

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

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Contact: Clarkson Hine
(202) 224-5358

BOSNIA ARMS EMBARGO

**CLINTON POLICY IS ONLY POLICY THAT WOULD LEAD TO GROUND TROOPS:
DESPITE ADMINISTRATION SCARE TACTICS,
DOLE TO PURSUE END TO EMBARGO IF NO PEACE IS REACHED**

WASHINGTON -- Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole today issued the following statement regarding Defense Secretary William Perry's speech at Kansas State University, in which he attacked the idea of lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia and conducting air strikes against the Serb military forces:

It seems ironic to me that two years after advocating a "lift and strike" policy the Clinton administration is acting like it never supported the idea -- even though it was candidate Clinton's idea and President Clinton's idea -- at least for a few months until the British and French said "no."

Secretary Perry reportedly said in his speech that such an approach would lead to the introduction of tens of thousands of U.S. ground troops. Yet, in May 1993, President Clinton asked for Congressional support of lift and strike.

Ground Troops & Administration Scare Tactics

Let's be clear, there is only one policy that would lead to the introduction of ground troops into Bosnia and that is the Clinton policy. Lifting the arms embargo does not mean deploying American ground forces. It is the Clinton administration that has committed to sending U.S. ground troops to enforce a partition of Bosnia if the Serbs agree to it, and the Clinton administration has offered to assist the withdrawal of U.N. troops. The way to avoid sending ground troops is to give the Bosnians -- who have plenty of manpower -- arms to defend themselves. In the past, the United States has provided military assistance before without sending thousands of ground troops -- in Afghanistan and Central America.

In my view, the administration has resorted to scare tactics in order to deflect attention from the fact that the Clinton policy and the Contact Group policy have been a total failure.

The May 1 ceasefire deadline is nearing, but the Contact Group is no closer to reaching a deal with the Serbs than it was in July 1994, when it made its "take it or leave it" ultimatum to the Serbs. Well, the Serbs have taken 70% of Bosnia and left the Contact Group high and dry.

Let's be clear, lifting the arms embargo will restore Bosnia's fundamental right to self-defense. A right that has been revoked by the international community with the support of the United States.

(more)

Leadership Means Going First

As for acting unilaterally, going first does not mean going it alone. I expect we will be joined by a number of countries, including NATO countries -- even if the British and French refuse. More than 90 countries supported the termination of the arms embargo in the U.N. General Assembly.

Furthermore, leadership means going first. It does not mean waiting around for things to happen. And it does not mean accepting the lowest common denominator of the international community.

The U.S. tried the European approach for the past three years. The results are clear:

- 70% of Bosnia is still occupied and two and a half million people are still not able to return to their homes.
- NATO credibility has suffered due to the absurd "dual-key" arrangement which subordinates it to the U.N.

Without Peace, Senate Will Move to Lift Embargo

The bottom line is that the present policy has failed and is not cost-free. In fiscal year 1994 and in fiscal year 1995, we will have spent more than a billion dollars to support the U.N. forces in Bosnia -- and this does not include humanitarian and other assistance to Bosnia, or the costs of U.S. military direct and indirect support. We have subsidized the U.N. forces despite the fact that they have not fulfilled their mandate, and that they have not been able to protect their own forces, let alone the Bosnians. Recent events in Bihac demonstrate that the safe havens are safe for Serbian attack, not Bosnian civilians.

If a peace agreement is not reached by the end of the ceasefire on May 1, will the administration propose that the U.N. forces stay indefinitely because it lacks the will to change the course set by the Europeans? If so, that is a sorry commentary on U.S. foreign policy especially on a day when we have news reports of a CIA report's conclusions on the brutal facts of Serbian genocidal aggression against the Bosnians.

If no peace is reached in the coming weeks, I will take up the bipartisan Dole/Lieberman legislation to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia.

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