

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: CLARKSON HINE
(202) 224-5358

BOSNIA/HAITI

DOLE AMENDMENTS DON'T TIE PRESIDENT'S HANDS; CONGRESS SHOULDN'T SIT ON ITS HANDS EITHER

I HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH THE WHITE HOUSE OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS TO NARROW OUR DIFFERENCES ON MY BOSNIA AMENDMENT AND MY HAITI AMENDMENT. THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS ARE DIFFICULT AND WILL NOT BE RESOLVED TODAY -- MAYBE THEY WILL NEVER BE RESOLVED. HOWEVER, WE HAVE COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING ON MY BOSNIA AMENDMENT AND ON HAITI, AS WELL.

IN MY VIEW, THE LESSON OF THE SOMALIA DEBATE AND THE SENATE'S VOTE LAST WEEK IS THAT CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL SHOULD BE OBTAINED IN ADVANCE OF A SIGNIFICANT DEPLOYMENT, SO THAT WE AVOID CONGRESSIONAL MOVES TO ABRUPTLY TERMINATE AN OPERATION AFTER OUR TROOPS ARE ALREADY ENGAGED IN A MISSION.

I AM NOT SEEKING TO PLACE A "STRAIGHTJACKET" ON THE PRESIDENT'S POWERS AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF, AS SOME FORMER EXECUTIVE BRANCH OFFICIALS HAVE SUGGESTED. INDEED, I AM TRYING TO CONSTRUCT A POLITICAL "FLAK-JACKET" TO PROTECT AGAINST CONGRESSIONAL ARTILLERY ONCE A DEPLOYMENT IS UNDERWAY.

Not a Partisan Issue

SOME HAVE SUGGESTED THAT I AM OFFERING MY AMENDMENTS BECAUSE THERE IS A DEMOCRAT IN THE WHITE HOUSE. WELL, I WOULD CALL TO THEIR ATTENTION AN AP STORY FROM NOVEMBER 13, 1990 -- A STORY WHICH SAID A SENATOR CALLED ON THE PRESIDENT TO CALL CONGRESS BACK INTO SESSION AND SEEK ITS APPROVAL FOR U.S. TROOP DEPLOYMENTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF. THE PRESIDENT WAS GEORGE BUSH, THE SENATOR WAS THE SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER. I SAID, "I THINK IT OUGHT TO BE PUT TO THE CONGRESS, PUT UP OR SHUT UP." IT WAS MY VIEW THAT OBTAINING CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR OUR PERSIAN GULF POLICY WOULD HELP BUILD A CONSENSUS AMONG THE PUBLIC. MY VIEWS HAVE NOT CHANGED.

Don't Tie President's Hands

MY AMENDMENTS ARE NOT DESIGNED TO TIE THE PRESIDENT'S HANDS OR TO LIMIT HIS ABILITY TO ACT IN THE PROTECTION OF AMERICAN INTERESTS. HAVING READ THEIR NUMEROUS EDITORIALS IN SUPPORT OF THOUSANDS OF PAGES OF CONGRESSIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON ASSISTANCE TO NICARAGUA, AND CERTIFICATIONS ON U.S. TROOPS IN EL SALVADOR, I FIND IT FASCINATING THAT THE NEW YORK TIMES AND THE WASHINGTON POST ARE NOW CONVERTS TO THE DOCTRINE OF PRESIDENTIAL FLEXIBILITY. IT'S CERTAINLY A 180 DEGREE TURN- AROUND FROM THEIR SUPPORT FOR CONGRESSIONAL AMENDMENTS DURING THE 1980s WHICH PRECLUDED MILITARY, INTELLIGENCE AND OTHER OPTIONS WITH RESPECT TO U.S. POLICY TOWARD CENTRAL AMERICA. I DON'T KNOW IF THE EDITORIAL WRITERS READ MY AMENDMENTS, BUT IF THEY DID, THEY IGNORED THE FLEXIBILITY IN THE TEXT. IN ANY CASE, I WELCOME THE POST'S AND TIMES' CONVERSION AND HOPE IT WILL CONTINUE WHEN A REPUBLICAN RETURNS TO THE WHITE HOUSE.

I DON'T BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD TIE THE PRESIDENT'S HANDS, BUT I DON'T BELIEVE THE CONGRESS SHOULD SIT ON ITS HANDS, EITHER. WHAT I AM SEEKING TO DO IS TO FIND THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN PRESIDENTIAL PREROGATIVES IN COMMITTING U.S. FORCES TO MILITARY OPERATIONS, IN PARTICULAR, MULTILATERAL AND PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS, AND CONGRESSIONAL PREROGATIVES IN APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THOSE ACTIVITIES.

Congressional Power of Purse

TO REMIND THOSE OUTSIDE THE CONGRESS WHO ARE WATCHING AND COMMENTING ON THIS DEBATE, IT IS THE CONGRESS WHICH HAS THE POWER OF THE PURSE. IT IS THE CONGRESS WHICH APPROPRIATES FUNDS FOR FOREIGN AID, FOR MILITARY BASES ABROAD, FOR NATO, AND FOR THE UNITED NATIONS, AMONG OTHER THINGS.

(MORE)

IT HAS NOT BEEN MY INTENTION TO USURP THE PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY IN FOREIGN POLICY -- AND IN MY VIEW EVEN MY ORIGINAL AMENDMENTS DID NOT DO SO. INDEED, I WOULD NOT HAVE DIRECTED MY STAFF TO MEET WITH ADMINISTRATION STAFF TO LISTEN TO THE PRESIDENT'S CONCERNS AND TO MAKE CHANGES IN THE AMENDMENTS TO ADDRESS THOSE CONCERNS IF THAT WERE THE CASE.

BUT, AS THE DEBATE LAST WEEK ON SOMALIA DEMONSTRATED, THE CONGRESS WILL NOT GO ALONG AND QUIETLY FOOT THE BILL, ESPECIALLY IF AMERICANS ARE SENT INTO HARM'S WAY FOR MISSIONS THAT ARE QUESTIONABLE, UNCLEAR OR DO NOT REFLECT U.S. INTERESTS.

SOME OF MY COLLEAGUES SAY THAT THE CONGRESS SHOULD NOT SEEK TO GIVE APPROVAL PRIOR TO A DEPLOYMENT, THAT WE SHOULD WAIT AND PULL THE PLUG LATER, IF NECESSARY. THERE IS NO CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR CONGRESS TO WAIT FOR BODY BAGS BEFORE WE MAKE OUR VIEWS ON A PARTICULAR MISSION OR OPERATION KNOWN. MOREOVER, I BELIEVE THAT IT IS IN THE PRESIDENT'S INTEREST TO HAVE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL IN ADVANCE.

Peacekeeping in Bosnia

A FEW WEEKS AGO, FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH BOSNIAN PRESIDENT IZETBEGOVIC, PRESIDENT CLINTON WAS ASKED BY REPORTERS WHETHER HE WOULD AGREE TO THE BOSNIAN GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST FOR A GUARANTEE OF U.S. PARTICIPATION IN IMPLEMENTATION OF A POTENTIAL PEACE SETTLEMENT. PRESIDENT CLINTON RESPONDED AND I QUOTE: "I'VE BEEN WILLING TO DO THAT SINCE FEBRUARY. BUT IN ORDER TO DO IT, WE HAVE TO HAVE A FAIR PEACE THAT IS WILLINGLY ENTERED INTO BY THE PARTIES. IT HAS TO BE ABLE TO BE ENFORCED OR, IF YOU WILL, BE GUARANTEED BY A PEACEKEEPING FORCE FROM NATO, NOT THE UNITED NATIONS, BUT NATO. AND, OF COURSE, FOR ME TO DO IT, THE CONGRESS WOULD HAVE TO AGREE."

LAST WEEK, THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE HELD A HEARING ON U.S. POLICY TOWARD BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA AT WHICH ASSISTANT SECRETARY STEPHEN OXMAN AND AMBASSADOR VICTOR JACKOVICH TESTIFIED. THE DISTINGUISHED CHAIRMAN OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, SENATOR PELL, OFFERED TO HOLD THIS HEARING DURING THE SENATE'S DEBATE ON THE FOREIGN OPERATIONS APPROPRIATIONS BILL. AT THAT TIME, I WAS CONSIDERING OFFERING AN AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE CALLED ON THE PRESIDENT TO SEEK CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL PRIOR TO COMMITTING U.S. FORCES TO IMPLEMENT A PEACE SETTLEMENT IN BOSNIA. IN LIGHT OF THE DISTINGUISHED CHAIRMAN'S OFFER TO HOLD HEARINGS ON U.S. POLICY TOWARD BOSNIA, I DECIDED NOT TO OFFER MY AMENDMENT. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK SENATOR PELL FOR ACTING SO QUICKLY. UNFORTUNATELY, IN HIS TESTIMONY, SECRETARY OXMAN SEEMED TO WALK BACK THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS.

I BELIEVE THAT IT IS CRITICAL THAT THE CONGRESS THOROUGHLY CONSIDER U.S. POLICY TOWARD BOSNIA, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE PRESIDENT HAS MADE A TENTATIVE COMMITMENT TO SEND AS MANY AS 25,000 U.S. TROOPS TO ENFORCE A POSSIBLE BOSNIAN SETTLEMENT. SUCH A DEBATE, IN ADDITION TO CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION WOULD BE NECESSARY, IN MY VIEW, EVEN IF A SMALLER NUMBER OF GROUND TROOPS WERE TO BE DEPLOYED.

President Welcomes Congressional Authorization

AND SO, I AM PLEASED THAT AS A RESULT OF MY DISCUSSIONS WITH THE WHITE HOUSE, THE PRESIDENT HAS SENT A LETTER TO ME WHICH STATES THAT, AND I QUOTE, "I HAVE ALSO MADE CLEAR THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE A STRONG EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FROM THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS PRIOR TO THE PARTICIPATION OF U.S. FORCES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF A BOSNIAN PEACE ACCORD. FOR THAT REASON, I WOULD WELCOME AND ENCOURAGE CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION OF ANY MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN BOSNIA."

IN VIEW OF THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER WELCOMING CONGRESSIONAL AUTHORIZATION PRIOR TO SENDING U.S. TROOPS TO BOSNIA TO IMPLEMENT A SETTLEMENT, I HAVE REMOVED THE FUNDING PROHIBITION FROM MY AMENDMENT. THEREFORE, MY AMENDMENT NOW STATES THAT IT IS THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT NONE OF THE FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THIS BILL SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR THE PURPOSES OF DEPLOYING U.S. ARMED FORCES TO PARTICIPATED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT IN BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA, UNLESS PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED BY THE CONGRESS. IT ALSO STATES THAT SUCH AUTHORIZATION SHOULD NOT APPLY TO MISSIONS AND OPERATIONS INITIATED ON OR BEFORE TODAY, SUCH AS THE HUMANITARIAN AIRLIFTS INTO SARAJEVO, THE NATO NO-FLY ZONE, OR CURRENT NATO OVERFLIGHTS OR AIR STRIKES DESIGNED TO STOP THE SHELLING OF SARAJEVO, WHICH HAS DRAMATICALLY INCREASED OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS.

I BELIEVE THAT I WAS NOT ALONE IN THINKING THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD COMMITTED TO SEEKING CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. AND, I BELIEVE THAT I AM NOT ALONE IN THINKING THAT THE PRESIDENT

(MORE)

SHOULD RECEIVE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL IN ADVANCE OF SENDING U.S. GROUND FORCES TO BOSNIA. I AM PLEASED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS TAKEN THE SAME VIEW.

SENDING 25,000 TROOPS TO BOSNIA IS NOT A MINOR MATTER. THIS IS A MASSIVE UNDERTAKING WHICH WOULD PUT AMERICAN LIVES IN HARM'S WAY FOR A DUBIOUS AND, IN MY VIEW, UNPRINCIPLED PURPOSE. THIS PROPOSAL MUST BE THOROUGHLY CONSIDERED BY THE CONGRESS AND VOTED ON. I HAVE LONG BELIEVED THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS CLEAR INTERESTS IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA. I BELIEVE THAT THE INTEGRITY OF INTERNATIONAL LAWS AND PRINCIPLES, INCLUDING THE HELSINKI ACCORDS AND THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER, ARE AT STAKE IN BOSNIA. I BELIEVE THAT REGIONAL STABILITY IS ALSO AT STAKE IN BOSNIA.

U.N. Plan in Bosnia Rewards Aggression

HOWEVER, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CURRENT OWEN/STOLTENBERG PLAN PROTECTS OR PROMOTES THOSE INTERESTS. THIS U.N.-MEDIATED PLAN REWARDS AGGRESSION -- AND IN SO DOING, IT UNDERMINES THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER AND FUNDAMENTAL INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES, SUCH AS THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF INTERNATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED STATES.

AND SO, IF THE BOSNIANS SUCCUMB TO INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE AND AGREE TO THIS PLAN, WHAT THE CONGRESS WILL HAVE TO DECIDE IS WHETHER TO SEND THOUSANDS OF AMERICAN MEN AND WOMEN INTO A DANGEROUS ENVIRONMENT, TO PROTECT TERRITORIAL GAINS MADE THROUGH THE MOST DEPLORABLE MEANS OF "ETHNIC CLEANSING."

MY HOPE IS THAT AS WE DISCUSS THIS ISSUE FURTHER, THE ADMINISTRATION WILL REALIZE WHAT SOME OF US HERE ALREADY REALIZE: THAT THE OWEN/STOLTENBERG PLAN IS FATALLY FLAWED, BUT THAT THERE ARE STILL OTHER OPTIONS -- OPTIONS WHICH WOULD SUPPORT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE BOSNIAN STATE, PROMOTE ITS SURVIVAL, ARE LESS COSTLY IN LIVES AND IN DOLLARS, AND WHICH WOULD NOT UNDERMINE THE VERY VALUES AND PRINCIPLES THAT THIS COUNTRY STANDS FOR.

THERE HAVE BEEN CONSULTATIONS WITH THE CONGRESS ON BOSNIA, AND IN THOSE MEETINGS, MEMBERS HAVE RAISED MORAL, POLITICAL AND MILITARY CONCERNS ABOUT THE CURRENT OWEN/STOLTENBERG PLAN. YET, IN THOSE SAME MEETINGS AND IN HOUSE AND SENATE LEGISLATION, THE CONGRESS HAS SUPPORTED THE PRESIDENT ON LIFTING THE ARMS EMBARGO -- UNILATERALLY, IF NECESSARY -- AND WE HAVE AUTHORIZED THE NECESSARY FUNDS TO PROVIDE ARMS AND OTHER MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO THE BOSNIAN GOVERNMENT. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE ADMINISTRATION, UNTIL RECENTLY, HAS LISTENED MORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND EUROPEANS, AND LESS TO THE CONGRESS.

Consensus Building Between Executive and Congress

I HOPE THAT THROUGH THIS AMENDMENT, AND MY AMENDMENT ON HAITI WE WILL HAVE STARTED A PROCESS OF GENUINE CONSENSUS-BUILDING BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND THE CONGRESS, NOT JUST ON BOSNIA AND HAITI, BUT ON ALL OF THESE DIFFICULT POST COLD-WAR FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS. I HOPE THAT WE CAN COME TO A MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING ON THE APPROPRIATE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY, AS WELL. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE PRESIDENT AND HIS STAFF FOR WORKING WITH ME ON THESE AMENDMENTS AND LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING SUCH A DIALOGUE AND CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP ON FOREIGN POLICY IN THE FUTURE.

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