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NEWS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

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BOSNIA RESOLUTION

DOLE TO INTRODUCE RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE PRESIDENT'S CONDITIONAL USE OF U.S. GROUND FORCES TO ASSIST IN UNPROFOR WITHDRAWAL

At this moment, several thousand U.S. troops and their equipment are headed for Europe to positions near Bosnia and Herzegovina. Tomorrow the Armed Services Committee will hold hearings on this deployment and U.S. policy. On Thursday the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will also conduct hearings to learn about current U.S. Policy toward Bosnia.

These hearings are of critical importance -- not only because of the seriousness of sending American ground forces into harms' way, but because of the continued confusion over U.S. policy.

Last Wednesday, at the Air Force Academy, the President stated, and I quote, "I believe we should be prepared to assist NATO if it decides to meet a request from the United Nations troops for help in a withdrawal or a reconfiguration and a strengthening of its forces." But, a few days later, in his weekly radio address, the President stated that in addition to assisting in the withdrawal of UNPROFOR, the United States may send ground troops in the "highly unlikely event" that part of the U.N. force became "stranded and could not get out of a particular place in Bosnia" and need "emergency extraction." The President added that such an emergency operation would be "limited and temporary."

What is U.S. Policy in Bosnia?

The first question each of the committees must ask is what is U.S. policy today. Is it to help strengthen and reconfigure U.N. forces, or is it to assist in "emergency extraction?" Furthermore, what is the difference between reconfiguring forces and emergency extraction? What is the relationship between emergency extraction and total U.N. withdrawal? Would such an extraction be a prelude to full withdrawal? In other words, what is the mission of U.S. ground forces if they are deployed for contingencies other than participating in a complete withdrawal of U.N. forces.

Basic Operational Questions

Then the committees will need to turn to basic operational questions:

- What is the NATO-U.N. relationship? When does NATO command begin? How far does it extend -- to all air and ground forces in Bosnia?
- What is the command structure and its relationship with U.N. commanders?
- What are the rules of engagement? Are they robust?
- What are the threats to our forces? How will they be addressed?
- What is the estimated duration of the operation? Last August during DOD authorization conference former U.S. envoy Chuck Redman told conferees that Pentagon estimates were that a withdrawal operation would take three months -- to include equipment. If the current plan anticipates a longer duration, why is that the case? If the duration is lengthy, is this because of demands by UNPROFOR contributors to take all of their equipment -- not just lethal equipment? And will U.S. lives be risked to save equipment?
- With respect to emergency extraction operations, how are the terms "limited" and "temporary" defined?
- What will the U.S. role be in U.N. decisions which could lead to such emergencies, for example if Bosnian Serbs retaliate for an UNPROFOR action by overrunning Gorazde?

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In addition, the committees will need to pursue the Administration's decision to provide close air support to the quick reaction force. Reportedly, Secretary Perry has agreed to make helicopter gunships part of potential close air support operations for the quick reaction force. AC-130s, unlike our F-16s, fly slow and close to the ground -- therefore they are more vulnerable.

-- What actions will NATO take to suppress the threats posed by surface to air missiles (SAMS)?

-- When will such action be taken?

An American pilot was shot down by a SAM and is missing. Last December, Admiral Leighton Smith, our NATO commander in Naples wanted to take out Bosnian Serb SAM sites because of the threat they posed to pilots patrolling the no-fly zone. But, NATO did not take out those SAMS because the U.N. commanders said "no." Had NATO acted six months ago, our pilot may not have been shot down. So the question now is, are we going to send more Americans into harm's way without taking measures to reduce the risk?

Questions on Diplomatic Front

On the diplomatic front, there are also many questions.

-- What is the diplomatic strategy with respect to Serbian President Milosevic? Are we sure there is a split between Milosevic and Radovan Karadzic, or is Milosevic playing good cop and Karadzic bad cop? If there is a split how do we explain Milosevic's role in releasing some of the U.N. hostages? Has Milosevic been promised anything in return for his assistance in securing the release of hostages?

-- Are we going to agree to lift most sanctions on Serbia in return for recognition of Bosnia and what does recognition mean -- really closing the borders and cutting off supplies and military contact with the Bosnian Serbs?

-- If we lift sanctions on Serbia now, how do we maintain any leverage over Serbian actions against the Albanians in Kosova and Serbian support for militant separatists in Croatia?

I have not listed all of the questions that need to be asked at the hearings this week. Furthermore, these matters need to be placed in a larger context -- namely, what is the objective of these actions: is it to remove U.N. forces or to keep them there? Are we serious about withdrawal or not? If not, why not?

Administration Consultations With Congress

This bigger picture should be the focus of Administration consultations with the Congress. We should not only be informed about NATO planning and operations. We should be engaging in a dialogue about where we are going. Are we at last going to lift the unjust and illegal arms embargo on Bosnia?

I believe that the United States has interests in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As George Will said this week in Newsweek in response to the charge made by some that the U.S. has no 'dogs in this fight,' that, and I quote, "but those in the fight are not dogs and by the embargo we have helped make the fight grotesquely unfair. What would be the consequences on our national self-respect -- our nation's soul -- of a preventable Serbian victory followed by 'cleansing' massacres? Bosnian Serbs have seized 70 percent of Bosnia but they are not a mighty military force and will become even less so if the Serbian government in Belgrade can be pressured into leaving Bosnia's separatist Serbs isolated in combat with a Bosnian army equipped at last with tanks and artillery. The Serbs fighting in Bosnia are bullies led by war criminals collaborating with a dictator. If we don't have an interest in this fight, what are we?"

I believe that we need to assist our NATO allies in the event of U.N. withdrawal. However, I also believe that we need to recognize that U.N. efforts in Bosnia have failed -- failed to stop aggression, failed to bring peace, and failed to protect the Bosnians.

The New Republic in its June 19 editorial states that, and I quote, "there is another Bosnian crisis this week. Not in Bosnia, of course. In Bosnia things are the same, only more so. A greater Serbia is slowly and steadily emerging by means of a genocidal war. No, the crisis is taking place in the capitals of the western powers, which are finding it harder and harder to escape the consequences of their policy of appeasement."

The European decision to create a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) is in itself an admission of failure. The QRF is intended to protect UNPROFOR, not the Bosnians. And the very tasks the QRF envisions being engaged in, such as securing the Sarajevo airport, are tasks that were originally given to UNPROFOR by the

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U.N. Security Council. Therefore, there is a real question of whether or not sending more forces -- even with more equipment -- will do anything more than supply the Bosnian Serbs with more potential hostages.

The bottom line is that keeping UNPROFOR on the ground indefinitely will not bring us to a solution in Bosnia. Indeed it will prevent a solution by reinforcing the failed status quo. As The New Republic points out, and I quote, "it cannot have escaped the notice of our policymakers that the U.N. is providing cover for the Serbs, except that the U.N. is providing cover for our policymakers, too. It saves them from the prospect of action."

Withdraw UNPROFOR & Lift Arms Embargo

Withdrawing the U.N. force is the first step away from failure and toward a solution. I support U.S. participation, to include ground troops, in a NATO operation to withdraw U.N. forces from Bosnia provided certain conditions are met.

Therefore, some time over the next few days I intend to introduce a resolution to authorize the President to use U.S. ground forces to assist in the complete withdrawal of U.N. Forces from Bosnia under the following conditions:

- (1) nato command, from start to finish, no u.N.-Nato dual-key arrangement;
- (2) robust rules of engagement which provide for massive response to any provocation or attack on u.S. Forces;
- (3) no risking u.S. Lives to rescue equipment;
- (4) prior agreement on next steps, to include lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. President, we need to support our allies. But we must make sure that in so doing, we are neither prolonging a failed policy or leaping into a quagmire.

I believe that this resolution will provide the president with the essential support of the congress and will help put us on the right policy track.

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* Remarks delivered on Senate floor, approximately 3:45 p.m.