

"We" are a proud Country, the best on the planet; and from our childhood, to our death, our pride in faith, become part of us and this we never regret; So for the good of the world, I say this; "Be with God, fear not the evil from Hell, for hell has not the courage, the pride, the body or the heart of an American, and this day, today, the world and Oklahoma will never forget;

"God Bless America"

By S.L. (Spud) Beckes, The Oklahoma Poet.●

#### STATEMENT ON LIBERIA

● Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, as the United States military winds up its spectacularly successful evacuation of over 1,795 people from Liberia, I rise today to pay tribute both to our 214 soldiers who conducted this very difficult mission, and to the United States personnel, led by Chargé D'Affaires Bill Mylam, who are working under dire circumstances to try to bring some stability to Liberia. These people have undertaken magnificent and courageous endeavors, endeavors of which the American people should be very proud.

Today I also want to focus on the challenge that must be faced in dealing with this unfortunate turn of events in West Africa.

After a few months of guarded optimism that there might be peace in Liberia, it appears that this woeful country is once again on the brink of collapse. Looting and fighting have overtaken the capital, halting implementation of the Abuja Accords, suspending humanitarian operations and limiting food and water supplies. In addition to the 1 million-odd refugees around Liberia, 60,000 people have been newly displaced in Monrovia, and 15 to 20,000 Liberians are crowded into the Barclay's Training Center [BTC], seeking protection from tribal warfare. After United States evacuation efforts, only 19 Americans remain in Liberia in an official capacity, and humanitarian efforts are endangered. The prospects look bleak, but our resolve to contain the fighting and disintegration must remain steadfast. We have so few alternatives.

Since September 1995 when the Abuja Accords were signed by all the warring factions, the United States, along with other interested members of the international community, has tried to help implement them. The primary tasks were deploying West African peacekeeping forces through ECOMOG throughout the country, militarily disengaging and disarming the factions, and quickly investing in an economy that had virtually nothing to offer the citizens of Liberia.

Mr. President, this has not been overly successful. While there have been many false hopes in Liberia, Abuja represented a reasonable plan, but only if each phase of that plan was fully met. It has not been—not by the Liberian factions, not by the international community, and not by the United States.

ECOMOG has never been strong enough to help create an atmosphere of stability needed for peace to survive. Nigerian elements have remained dominant in ECOMOG, while new forces—such as a Ghanaian battalion that had previously succeeded at peacekeeping missions—have not been funded. This is a failing of the international community, including the United States, that had pledged to support the Abuja Accords. At the pledging conference, the United States committed \$10 million for ECOMOG—a small sum for peace in any case. We have only delivered \$5.5 million of that.

Mr. President, strengthening ECOMOG to help it carry out its mission is a commitment the United States made, correctly, to help prevent an explosion like the current one in Monrovia from occurring. But the fact that we barely delivered on our commitment has been damaging to the peace process. Two months ago, Senator KASSEBAUM and I made a proposal to transfer \$20 million from democracy programs at AID to help fund a new battalion for ECOMOG. An unusual source of funding, perhaps, but indicative of the high priority we placed on the funding of ECOMOG, and a statement that ECOMOG is part of our development efforts in West Africa. The administration opposed this particular transfer, but promised to work to come up with other sources of funding for ECOMOG. Not only did the administration not find the money, but it also did little in this time frame to solicit contributions from others. Crises like these demand creative responses, so I would propose we take a hard look at other programs for this purpose. Strong cases can be made that Liberia is relevant to both these accounts. I will work with the administration to continue to look for resources which we can redirect to this cause.

In theory I support the proposals I have heard about on the table today to extend communications and other logistical support and training to new battalions for ECOMOG, but I can't resist asking why the administration didn't focus on this earlier? Why did it take massive looting and displacement in Monrovia to solicit this response? And if the fighting lulls, will the interest in Liberia be sustained long enough to actually realize a support package for the Abuja Accords? I will be anxious to see what plan the European Command submits to the United States at the end of this week, and, if appropriate, will do what I can to assist the administration in making these plans operational.

While I understand and sympathize with the tight budgets under which the administration must live, this is symptomatic of a larger trend to resistance to reinvent U.S. activities in the realm of peacemaking that I see. For example, at the time of the Abuja Accords, the United States pledged \$75 million to help implement the peace process; \$10 million of that was for ECOMOG,

and \$65 million for humanitarian assistance. I fully support emergency aid, Mr. President, but I think it is shortsighted—and perhaps even becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy—when we under-finance peace and development efforts, because we are invested in humanitarian funding. In Liberia, it is to some degree a chicken-and-egg scenario, given the destruction and desperation in the country. However, this should not deter us from investing in creation of an infrastructure for peace and development. As we ignore development needs, we only increase the potential for violent outbreaks, which, in turn, as we saw in Bosnia and Rwanda, could lead to the use of United States troops. While I understand that the use of United States military in Liberia is quite unlikely, if we do not invest in the peace process and in Liberia's development, we could very well face calls for United States military engagement, which in my view would be tragic and unwise.

Regional peacekeeping is a peace and development idea worth investing in, Mr. President. In a post-cold-war era, as we restructure U.S. and U.N. doctrines for the use of force, it will become inevitable that regional forces, in most cases, will be the best deterrent early on to contain the spread of violence and instability. If the international community ignores, or does not work to strengthen, these organizations then it will all too often lead to pressure for the deployment of foreign—and in some cases American—troops. Bosnia is a prime example: for several years we tried to work with the Europeans to address effectively the Balkan war. But when it was clear the Europeans had completely failed, for a variety of reasons, it was U.S. troops that stepped in to fill the vacuum and lead the way to a peace implementation force. I still disagree with the decision to deploy United States troops in Bosnia, and I see the potential for calls for a similar path in Liberia if we do not support ECOMOG at this important juncture.

Another serious failure of Abuja has been the process of disarmament. Under Abuja, all parties were to disengage and disarm completely by February of this year. Of course, without any economic alternative other than soldiering, or any hope of protecting themselves without their weapons, most Liberians did not disarm. The lack of logistical support also made it difficult for ECOMOG to deploy to supervise the disarmament. Then, factions such as Charles Taylor's NPFL placed conditions on disarmament—in effect, reopening the delicate Abuja Accord. Another problem in the disarmament effort has been the lack of effort by Liberia's neighbors—namely Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, and Guinea—in halting the arms—on both the black and gray markets—that cross their borders into Liberia.

Mr. President, this is an issue we should take quite seriously. I have

raised the issue directly with parties involved in public and private, and am aware that high-ranking administration officials have done the same. Yet even as Abuja had its most reasonable chance to succeed, arms have flowed to the parties each country it favors. I will work to finally activate the U.N. Commission that was created after the U.N. arms embargo was imposed against Liberia, and establish sanctions for those flaunting the international embargo. I will also submit that if this practice continues, the United States consider sanctions of its own against those working to undermine the Abuja Accords. At a minimum, we should revive the sanctions against individuals working against democratization efforts that were lifted when Abuja was concluded.

At this point, I request that an op-ed in yesterday's New York Times by Jeffrey Goldberg be printed in the RECORD. I do not agree with all the conclusions it draws, particularly the proposal that the preferable course of action is to have U.S. marines occupy Monrovia. However, I do recommend the article as a cogent analysis of what went wrong, and what the United States can try to do to repair the Abuja process.

The article follows:

[From the New York Times, Apr. 15, 1996]

#### LIFTING LIBERIA OUT OF CHAOS

(By Jeffrey Goldberg)

George Boley stood in a clearing deep in a Liberian rain forest and said that he was misunderstood. "I am not a warlord," he told me in late 1994. "I don't know why they use this term to describe me."

Behind the self-styled chairman of the wildly misnamed Liberian Peace Council stood 80 soldiers. Most were teen-agers, some were as young as 9. All were armed, many were drunk. "These are professional fighting men," he said, without irony.

Mr. Boley, who holds a Ph.D. in educational administration from the University of Akron, is most assuredly a warlord, as are the other Liberian faction leaders who last week drove their country back into chaos.

Fighting in the capital, Monrovia, has killed untold numbers. United States troops have evacuated more than 1,600 Americans and other foreigners. But the United States must take stronger action to restore peace—and it can do so without endangering American troops.

The civil war began in 1989 when Charles Taylor, the warlord of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, invaded from neighboring Ivory Coast. The next year, Liberia's dictator, Master Sgt. Samuel Doe, was killed, setting off six years of gang warfare among several factions.

A peace accord struck in Abuja, Nigeria, last August was supposed to end the war. It handed Monrovia over to the warlords, who agreed to share power peacefully. But they never came through on their pledge to disarm their supporters.

So it was inevitable that violence would erupt this month after Mr. Taylor sent his men to arrest a rival, Roosevelt Johnson, on murder charges. Mr. Johnson's faction has indeed murdered civilians. But Mr. Taylor's fighters have also indiscriminately killed civilians, including five American nuns in 1992.

The fault for this new spasm of violence rests mostly with the warlords, of course. But the United States is also to blame. Last year, it missed a chance to adequately fin-

nance a disarmament effort by the United Nations and West African Peacekeeping Force, which has been in Liberia since 1990.

The peacekeeping force—with soldiers from nine countries—successfully defended Monrovia from a 1992 attack by Charles Taylor's faction. But it is now demoralized, cashstrapped and undermanned. Its ground forces, once at 12,000, are down to 5,000 or so poorly equipped men. Their commanders are for the most part Nigerian Army generals and are widely considered corrupt.

For Liberia, the best scenario would have United States Marines occupying Monrovia. But with Somalia still fresh on Americans' minds, this is probably not politically feasible. Still, a strong West African force of about 15,000 men could disarm the ragtag factions and weaken the warlords. This would take American cash and equipment—from ammunition and food to armored vehicles and helicopters. The United States would also have to send military trainers and communications equipment to Ghana and other willing and capable West African nations.

All this would cost more than \$20 million. But over the past six years, Washington has poured almost half a billion dollars of humanitarian aid into the country, not including the cost of the current evacuation—the third such operation since 1989.

America has a special responsibility to Liberia, founded in 1847 by freed American slaves. Liberia was also an American ally in the cold war, and \$500 million in American aid propped up the brutal Doe regime.

The only way to end the terror of the warlords is to take their guns away. If Washington helps West African troops do so, not a single American soldier would be endangered. And it would ultimately cost less than airlifting Americans out of Monrovia every time the city explodes.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Situations like Liberia—and indeed other conflicts that have not been resolved by post-cold-war politics—demand creative responses by the international community. Liberia poses challenges that do not fall under the traditional definitions of United States national security, but they do include threats to our well-being and national interests. For instance, as Liberian refugees spill over into Guinea, the stresses on some of the last remaining tropical rainforest in West Africa become untenable, and the rainforest shrinks, causing shortages of resources, food, and medicine. Large concentrations on refugees and displaced persons also heighten potential for outbreaks of disease. One case of Ebola or typhoid in a refugee camp, and we have a humanitarian disaster that can spread anywhere in just a plane ride.

Unfortunately, our option is not to pull out of Liberia and wash our hands of the problem: because of regional ramifications and threats of disease and environmental degradation, the issue is whether we meet the challenge of Liberia, or invest more after more destruction in the tragedies that would unravel in Sierra Leone, Guinea, Cote D'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and perhaps elsewhere in West Africa. So, Mr. President, we don't really have a choice: the problem is maintaining stability in West Africa, whether we call it Liberia or Burkina.

For these reasons, yesterday I introduced a resolution, Senate Resolution

248 with Senators KASSEBAUM, SIMON, LEAHY, JEFFORDS, and PELL, declaring the breakdown of the Abuja process would have serious ramifications for United States interests in Liberia and throughout West Africa, and urging the administration to consider a number of steps. These include scrutinizing the budget to find funding for ECOMOG; this is key. We also suggest considering the provision of excess defense articles for communications and logistical support for troops willing to participate in ECOMOG. The resolution also urges the administration to use its influence with other governments to solicit interest in ECOMOG, and finally, it calls on the administration to lead U.N. efforts to establish finally a committee to enforce the U.N. arms embargo against Liberia. These are all suggestions that the administration should consider, and it is not an exhaustive list. The point is, we need decisive and creative action in Liberia—and part of that must be real support for the west African peacekeeping force.

So, once again I applaud the work of our diplomatic and military forces in Liberia today, and compliment the administration on its efforts to help calm the situation. At the same time, I urge them to focus fully on Liberia—not just to quell the current tensions, but invest in trying to prevent them from erupting again.

I also want to express our gratitude to Ghana's President Jerry Rawlings and his senior diplomatic team which has worked tirelessly and somewhat successfully to negotiate a ceasefire. Other ECOWAS states, particularly Cote D'Ivoire, have been very helpful in trying to reach the same goal. We also owe a debt of gratitude to Sierra Leone for making Freetown available as a transit point for those evacuated. While multilateral efforts may have failed to this point in Liberia, with each step—as painful as it is—the United States, ECOWAS, and the rest of the international community seem to be strengthening their abilities. We must learn from the past and look creatively to the future: we have no choice, unless we are willing to confront what could be even bigger disasters in the near future.●

#### HEALTH CARE

● Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, yesterday the U.S. Senate moved in a positive direction in reforming our Nation's health care system. S. 1028, a bill narrow in scope that builds upon and strengthens the current private market system, moved one step closer to becoming law.

During yesterday's debate, the merits of including medical savings accounts in the legislation were discussed at great length. I believe MSA's are a good idea. MSA's give people control over their health care dollars and encourage them to make their own decisions about health care benefits. They preserve medical freedom and provide plenty of incentives for cost control.