

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, May 4, 1998.

Hon. LEE H. HAMILTON,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR LEE: Thanks for your ideas regarding our policy on Kosovo. Your thoughts broadly reflect our own approach.

As you suggested, we are working to maintain Contact Group unity and thereby sustain effective pressure on Milosevic. In two meetings in March, Contact Group Ministers outlined the specific steps needed to resolve the situation and agreed on a set of measures, including a UN arms embargo, to apply pressure on Milosevic. We demanded an urgent start to authoritative talks between Belgrade and Kosovar Albanians, and pledged to consider further measures, if needed.

We can only avert continued deterioration in Kosovo and serious risk to regional stability through unified, focused, sustained pressure on the parties, especially Belgrade. Strobe Talbott recently visited key European capitals to build support for further Contact Group action at the April 29 meeting in Rome, and beyond. Our proposed approach includes a balanced mix of incentives and disincentives that deserves the support of all Contact Group nations.

As you also advocate, we have been firm with both parties that the difficulties in Kosovo cannot be solved through the use of force. We have made clear that we do not support secession or independence for Kosovo, and that Kosovar Albanians must pursue their legitimate human rights grievances peacefully. We also have made clear to Milosevic that further acts of repression or disproportionate violence by Serbian security forces will only deepen Belgrade's isolation and strengthen international resolve to take further measures.

I appreciate your thoughts on this important issue, and will count on your advice and assistance on this difficult problem in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,

SAMUEL R. BERGER,
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs.

MARCH 31, 1998.

Hon. SAMUEL R. BERGER,

Assistant to the President for National Security
Affairs, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR SANDY: At a recent breakfast Secretary Cohen had with several Members, the subject of Kosovo came up. Following the meeting, I did some thinking on the issue, and I wanted to share with you some policy suggestions concerning the U.S. approach to the crisis in the Kosovo province of Serbia.

The basic policy problem for the United States, working with the Contact Group, has been getting Yugoslav President Milosevic to compromise on Kosovo. We want him to remove his special police units and initiate a serious negotiating process, without preconditions, with leaders of the ethnic Albanian majority in Kosovo to find a mutually acceptable compromise on the future status of the province.

I understand and support the basic goals of the Administration's policy in Kosovo—a peaceful resolution of the crisis through negotiation resulting in a return of full autonomy for the province. However, it is my impression that the Administration's tactics in support of this policy—pushing for sustained pressure on Milosevic by advocating renewed economic and diplomatic sanctions, and making implied or even direct public threats of possible military action if the Serb crack-down in the province gets harsher—is not a policy that our NATO allies in the Contact Group support. They are urging a cautious and more even-handed approach as the best way to get Milosevic to compromise.

I would suggest that U.S. policy on Kosovo be adjusted to give Milosevic both the incentive and the confidence to compromise:

First, the Administration should not make implied or direct public threats of military action in Kosovo. The use of military force against Serbia has no support among our allies. We are already committed in Bosnia with 8,000 troops on the ground. We need Serbia's cooperation to make Dayton work. Threats to use force lack credibility, and air strikes alone are unlikely to change Serbia's policies on an issue as crucial to it as Kosovo.

U.S. threats to use force will also encourage the Kosovo Liberation Army and others to provoke Serbia, thereby enlisting the U.S. on the side of their separatist agenda.

Second, the Administration should stop comparing the situation in Kosovo to wartime Bosnia. Kosovo, unlike Bosnia, is an integral part of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We could cite international responsibility to help the independent state of Bosnia, but Kosovo is not an independent state, and has no recognition as such. Continued comparisons of Kosovo to Bosnia will only harden Mikosevic's resolve to defy the international community and circle the wagons in his country.

Third, the Administration must state unequivocally and often that we do not support independence for Kosovo, and that a solution for Kosovo must be found consistent with the territorial integrity of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The future of Kosovo must be decided between the Serbian government and representatives of the ethnic Albanian residents of Kosovo, and the international community should do what it can to facilitate those negotiations.

Fourth, we can threaten Milosevic with sanctions, as the Contact Group has done very recently, if he does not start negotiations without preconditions with the ethnic Albanians within the next month. But threats of sanctions must have the support of the Contact Group if they are to be effective—otherwise Milosevic will play off governments against each other. To be consistent and even-handed, we should also tell ethnic Albanian leaders that they must also come to the table without preconditions on independence of the presence of a third-party mediator.

Fifth, the Administration should not blame Milosevic alone for the current crisis in Kosovo. Clearly, he bears heavy responsibility. But to be an effective intermediary, we must also highlight the unacceptable use of violence by armed ethnic-Albanian separatist groups, which is part of the reason for Serbia's recent crack-down in the first place. We must make clear to both sides that we will not accept violence as a means of resolving the conflict.

If we want to get Milosevic to demonstrate compromise on Kosovo, I do not believe the current U.S. policy of threatening sanctions—beyond what the Contact Group supports—and threatening unilateral U.S. military force will achieve such compromise.

Such a policy antagonizes our allies and Russia, and will not result in a lasting political settlement. Such a policy could very well embroil us in a military conflict in Kosovo at a time when the U.S. public and the Congress grudgingly tolerate our continuing involvement in Bosnia, and could harm U.S. interests throughout former Yugoslavia.

I appreciate the opportunity to give you some of my thinking on the Kosovo problem. I intend to follow up with you on the phone on this matter as well, and I am available if you have any questions.

With best regards,
Sincerely,

LEE H. HAMILTON,
Ranking Democratic Member.

SPECIAL TRIBUTE HONORING
KATIE ROCCHIO, LEGRAND
SMITH SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 1998

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect for the outstanding record of excellence she has compiled in academics, leadership and community service, that I am proud to salute Katie Rocchio, winner of the 1998 LeGrand Smith Scholarship. This award is made to young adults who have demonstrated that they are truly committed to playing important roles in our Nation's future.

As a winner of the LeGrand Smith Scholarship, Katie is being honored for demonstrating that same generosity of spirit, intelligence, responsible citizenship, and capacity for human service that distinguished the late LeGrand Smith of Somerset, Michigan.

Katie Rocchio is an exceptional student at Coldwater High School and possesses an impressive high school record. President of the Student Council, Katie is also a member of the National Honor Society, and is the photo editor for her school newspaper. Outside of school, Katie is involved with the Community theater and various other community activities.

In special tribute, therefore, I am proud to join with her many admirers in extending my highest praise and congratulations to Katie Rocchio for her selection as a winner of a LeGrand Smith Scholarship. This honor is also a testament to the parents, teachers, and others whose personal interest, strong support and active participation contributed to her success. To this remarkable young woman, I extend my most heartfelt good wishes for all her future endeavors.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOROUGH OF HOPATCONG, SUSSEX COUNTY, NJ

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 1998

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Borough of Hopatcong, Sussex County, NJ.

The Borough of Hopatcong, known originally as the Borough of Brooklyn, was founded on April 2, 1898 off the western shore of Lake Hopatcong, the largest public recreational lake in New Jersey. Although the land surrounding the lake was originally settled by the Leni Lenape Indians, by 1715, English colonists attracted by the growing fur trade had purchased over 1,000 acres of the lake area.

The discovery of iron ore in the middle 1700's led to the development of a thriving mining industry in the Hopatcong area. The inhabitants of Hopatcong at that time, which numbered no greater than 20 families, stayed in small communities that were close to the local iron forges. The Brookland Forge, one of the most productive in the area, comprised four hearths which produced 300 tons of iron per year. While most iron was transported east, to be used by various companies in creating metal products, high shipping costs