

knowledge, urged the administration to take any steps at that time to stop the arms from reaching the Bosnians.

Arms shipments from Iran and the other countries to Bosnia, facilitated by Croatia, which incidentally took its share of these weapons, in fact, became public knowledge in a Washington Post article on May 13, 1994, approximately 1 month after the administration made the decision to give no instructions to the Croatians. Again, we heard, and the record shows, no calls from anyone to stop those shipments of arms.

In June 1994, 1 month later and 2 months after the decision made by the administration, our colleague from Arizona, Senator McCAIN, speaking forcefully for the lifting of the arms embargo denying the Bosnian Government the right to self-defense, shared with us all—and it is printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—a June 24, 1994, Washington Times story entitled “Iranian Weapons Sent Via Croatia—Aid to Moslems Gets U.S. ‘Wink.’” The whole story was told 2 years ago, 2 months after the administration’s decision. I urge my colleagues to look at that article. Thus, the Congress and the public not only knew of Iranian arms shipments to Bosnia, but we also knew of President Clinton’s decision not to act to stop those shipments nearly 2 years ago.

On April 14 and 15, 1995, a little more than a year ago, a year after the decision was made by the administration, the Washington Post reported extensively on the President’s decision not to stop arms shipments destined to the Bosnian Government, and still, I think for understandable reasons, there was no clamor for the United States to stop those shipments. In fact, the Washington Post, in an editorial on April 16 of 1995 entitled “Arms For Bosnia,” endorsed President Clinton’s decision saying that the risk of Iranian influence was “A risk worth taking to serve what ought to be regarded as the political and moral core of American policy to render as much support as possible to the Bosnian Muslims.”

So there can be no doubt that we all knew or should have known about the Iranian arms shipments to Bosnia and the shipments from other Islamic countries 2 years ago, and we all knew or should have known of the President’s decision not to try to stop those shipments in the spring of 1994. And during that whole time the Senate and the House of Representatives did not call for U.S. action to stop those shipments.

Therefore, Mr. President, I conclude that these shipments were by no means covert. In fact, not only were they not covert, they were not wrong, and shortly thereafter we in Congress expressed our agreement with that conclusion.

Later, in 1994—in fact, in August 1994, on August 11, 1994—with pressure building here for support of the resolution that Senator DOLE and I and others were advancing to lift the arms embargo, unilaterally if necessary, the Sen-

ate adopted an amendment offered by the Senator from Georgia, Mr. NUNN, and then Senate majority leader, Senator Mitchell, as an amendment to the fiscal year 1995 Defense authorization bill which called for multilateral lifting of the arms embargo but, more relevant to the present controversy, mandated the end of any American involvement in enforcing the international arms embargo on the Bosnian Government.

In October 1994, Senator DOLE and I and our cosponsors, unfortunately, could not gain enough votes to pass our legislation mandating unilateral lifting of the arms embargo, but in response to our efforts the Congress adopted the Nunn-Mitchell provision as part of the fiscal year 1995 National Defense Authorization Act. So we in this body and our colleagues in the other body made it illegal, against the law, for the United States to use appropriated funds to enforce the arms embargo.

So since November 1994, the Clinton administration has been prohibited from acting to intercept arms shipments to Bosnia from Iran or anybody else, exactly the decision made in April 1994 by the administration. In that sense, the decision was ratified by the Congress.

Mr. President, let me make clear that I share the concern expressed by my colleagues who spoke the other day, and other times, about the continued Iranian presence and influence in Bosnia. In fact, the Senate majority leader and I raised this concern in a letter we sent a few months ago to President Izetbegovic of Bosnia. I believe there has been a response to that letter. But, of course, what I am saying here is that we need to see the results and the content of the administration’s decision of April 1994 beyond the unfortunate but, after all, very limited, continued presence of Iran in Bosnia.

The supply of arms to Croatia and Bosnia by Islamic countries in 1994 and before in fact changed the military balance in the former Yugoslavia. As a result, the Bosniacs and Croats were able to defend their people and their territory and even reverse Serb gains.

I certainly—and I am sure most of my colleagues—would much rather have seen the arms embargo lifted and the arms supplied to the Bosnian Government by the United States or other friendly countries other than Iran. It is clear to me—it was then—that the Bosnian Government would have preferred that outcome, but just as a drowning person cannot be particular about who has thrown him a life jacket, a dying nation, a nation under death siege, as Bosnia was at that time, cannot be particular about who gives it arms. Without the supply of those arms, the Serbs, in my opinion, would have completed their campaign of territorial aggression, ethnic cleansing. With these arms, the Bosniacs and Croats cooperated to hold the Serbs in place—in fact, to reverse some Serb gains.

Then we came to 1995, growing concern about the course of the war, and finally Senator DOLE and I, and our cosponsors, were able to receive majority support here in this Chamber and in the other body for mandating a unilateral lifting of the arms embargo against the Bosnians. Srebrenica fell; a slaughter occurred there. With that in the public’s mind, and being able to say to our allies in Europe that Congress was about to force him to lift the arms embargo unilaterally, the President was able to gain the allies’ support for the NATO airstrikes which brought the Serbs to the negotiating table at Bosnia, which stopped the war and then led to the 60,000-person implementation force now there in Bosnia, with 20,000 Americans, whose presence, incidentally, was ratified in a bipartisan vote here in which the Senate majority leader, in an extraordinary act of bipartisanship, nonpartisanship, gave his support to that presence.

So I say, in conclusion, that to criticize the Clinton administration, President Clinton, for their decision not to protest the flow of arms to Bosnia in April 1994 is unfair and inconsistent with the position that so many of us took that, in fact, the arms embargo should be lifted. The decision the President made was, in my opinion, moral. It would have been outrageously immoral to have watched aggression and genocide continue in Bosnia and have done nothing—in fact, not only to have done nothing, but to have acted to stop others from doing something to help the victims of that aggression and that genocide.

Finally, in the struggle many of us made here on a bipartisan, nonpartisan basis to change the course of this war, I think we had a substantial effect. It was, in my opinion, some of the finest hours of this Chamber in affecting the course of foreign policy and world events, stopping aggression and genocide, and preserving stability in Europe.

I hope we will not sully that extraordinary record of nonpartisanship with a kind of partisanship in hindsight, which is unjustified by the facts and inconsistent with the bipartisan leadership of this Chamber on this matter.

I thank my colleagues, and I yield the floor.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am wondering, could we extend the time for morning business. We have more time requested than time allotted for morning business. So I would ask that we extend morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator can ask unanimous consent to extend morning business.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that we extend morning business for an additional 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Democratic floor leader is in the Chamber. He has 25 minutes reserved.

I ask unanimous consent that I have 10 minutes of the 25 minutes the floor leader has reserved.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I also ask the Parliamentarian to inform me when I have used 10 minutes.

A HEALTHY ECONOMY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I quote from the majority leader of the U.S. Senate in late February of this year, when he stated, "It is also true"—said Senator DOLE—"as some have said, that our economy is the strongest it has been in 30 years."

The business publication, *Barron's* magazine, that is looked upon with favor by the business community and has been for many, many years says:

In short, Clinton's economic record is remarkable. Clinton rightfully boasted that our economy is the healthiest it's been in 30 years.

This came, Mr. President, late in March of this year. DRI McGraw-Hill, late March of this year:

The normal economic indicators suggest that the economy is in its best shape in decades.

Mr. President, the statements that I have given here, the quote from the majority leader of the U.S. Senate, from *Barron's* magazine, and from DRI McGraw-Hill are not publications of the Democratic National Committee. We could not go further from the Democratic National Committee than the majority leader of the U.S. Senate, *Barron's* magazine, and McGraw-Hill, yet each of these state that the economy is the best it has been in decades.

I am the first to acknowledge that we can do better. But we are doing pretty good. We are doing real well. The reason I want to talk about this this morning is I understand from listening and watching very closely what has transpired in this Chamber, especially on the other side of the aisle, that there is some tendency to talk about how bad we are doing.

The economy is on fire. The economy is doing well. These are not statements. They are based upon statistics. The smallest deficit share of our economy since 1979. This will be the fourth year in a row where we have had a declining deficit. I, Mr. President, last year with pride talked about it was the third year in a row where we had a declining deficit, the first time in 50 years we had 3 years in a row with a declining deficit.

I said then, as I say now, it should be smaller, but 3 years in a row, the first time in 50 years, a declining deficit. This next year will be 4 years in a row with a declining deficit; the first time since the years of the Civil War that we

have had 4 years in a row with a declining deficit.

The lowest combined rate of unemployment and inflation since 1968. Strongest job growth. In fact, it is a stronger job growth than any Republican administration since the 1920's. Nearly 8.5 million new jobs added in just over 3 years. That is a faster annual rate of growth than from any Republican administration since the 1920's.

Mr. President, we have heard a lot of talk in years gone by about the Federal employment being too high. President Reagan, when he was Governor, used to rail about how big the Government was. Yet while he was Governor of California, the government of California got bigger and bigger. When he got off his job of being Governor, he had a radio program, and about one out of every two programs dealt with how big the Federal Government was. It is interesting to note, when President Reagan was President, the Government got bigger and bigger.

Vice President GORE, in this administration, was given the job to cut back the size of Government. The Government has been cut back. It is not talked about. We have over 200,000 fewer Federal jobs than we had 3 years ago. That is a cutback that is staggering. The smallest work force since the days of President Kennedy. Highest share of jobs in the private sector again since the 1920's. And 93 percent of all new jobs have been created by the private sector.

We have had the lowest inflation during any administration since the days of Kennedy, the strongest industrial production growth in 30 years. The industrial production has grown almost 4 percent annually. That is faster than any administration since the days of Lyndon Johnson.

Strongest business investment growth for an administration since the days of John Kennedy. Business investment has grown almost 11 percent annually. As I have indicated, that is a faster rate of business investment growth than any administration since John Kennedy was President.

Lowest mortgage rates in 30 years. Strongest stock market growth since World War II. Highest home ownership in 15 years. Strongest construction growth since Truman was President. Almost 900,000 new construction jobs have been created in just over 3 years. That is the fastest annual rate of construction since Harry Truman was President.

It is no wonder that *Barron's* magazine says:

Clinton has rightfully boasted that our economy is the healthiest it's been in 30 years.

Mr. President, we have had 10 Presidents since the Second World War. If we listed the Presidents, we would find we have had five Republican Presidents and five Democrat Presidents. But if you looked at job growth during the years of those 10 Presidencies, you

would find that Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 were Democrats. The bottom five were Republican Presidents.

If you want to look at that same list of Democratic Presidents, you would find that they also led from 1 to 5 in economic growth. I think it is important that we here on the Senate floor make sure the record is clear and not try to frighten the American public.

We acknowledge that we need to do better. We acknowledge that we have problems that need to be looked into. We believe that the minimum wage should be raised. We believe that it is not a question of making sure that teenagers that work at McDonalds get paid more, because the vast majority of the people who earn minimum wage are not teenagers. Sixty percent of the people who earn minimum wage are women, and for 40 percent of those women, that is the only money they get for them and their families.

We believe one of the ways we can make the economy better is to raise the minimum wage. Why? Because it will tend to force people off welfare and cause people not to go on welfare. We need to do better, but we are doing well. The so-called misery index, the combined rate of unemployment and inflation, is at its lowest level since 1968. We think that is good.

Car manufacturing. The United States is in the world lead. In 1994, the United States surpassed Japan as the world leader in automobile production. The last time the United States was No. 1 was way back in 1979. In 1995 and 1996, America has and will retain its status as the world's largest producer of cars. There have been times in the history of our country when the business sector has done as well, but never have they done any better. Economic numbers point to the business community as being very happy with what is going on.

We can look at areas where not everyone can enjoy this, but a family that invested money in the stock market—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair informs the Senator he has reached the 8-minute mark.

Mr. REID. I thank the Chair.

A family that invested money in the stock market, under the Clinton administration, for example, if they invested \$10,000, they would get almost a 50-percent return on that money, in fact a little over 50-percent return.

Jobs have been added, as I have indicated, and the fact of the matter is, Mr. President, they have been good jobs, high-wage jobs. Over 60 percent of the jobs added have been high-wage jobs.

So we have work to do. We have a lot more that we can do. There are a lot of people not enjoying the success of the economy that is doing so well. We have to try to make sure that we do a better job in allowing people to succeed in this great country that we have.

But I want everyone within the sound of my voice to appreciate the fact that