

May 8, 1993

Senator Dole:

A couple of points about today's news (I have included the articles on Bosnia in this package):

(1) Is the Milosevic-Karadzic rift real?

There is no way to know for sure at this point. We'll have to watch the Serb-Bosnian border to see if an embargo will be enforced by Serbia. Karadzic is saying that Milosevic's announced embargo is proof that they are not in collusion, and that this is a civil war. There is no doubt, however, that Serbia has sponsored this war and directly participated in it up until now. But, Milosevic is very clever and I would interpret his actions as an attempt to protect Serbia proper, in particular its military facilities and infrastructure, against air strikes.

(2) Should the U.S. send troops to Bosnia as part of the UNPROFOR operation there?

The French have called for U.S. troops to be deployed on the ground now (to show our seriousness, they say), and remain opposed to air strikes and lifting the arms embargo. Sending troops into this situation is exactly what we don't want to do. The U.N. operation, despite good intentions, has been ineffective because of a narrowly defined mandate (to escort humanitarian assistance, namely) and rules of engagement that make UNPROFOR troop action dependent on Serbian good will and cooperation; they can only fire their weapons if they are directly threatened (you may recall that the Bosnian Vice President was assassinated while under UNPROFOR protection). The bottom line is that the UNPROFOR operation is not doing anything to bring this war to an end; more people are being killed by artillery shells than from a lack of food. Today on CNN Newsmaker Saturday, the Bosnian Foreign Minister said that the Bosnian government had officially requested that the British and French troops be pulled out because they are the "last obstacle" to a lifting of the arms embargo and air strikes. Senator Lugar, also on CNN today, said that U.S. troops, if sent, should be well-armed and have different rules of engagement and a different mandate. Senator Lugar also said that the President needs to tell the Europeans what we intend to do and then ask for their cooperation, otherwise there won't be consensus.

- Mira