

I urge my colleagues to read and consider Mr. Soros' insightful comments on this difficult issue that we must debate as the time for elections and the withdrawal of the implementation force troops draws near.

[From the Wall Street Journal, May 29, 1996]

POSTPONE THE BOSNIAN ELECTIONS . . .

(By George Soros)

I am deeply committed to making the Dayton peace process work. My foundation, among its many projects, has prepared a \$15 million plan for providing pluralistic TV broadcasting to most of Bosnia prior to the elections, and the U.S. and European governments have pledged substantial funds to turn the plan into reality. Yet I feel compelled to voice a protest against the impending decision of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to certify that conditions are suitable for holding "free and fair" elections in Bosnia by Sept. 14.

IMMENSE PRESSURE

The OSCE head of mission in Bosnia, career U.S. diplomat Robert Frowick, has been under immense pressure from the U.S. government to issue the certification required under the Dayton agreement; two of his top aides have resigned in protest. The International Helsinki Federation issued a report on May 23 documenting that virtually none of the conditions spelled out in the Dayton agreement has been met:

Indicted war criminals have not been arrested. Gen. Ratko Mladic is in charge of the Bosnian Serbe army, issues all orders and communicates with the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR) commander through an interpreter. Radovan Karadzic continues to dominate the political scene, sacking the prime minister of Republika Srpska, Rajko Kasagic, who was willing to cooperate with U.N. representative Carl Bildt, but as a sop to Mr. Bildt, Mr. Karadzic has now promised not to make any further public appearances.

Freedom of movement remains severely restricted. Although official boundary checkpoints have been turned over to IFOR, they have been effectively replaced by mobile checkpoints, where the authorities representing all three ethnic factions routinely refuse to accept documents issued by the others. Signatures required to register political parties cannot be gathered across ethnic lines, hindering opposition parties seeking to attract a multiethnic constituency. For instance, the Liberal Democratic Party based in Sarajevo and the Social Liberal Party based in Banja Luka, which were united before the war and which are trying to form a common platform, cannot meet or even speak by telephone because of a lack of phone lines.

Freedom of expression and independent broadcast and print media are virtually nonexistent in so-called Herzeg Bosna (a Croatian ethnic enclave within the Bosnian-Croatian Federation) and in Republika Srpska. The situation is somewhat better in Bosnian territory, with an independent press in cities such as Sarajevo, Tuzla and Zenica and with some independent local TV and radio stations. Under present conditions the three nationalist parties that rule their separate entities control the relevant media, giving them an unfair advantage. The media under their control continue to foment ethnic and religious hatred, in contradiction of the Dayton agreement.

Freedom of association is severely repressed, leaving little chance for opposition parties to solidify support. The Helsinki Federation report cites specific instances.

The failure of the international community to secure the return of refugees (only about 60,000 out of the estimated 2.4 million have returned), coupled with election rules

that allow people to vote where they now live, will legitimize the results of ethnic cleansing.

It is easy to understand what drives U.S. policy, but it is less easy to condone it. The timetable for the Bosnian elections is determined by the timetable for the withdrawal of IFOR troops, which is governed by the U.S. presidential election. President Clinton has of course made a commitment that U.S. troops would begin returning home by the end of the year. U.S. voters, who are so far removed from the problems of Bosnia and not well informed about the issues at stake, are primarily interested in whether the president will keep his word.

To conduct early elections in Bosnia, it would have been necessary to arrest the indicted war criminals before the momentum of Dayton dissipated. But the military has been traumatized by its experience in Somalia, and the Pentagon refused to accept the mission. The Clinton administration put its faith in Slobodan Milosevic, but he could not or would not deliver. To order IFOR into action against the advice of the military would expose President Clinton to a pre-election risk that he is determined to avoid.

But to persevere in the present course entails even bigger risks. Bosnia will set a precedent for the post-Cold War world. By insisting on going through with the elections we would breach the conditions of the Dayton peace plan we engineered, provide a blueprint for legitimating ethnic cleansing and undermine the principles of international law we sought to establish by creating the War Crimes Tribunal.

FURTHER CONFLICT

Bosnia cannot be split into separate ethnic entities without further conflict. The Serbs have carved out a contiguous territory for themselves (although the area around Breko remains contested), and the Croat nationalists of Herzeg Bosna aim at no less. Even the military concedes that it would be easier to maintain its presence than to reintroduce troops after fighting has erupted again.

The failure of the international community in Bosnia is already affecting the behavior of neighboring Yugoslavia and Croatia, and it will be a source of never-ending re-creation between the U.S. and Europe. President Clinton may be able to avoid Bosnia becoming an election issue, but it would surely haunt his second term in office.

BOB DAYTON, MIKE GRIFFIN AND  
GENE SHERIDAN HONORED

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 10, 1996

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my constituents in the 5th Congressional District of New York, and the citizens of the village of Port Washington, in Nassau County, in recognizing the Port Washington Youth Activities [PYA] as it celebrates its sixth hall of fame dinner dance.

This year, the PYA will honor three individuals, Bob Dayton, Mike Griffith, and Gene Sheridan for their dedication and support of youth activities in the community. These individuals will be inducted into the Port Washington Youth Activities Hall of Fame.

Bob Dayton was a significant force in the developmental days of PYA; he served as coach, commissioner, officer, and director for more than 13 years. Mike Griffith is being cited for his athletic achievements in basket-

ball at the collegiate level in the 1970's. Many of his skills and dedication to excellence were developed in his active days as a youth in the PYA basketball and baseball programs. Finally, Gene Sheridan is being honored for having distinguished himself as commissioner, director, and a coach of youngsters in the lacrosse, basketball and football programs for more than 12 years and still remains active today.

All three of these gentlemen are being recognized for their individual and collective contributions to youth sports. Their achievements are an excellent reflection upon themselves, their families, and their community, and represent the true American spirit of dedication and voluntarism embodied by the PYA. These three men are most deserving of this honor, and merit the special appreciation of their neighbors and friends.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me now in honoring Bob Dayton, Mike Griffin, and Gene Sheridan, and in congratulating the Port Washington Youth Activities for its generous contributions and dedicated service to the community.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT  
FINANCING, AND RELATED PRO-  
GRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT,  
1997

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER G. TORKILDSEN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 1996

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3540) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1997, and for other purposes:

Mr. TORKILDSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Foreign Operations appropriations bill and aid to Israel—our most important ally in the Middle East.

At less than 1 percent of the total budget, foreign aid is a bargain. It gives us tremendous leverage when negotiating with nations and provides a valuable tool for promoting democracy throughout the world. It is also important to remember that 85 percent of aid to Israel comes back to the United States through trade, creating and sustaining jobs.

The Middle East remains the most turbulent and heavily armed region of the world, producing a constant threat to Israel's national security. Amid unrest and oppression, Israel remains a beacon of hope for free people, and a model for those still struggling for the basic right to vote. At the heart of Israel's recent elections was the desire of all Israelis to live free of violence. American military and economic support remains an essential part of this much-needed sense of security.

In recent years, due in large part to ongoing U.S. support, Israel has enjoyed a prospering economy. This week, Prime Minister-elect Netanyahu stressed his commitment to continued economic growth through free market reforms. U.S. economic aid is helping Israel aggressively enter the global marketplace as a key trading partner.