. 33322) under the heading 'Suspension of Munitions Export Licenses to Yugoslavia'; and

(2) any similar policy being applied by the United States Government as of the date of receipt of the request described in subsection (a) pursuant to which approval is routinely denied for transfers of defense articles and defense services to the former Yugoslavia.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as authorization for deployment of U.S. forces in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina for any purpose, including training, support or delivery of military equipment.

### Lift Arms Embargo

U.S. leadership is needed to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnians, as well. For two years, the Bosnians have suffered widespread death and destruction because they have been unable to adequately defend themselves -- all because of an arms embargo that was placed on Yugoslavia -- a country that no longer exists. The brave forces defending Gorazde had manpower and morale, but could not stop the tanks and mortars with small arms.

### Congress Overwhelming For Lifting Arms Embargo

I would remind the Administration that the Congress is on record on the matter of the lifting the arms embargo. The Senate overwhelmingly adopted an amendment I sponsored which called for an immediate and unilateral lifting of the arms embargo. Yesterday the House-Senate conference on the State Department Bill adopted the Dole Amendment. It is high time that the Clinton administration begin listening to the views of the Congress on this issue -- which are strong and clear -- rather than just listening to U.N. bureaucrats, like Yasushi Akashi or the British and French -- who always have the option of withdrawing their troops if the embargo is lifted.

This embargo, unlike the embargoes against Iraq and Libya, is illegal and unjust. I would like to bring attention to an op-ed in today's New York Times, by Jeane Kirkpatrick -- who was our Ambassador to the United Nations during the Reagan administration -- and by Morton Abramowitz -- who held a number of senior positions in the State Department and is President of the Carnegie Endowment. This article makes the legal and moral case for immediately and unilaterally lifting the arms embargo.

### U.N. Failures in Bosnia

The criticisms of the manner in which the United Nations has operated in Bosnia are justified. The U.N. protection forces seem to have done anything but protect. Time and time again, General Rose has stated that the United Nations is not in Bosnia "to win a war." That is true, but neither are U.N. forces in Bosnia to ensure that the Bosnian Serbs win the war. The United Nations has failed to enforce U.N. Security Council resolutions, the United Nations has cowered and hesitated in the face of Serbian defiance and threats, and finally the United Nations presence has created an obstacle to the lifting of the arms embargo against the Bosnians.

### Administration Cannot Escape Blame

The flaws of the U.N. and UNPROFOR, however, do not exonerate the weakness of the United States and the absence of a consistent U.S. policy toward Bosnia. The Administration cannot escape blame for its pretense of helplessness, for overreliance on the diplomatic initiatives of the Europeans and the Russians, and for asserting neutrality in the face of blatant Serbian aggression. All of these failings contributed to the success of Karadzic and Mladic's strategy of conquest and ethnic cleansing.

There is still time for the Administration to define a policy toward Bosnia which places the tremendous influence of U.S. diplomacy and substantial military strength of NATO on the side of the Bosnians -- who are the victims of the bloodiest aggression in Europe since the Second World War. If the President acts decisively and with urgency in the coming hours, there is still hope of stopping the carnage in Gorazde. NATO is not in need of the means to act, it is in need of a leader.

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\* Remarks delivered on the Senate floor, approximately 11:20 AM.