

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ANALYSIS OF THE CRISIS IN BOSNIA

HON. HARRY JOHNSTON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 21, 1995

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to introduce into the RECORD our ranking member's insightful, thought-provoking analysis of the crisis in Bosnia.

CONTINUING CRISIS IN BOSNIA

(By Lee H. Hamilton)

I. INTRODUCTION

It is a pleasure to be here today and a privilege to address this distinguished group. The World Affairs Council of Washington has long fostered a better understanding of American foreign policy. It has served as an important forum for considering important foreign policy issues.

Today I want to talk about one of the toughest foreign policy issues since the end of the cold war: the war in Bosnia. It's at the top of the foreign policy agenda right now. It has evoked more frustration than any other foreign policy issue since the Vietnam war. It is an issue that will not go away, much as we would like it to.

Secretary Perry was right on the mark the other day when he said, "We are at a defining moment in this war, and the actions we take in the next few weeks are going to be very critical."

II. CRISIS IN BOSNIA TODAY

Before the fall of Srebrenica, the military, diplomatic and humanitarian situation in Bosnia was bleak enough. Today the agony of Bosnia is almost unbearable.

The UN peacekeeping operation, UNPROFOR, is on the verge of collapse. The UN and NATO no longer appear able—or willing—to fulfill the pledges they made to protect safe areas and establish weapons-free zones.

On the humanitarian front—in the past, one of the few achievements—aid shipments have also been blocked. There is starvation in some cities and events like Srebrenica only compound the humanitarian disaster.

Diplomacy, too, is at a standstill. Neither the Bosnian government nor the Bosnian Serbs seem interested in a diplomatic settlement. The Contact Group—the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and Germany—still has a peace plan and a map on the table. But the Contact Group has not yet convinced the Bosnian Serbs to accept the peace plan. Talks with Serbian President Milosevic to recognize Bosnia and undercut the Bosnian Serbs—in exchange for a partial lifting of the embargo—are also stalled.

The military picture is worsening. The deployment of the new 10,000-strong British-French-Dutch rapid reaction force to buttress UNPROFOR is a last ditch effort to prevent for the collapse of that mission. UNPROFOR may decide to leave soon if the fighting continues or if the remaining safe areas prove indefensible.

In short, we are on the verge of a new and dangerous phase in this tragic war.

There is a growing feeling in Congress that UNPROFOR has failed and should leave Bosnia and that the arms embargo should be

lifted to allow the Bosnian government to defend itself and to improve its position at the bargaining table.

Members of Congress also understand that the President has made a commitment to help UNPROFOR withdraw, if it comes to that. All that points to U.S. involvement.

On the other hand, I see little support, either in Congress or among the American people, for a U.S. military mission in Bosnia. President Clinton will have an uphill battle winning support in Congress for sending troops to Bosnia for any purpose.

The question is, are there any other options?

III. U.S. INTERESTS IN BOSNIA

The fundamental problem for U.S. policy in Bosnia is the gap between what we say we want to achieve and the resources we are willing to commit to this crisis.

The Clinton Administration came into office determined to address the humanitarian tragedy of Bosnia. But it soon made a judgment that the United States does not have vital national interests at stake in this war. I agree. Bosnia has no strategic or economic significance.

Whenever I return home to my district in Indiana, it is clear that Bosnia is of no real significance to the people of Indiana. It is not a place they are willing to send their children to fight and to die.

Yet, as President Clinton has emphasized, the U.S. has important interests. These interests include:

Preventing a wider war in the Balkans that could engulf our NATO allies and spread instability throughout Europe.

Stopping the slaughter of innocent civilians and securing the delivery of humanitarian assistance;

Maintaining NATO as a powerful and credible force in the post cold-war world; and
Maintaining the credibility of the United Nations and strengthening its ability to respond to future crises.

With the horrible ethnic cleansing and bombardment of civilian populations there is an understandable desire to respond—to help victims, punish aggression and stop the killing.

But U.S. foreign policy cannot respond to every tragedy around the world or attempt to right every wrong, especially when the American people do not favor intervention.

The only way to turn back Serb aggression in Bosnia is to send hundreds of thousands of ground troops into combat, and occupy Bosnia for many years to come. The United States has never considered doing that. Neither the President nor Congress, past or present, have been Bosnia as a vital American interest worth that enormous risk and sacrifice.

IV. POLICY CHOICES WE HAVE NOW

I know there have never been good choices or simple solutions to the war in Bosnia. We must deal within the narrow options dictated by the realities on the ground, domestic political pressures in the United States, and the policies of our allies.

Right now we have three basic options:

The first option is what I call Lift, Strike and Train.

Many in Congress believe that UNPROFOR has failed and should be withdrawn and that the arms embargo should be lifted.

A bill sponsored by Senators Dole and Lieberman will come up in the Senate this

week. It calls for the lifting of the embargo either after the withdrawal of UNPROFOR, or 12 weeks after the Bosnian government asks UNPROFOR to withdraw.

Some who support this option recognize that it commits the United States to war—through training and equipping Bosnian forces, and through air strikes to defend Bosnian forces until they can defend themselves.

Yet the chief sponsors of this proposal are silent on its consequences. They talk about "letting the Bosnian people defend themselves." But they do not spell out what happens next. Lifting the arms embargo is fraught with peril for the United States.

The basic fact is that if we lift the embargo, so will the Russians. There will still be no level playing field in Bosnia, just more weapons on each side and wider war. We run the risk of getting drawn into a proxy war with Russia in the Balkans, the sort of nightmare scenario we sought to avoid during 40 years of the Cold War.

Unless NATO is willing to launch air strikes to protect the Bosnians, the Bosnian Serbs—with Serbia's help—will crush them in the time it will take to train and supply Bosnian forces. If the air strikes are not enough, the allies will be forced either to retreat or escalate with ground forces.

If lifting the embargo is anything more than rhetoric, the sponsors have an obligation to spell out their strategy. Who will supply the arms? Who will deliver them? Who will train the Bosnians to use them? Who's going to pay for them? Who will protect them while they are training?

The answer to all these questions is the United States. The United States will also have to feed and protect the civilian population once UNPROFOR leaves.

The Dole proposal does not address these concerns. In fact, it just hands over a key U.S. foreign policy decision to the Bosnian government. We tell the Bosnian government: You decide. Make a request to lift the embargo, and we'll do it. No discretion. No judgment. Just do it.

In the process of lifting the embargo, the Dole proposal will kill the initiative to strengthen UNPROFOR, force UN peacekeepers to withdraw instead and trigger the deployment of 25,000 U.S. troops to assist in that withdrawal.

In short, the Dole proposal means direct U.S. military intervention in Bosnia. That is precisely why the Bosnian government supports it.

The second option is to get UNPROFOR out and let the parties fight it out.

There is a growing sense that the UN is no longer able to carry out its mission in Bosnia, and that the parties themselves do not want to make peace.

According to this view, we should set a date certain for the termination of UNPROFOR—perhaps at the end of its current mandate at the end of November—if there is no progress on the negotiating front.

We must understand how difficult this business of withdrawal is going to be. It is not going to be a quick, easy, risk-free withdrawal.

A pullout by UNPROFOR, with or without a lifting of the arms embargo, will involve U.S. troops on the ground in Bosnia. In theory, they would be in Bosnia for only a matter of weeks, and only to help UNPROFOR

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

withdraw. They would not be involved in combat. But a withdrawal mission will almost certainly expose U.S. troops to hostile fire. Casualties are likely.

The withdrawal of UNPROFOR also threatens to trap U.S. troops in Bosnia. UNPROFOR'S pullout would leave the people of Bosnia exposed to humanitarian disaster. The presence of a well-armed, disciplined U.S. force in the midst of that disaster would lead to enormous pressure on that force to stay—to protect civilians, deliver humanitarian supplies, and even takes sides in the war. It will be difficult to resist that pressure.

Even if we want to leave, we may not be able to. Tens of thousands of Bosnian refugees, left in dire circumstances, will rush to the withdrawal forces for protection. They will try to block UNPROFOR'S withdrawal.

Remember, too, that as the UN peacekeepers leave, the contending parties are likely to grab more land. We will have to decide whether to use our air power and combat troops in response.

In short, there will be no such thing as an orderly withdrawal from Bosnia.

The third option is to strengthen UN peacekeeping and continue negotiations.

The proposal to strengthen UNPROFOR, stay the course, and focus on moving the parties toward a negotiated settlement is the least bad option. It will not provide a moral and just settlement, but at least it will stop the killing. This is a realistic and responsible policy.

Keeping UNPROFOR in Bosnia, beefed up by the Rapid Reaction Force, at least for the next two to three months, gives negotiations one last chance. We should support French and British efforts to protect remaining safe havens. I have doubts about an airlift using American helicopters to ferry British and French troops into Gorazde. The use of more aggressive air strikes against the Serbs certainly must be considered.

Maintaining the unity and cohesion in NATO must remain a paramount U.S. strategic consideration. We should act together with our NATO allies. I do not want Bosnia to become the sole responsibility of the United States. Whatever we do should be in cooperation with the Europeans and others whose troops are exposed on the ground.

There is no acceptable alternative. Any other course of action would provoke the collapse of UNPROFOR, a wider war, and the deployment of U.S. ground troops in the middle of a dangerous war.

For all of its obvious shortcomings UNPROFOR has produced much good in Bosnia.

UNPROFOR has kept hundreds of thousands of people alive through the delivery of humanitarian aid.

UNPROFOR has helped contain the fighting. In the first year of the war, 1992, there were upwards of 100,000 casualties before the deployment of UNPROFOR. This past year, the number of casualties was 3000. If UNPROFOR goes, we risk rekindling savagery of the magnitude that led to its deployment in the first place.

Time may be running out on this option, but we should still give it more time before we pull UNPROFOR out.

We must also do everything possible to get the peace negotiations back on track.

The only way to stop the killing and end this war is through a negotiated agreement acceptable to all sides—not wider war. We must continue to search for diplomatic, political and economic steps that will press the parties, especially the Serbs, to accept a peaceful outcome.

We must exploit the desire of the Serbs throughout the former Yugoslavia for recognition, acceptance and re-integration into the world community.

To gain concessions at the negotiating table, we must use as leverage Milosevic's political and economic need to end the sanctions and re-enter the world community.

We must be flexible enough in these negotiations to facilitate an agreement that will reflect realities on the ground—yet be fair enough to secure Bosnia as an integral state, however decentralized that state may be.

We must be realistic and flexible for one key reason: In the absence of NATO ground troops—including the U.S.—the Bosnian government stands to gain more territory at the peace table than it can ever gain on the battlefield.

V. ENDING POLICY AMBIGUITY

I urge the Clinton Administration to adopt this third option—to strengthen UN peacekeeping and press forward with negotiations—and stick with it.

Past ambiguities in U.S. policy have prolonged this war. Last year, I advised our top policymakers that it was time for brutal honesty on Bosnia.

Candor and honesty would have been helpful then, and are urgent now.

We have not been straightforward with the Bosnian government. They are still waiting for us to come to the rescue. We must be honest with them, and with ourselves. We should make it clear to the Bosnian government that it should get the best deal it can, because the cavalry is not coming to the rescue.

We have been trying to please all sides. We want to support the Bosnian government against Serbian aggression, we want to keep U.S. troops out of Bosnia, and we want to end the war. But these goals are not compatible. It is impossible to achieve any one of these goals without compromising the other two.

We must choose: do we want to fuel an open-ended Balkan war with uncertain outcome or do we want to work with our friends and allies to stop the killing?

VI. CONCLUSION

Bosnia has been a hellish problem for this Administration, and for this country. There are no heroes among the policymakers, and there is plenty of blame to go around. We cannot undo what has happened in this war, absent a commitment of ground troops and resources that neither the United States nor its allies are prepared to make.

We need to end the war in Bosnia not only to stop the senseless killing, but because a failure to end it will have a continuing, corrosive impact on NATO and the United Nations. We need these institutions to address future crises through collective action.

If the parties in Bosnia want to fight, we can't stop them from fighting. Yet I believe we still have an opportunity to end this war. There have been opportunities for peace in the past that slipped away. The Contact Group plan and map are still on the table. The parties' differences are not that great—at least not in comparison to the costs of a looming all-out war.

We have one last chance to try to end this war before UNPROFOR may be forced to withdraw. I urge the President to use these few remaining weeks to clarify U.S. policy and press as hard as he can for a negotiated peace settlement in Bosnia—before he is called upon to send U.S. ground troops to help our NATO allies leave.

FREEDOM FROM UNION VIOLENCE ACT

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 21, 1995

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, over the last several years, we in the House have devoted a great deal of attention to the issue of crime in the United States, and have passed several anticrime bills. While we have not always agreed on the proper methods to reduce crime in America, Members of this body have unanimously condemned acts of violence.

To me, therefore, it is inconceivable that this Congress has not moved to outlaw certain acts of violence that have been protected by the Supreme Court since 1973. That year, the Court ruled in its *Enmons* decision that union officials were exempt from prosecution for acts of violence, if they were used to gain legitimate union objectives. The *Enmons* decision severely restricted the scope of the 1946 Hobbs Anti-Extortion Act. The Hobbs Act was enacted primarily to quell violence and extortion by union members and officials as they enforced compulsory union membership. By exempting union officials from the Hobbs Act, the High Court effectively sanctioned these acts of violence.

The results of this decision have been devastating. Since 1973, union violence resulted in 181 murders, 440 assaults, and more than 6,000 acts of vandalism. In fact, from 1975 to 1993, there were more than 7,800 acts of documented union violence. I believe that this violence must stop.

On June 8, 1995, I introduced H.R. 1796, the Freedom From Union Violence Act. H.R. 1796 would restore the original intent of the Hobbs Act to allow Federal authorities to prosecute union officials accused of violence or extortion in violation of the Hobbs Act. The author of the Hobbs Act, Representative Samuel Hobbs, stated, "that crime is crime * * *, whether or not the perpetrator has a union card." I agree with Mr. Hobbs, and I believe that, regardless of one's views on labor issues, the House can agree that violence is wrong and ought to be condemned. Lady Justice, after all, is blindfolded—she should not be peeking to ask for union credentials.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

HON. DOUGLAS "PETE" PETERSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 21, 1995

Mr. PETERSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I've heard a lot the past several weeks about deficit reduction. And I've heard a lot about the urgent need to reform Medicare and Medicaid.

Although there is widespread agreement among nearly every Member of in this Chamber with regard to the above mentioned principles, let me remind my colleagues that Medicare cannot be saved through a simple line item on a budget bill, nor can Medicaid be reformed by simply changing it to a block grant and passing it off to the States. These ideas