

every week and still get your work done, still be in contact, still communicate with everybody in the office and your customers or people in other places."

What is wrong with the TEAM Act? What is wrong with making these kinds of agreements for a better workplace? Where I come from, the people I am talking to sure want higher wages. The Government got their increase. In 1993, it was taken away from you; stagnated wages. If you look at a State like Montana, everybody wants to put the miners out of business where the best blue-collar jobs in Montana are in natural resources and the management of natural resources.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BURNS. So this morning, Mr. President, I ask that we take a long look at the total picture of families and what makes them tick. How do we secure their wages? How do we give them some permanence, and how do we contribute to a better life for families in all of America?

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Connecticut has reserved 15 minutes.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I thank the Chair. I thank my colleague.

ARMS SHIPMENTS TO BOSNIA FROM ISLAMIC COUNTRIES

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, a few days ago, on Tuesday of this week, a number of colleagues rose to express criticism of the actions of the Clinton administration with regard to arms shipments from Islamic countries, including Iran, across Croatia to supply the Bosnian Army and the decision made not to intervene by this administration in April 1994. Yesterday, our colleagues in the other body voted to appropriate \$1 million to conduct a formal investigation of this incident, which has been referred to as Iran-Bosnia.

Mr. President, as far as I am concerned, the suggestion here that what happened in April 1994 with the Clinton administration bore any resemblance to the Iran-Contra affair is wrong. There is simply no connection between the two. As my colleagues in the Senate know, for quite a long time—1993, 1994, 1995—I was very critical of this administration's inability to lift the arms embargo multilaterally, preferably, but unilaterally if necessary. But for the very reasons that led me to work, on a bipartisan basis, with the Senate majority leader and others to urge this administration to mandate finally that the arms embargo against Bosnia be lifted, I find the criticism of the administration and the President with regard to the decision made in April 1994 to be way off base, to be unfair, to be a bum rap. It is, in fact, quite the opposite of what was implied and expressed by all of us who worked so hard to convince our colleagues and

this administration to lift the arms embargo against the Bosnian Government. I want to explain why I come to the conclusion that what the President did in April 1994 was not simply not wrong, but, in fact, I believe it was the right and moral decision to make.

Let me go back to that time in early 1994. In January 1994, we passed an amendment, supported by the majority leader and myself and many others on both sides of the aisle, which expressed the sense of the Senate—because it is all we could manage to convince our colleagues to support—a sense of the Senate that we should lift the arms embargo on the Bosnian Government by an 87-to-9 vote. That was a vote here in this Chamber. That vote expressed the growing disgust, fury, and frustration by most of us here in this Chamber, if not people throughout the country and the world, that acts of aggression and genocide were occurring, primarily by the Serbs against the Bosnian people, and not only was the world just standing by, but we were prohibiting the Bosnian people from receiving the arms necessary to exercise their fundamental right of self-defense. That was in January of 1994 that the Senate spoke.

In the spring of 1994, Bosnia was in dire straits. The newly established federation joining the Bosniacs and the Croats was in a very precarious state. The Bosnian Moslems in Gorazde, Sarajevo, and elsewhere were under siege, and not just casual siege but siege that threatened wide-scale death, destruction, and defeat. The Bosnians again, confronted by a foe with immense advantage and heavy weaponry, were, under an embargo passed in 1992 before the war broke out to try to stop the war from breaking out, denied by the international community the means to defend themselves.

I said then repeatedly, as others did in this Chamber, that that embargo was unjust and immoral. Major cities in Bosnia were threatened with being overrun by the Serbs. In fact, the Bosnian-Croat Federation was on the edge of defeat and annihilation.

Against that backdrop, in April 1994, the Croatian Government asked the United States, through diplomatic channels, whether the United States Government would object if Croatia were to allow arms shipments to go through its country, Croatia, to the Bosnian Government from other countries, primarily Islamic countries, including Iran. In fact, as I mentioned Islamic countries, there is some reason to believe that not just Iran, although that for understandable reasons concerns us, but also Turkey, perhaps Malaysia, perhaps including, with the support of our allies, Saudi Arabia, supplied arms to the Bosnians in transit through Croatian territory. The question then posed to the Clinton administration by this diplomatic query from Croatia was, should the United States at that point have acted forcefully to require the Croatians to stop those arms from going to the Bosnians?

President Clinton decided that the United States would neither approve nor object to such shipments. American diplomats told the Croatian Government in response to their question that they had "no instructions" on the matter. That, I feel very strongly, was the right decision diplomatically and morally, for to have done otherwise would have meant that the United States was not simply refusing to supply arms itself to the Bosnian Government, was not simply at that point enforcing to the extent it was able the embargo against the Bosnians, but was in fact demanding that other countries that wanted to allow arms to go to the Bosnians not be allowed to do so.

Some critics now insist that in making that decision the administration undertook covert action without reporting to Congress. That is a quasi-legal argument invoking, I suppose, memories of Iran-Contra, and I wish to explain why I feel there was not covert action here. In fact, it was neither covert nor was it action.

Let me make clear, too, that unlike the Iran-contra episode, there was here no mandate from Congress not to supply aid as there was in the case of aid to the contras. In fact, here there was growing support in Congress to have the United States Government either supply arms to the Bosnians or at least, as happened later in the year, to stop enforcing this immoral embargo.

Why do I say this was neither covert nor was it action? In legal terms, the administration decided to take no position, give no instruction on the delivery of arms through Croatia to Bosnia from Islamic countries including Iran. That does not constitute action. The State Department has made it very clear that the United States had no contact with Iran on this matter and took absolutely no action to facilitate these shipments. So I do not see how this can be construed as action by our Government which would require formal reporting to Congress under relevant law.

Second, and very importantly, this decision was by no means covert. While my colleagues who have been critical of late of the decision have acted, I presume, on the basis of an article which appeared early in April of this year, 1996, in the Los Angeles Times about the President's decision, the fact is that the decision made by the President and the administration in 1994 to give no instructions to the Croatians on the question of Islamic shipments of arms to the Bosnians across their territory should have been known to all of us and certainly should not be construed as news.

The leadership of the Congress and the relevant committees and their staffs have and at that time and from the beginning of the war in Bosnia had routine access to the very same intelligence information about the Islamic arms shipments that was seen by administration officials early in 1994, and, in fact, before. No one, to my

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 Iztbegovic 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.