

**DEVELOPMENTS IN
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
**COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**
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FIRST SESSION

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DEVELOPMENTS IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 1995

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
WASHINGTON, DC.

The above-entitled matter came on for hearing, pursuant to notice, in room 2255 of the Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC., at 10:13 a.m., Christopher H. Smith (Chairman) presiding.

Commissioners present: Christopher H. Smith, Chairman; Hon. Ben Cardin; Hon. Curt Weldon; Hon. Steny Hoyer; Hon. Frank Wolf; Hon. Edward Markey; and Hon. Bill Richardson.

Also present: Dr. Haris Silajdzic.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN SMITH

Chairman SMITH. The hearing will come to order.

Prime Minister Silajdzic, first of all, let me thank you for accepting our invitation to be here. We all look forward to your testimony.

I will make a few opening remarks and then will introduce my fellow Commissioners for any opening remarks they may wish to make.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the third hearing of the Helsinki Commission that has convened to hear Dr. Haris Silajdzic, formerly the Foreign Minister, but now the Prime Minister of Bosnia. Mr. Prime Minister, again, I welcome you here.

And yet, I grieve that the tragic situation in your country which could have been prevented, necessitates continued international attention. Again, we must review the continued relevancy of policy options that should have been taken by the international community long ago. It frustrates me, Mr. Prime Minister, and I can not begin to imagine how it must frustrate you.

We must not, though, accept the unacceptable. That is exactly what the Serb militants want us to do, and we must not do that. It is clear that the people of Bosnia, despite their endurance of a third winter of war, are not prepared to abandon the defense of their homes, their families, and their country. Indeed, Bosnia seems motivated to defend international principles, even if they must do so almost completely alone.

In contrast, much to my dismay, the international community has been beaten back by the Serb militants in what has become a game of bluff. The Serb militants clearly escalate the violence because they know that we are unwilling to escalate in response. Our threats against them lack any credibility. Officials directing the United Nations and NATO efforts have failed not only to stop vicious Serb aggression, but also to enforce their own Security Council resolutions. Instead, they have resorted to mutual recrimination, twisted explanations, and even blaming the victims for their fate.

Last summer, the so-called Contact Group, comprising of the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and Germany, offered the Bosnian Government and the Serb militants a plan on a take-it-or-leave-it basis with a deadline for an unconditional answer, and warnings of repercussions for any side that might reject it. Sarajevo accepted it in time and without condition. The militants effectively rejected it. As sanctions were then eased on Serbia in response, the deadline for Bosnian Serb acceptance was extended indefinitely.

Earlier this month, U.S. officials presented their plan as simply a starting point for negotiations and met with the Bosnian Serb leaders in their stronghold of Pale. To my dismay, the Secretary of State concluded, "that the Bosnian crisis is about Bosnia, but the NATO alliance is far more enduring, far more important than the Bosnian crisis." Frankly, I was amazed and appalled. Let's keep in mind, ladies and gentlemen, that the Secretary's comments refers to what is, in fact, a well-documented genocide. These diplomatic gestures were made toward those who orchestrated it. Through all of the complexities of the Balkans that we must consider, one generic fact remains. When you reward the aggressor, you get more aggression. It is as simple as that.

The Helsinki Commission through the leadership of the previous co-chairs of the Helsinki Commission, noted that calls for a negotiated settlement, however correct, are meaningless if accompanied by an artificial neutrality and not by severe repercussions for those who operate outside acceptable parameters and seek what they want through the use of force. Collective partnerships, however desirable, will erode if partners allow one of their own to be carved into ethnic pieces. Enunciating international principles, however promising, is empty if countries abandon them for historical affinities and big power politics.

Commemorations of the end of World War II a half-century ago, however appropriate, ring somewhat hollow when genocidal acts that stir memories of the Holocaust are allowed to occur. The world's commitment to human rights, however boldly expressed, is questioned when our collective consciences are unaffected by the horrors that continue to be reported from Bosnia-Herzegovina today.

Mr. Prime Minister, the Helsinki Commission is dedicated not necessarily to the defense of your country, but to the promotion of the principles adopted in the Helsinki Final Act almost 20 years ago. In reality, however, these two different goals have come to mean the same thing. Let me assure you that in this new Congress, we will remain true to that goal. Again, I welcome you here and I do look forward to your presentation.

I yield to my distinguished friend, Mr. Cardin, who is a Commissioner, for any opening comments that he would like to make.

OPENING STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE CARDIN

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Prime Minister, it is indeed a pleasure to welcome you here in Washington.

I was in Sarajevo, as you know, in July and had the opportunity to visit with your government and to open the new U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo. I had a chance to see first hand, the physical devastation that has been caused to your country, solely because you wish to continue a multi-ethnic community. Due to outside influences, that's been extremely difficult. I must tell you, I was very encouraged by the determination of the Bosnian people, their optimism and their hope for a future.

At that time, we all hoped that there would be a stronger international response to the problems of Bosnia and that we would see measures taken by the international community to protect the independence of your country and promote the confederation and federations that were created in order to provide better relationships between the countries of that region. That has not happened.

So, today we welcome you as a friend. We welcome your testimony so that we can get the most recent information as to what is happening in Bosnia and how this Commission can help you in restoring peace to your country and preserving the independence of Bosnia as a multiethnic society.

Chairman SMITH. I yield to Mr. Weldon of Pennsylvania, a subcommittee chairman of one of the National Security Committee.

OPENING STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE WELDON

Mr. WELDON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me first of all, acknowledge and welcome you to this hearing and acknowledge the leadership of Mr. Smith on these issues. He is one who has the highest respect of Members of both parties on the issue of human rights and the issues of the atrocities that have occurred in your homeland.

I am new to this Commission, but look forward to working with you. I'm not new to the problems and the concerns that your people have. For the past 2 years, I have worked with an American from Rhode Island by the name of John Jordan, who was a volunteer fire fighter, who went over to Sarajevo to assist your people in responding to the human tragedies that are occurring every day.

As a matter of fact, a year ago, we hosted, at that time, the head of the Emergency Response Network in Sarajevo, a 31-year-old gentleman by the name of Kinan Slinic who came over to our country to speak at our national dinner. We arranged private meetings for him with Vice President Gore, with Representative Steny Hoyer, and also with Senator Joe Biden who, at that time, had just returned from your country.

He made a very impassioned plea to this country through our dinner here in Washington where we honor our Emergency Response Network. He returned to Sarajevo and 2 weeks later, was assassinated with the bullet in the back of his head. It's a tragic statement that someone who has devoted his entire life to helping other people would be the victim of the atrocities in your country. We know that goes on every day. I hear regularly from John Jordan as he now leads the U.N. Command Operation in terms of emergency response services to all of your people. All I can tell you is, we want you to use the voice of this Commission to let us make sure that as American people and as world citizens, we're responding as aggressively as possible to help end this outrage.

Thank you.

Chairman SMITH. Mr. Prime Minister, it is a high privilege and honor to receive your testimony. Please proceed.

TESTIMONY OF DR. HARIS SILAJDZIC, PRIME MINISTER OF BOSNIA

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to read my remarks, if possible. I think, sir, it won't take long. But before I do that, I would like to thank you for your nice words about my people, my country.

Just to comment on what Mr. Weldon has just said and that is, it is tragic that a man devoted to helping other people would be killed by people back in Sarajevo. That is Bosnia. Bosnia is a country that devoted itself to helping other people, other countries. We always were, for hundreds of years, a country where a refugee could find safe haven, for hundreds of years. Now, all of a sudden, Europe does not need Bosnia anymore. So, the fate of that man, that shall be the fate of Bosnia. Bosnia is now being killed with a bullet in the back of its head by the international community. That's what we believe.

I will now proceed to read my remarks if you will allow me?

Chairman SMITH. Please, do.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, I am honored to appear before your Commission today under your new leadership. My government is grateful for the strong, consistent support that we have received from the U.S. Congress since our country's independence. In particular, we are grateful to your Commission for its constant vigilance in striving to ensure that the brutal aggression and atrocities committed against Bosnia and its people are both known and punished.

We are also grateful to the entire Congress for its numerous votes to terminate the invalid and illegal arms embargo against our country. We are grateful for the passage of the law that terminated U.S. enforcement of the embargo. We are grateful for the passage of the laws that would enable our army to receive millions of dollars for vital military assistance from the United States upon termination of the embargo. And we are grateful to the Senators who, as one of their first acts in the new Congress, again sponsored legislation to end the embargo.

The crisis caused by Serbian aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina seems very complicated to many observers. However, its essence is not difficult to understand. On one side is Serbian fascism, which is just a new form of communist totalitarianism. It is an expansionist fascism spreading from Serbia's borders, which Belgrade has decided are too small, through the conquest of Bosnian and Croatian territory.

On the other side is the legitimate Bosnian Government and people defending the integrity of their country and seeking to preserve its democratic character.

The fascist agenda of those who seek a Greater Serbia is to destroy Bosnia as an ethnically mixed community. But Bosnia never had any ethnically pure territories. No one could say this piece of land is Serbian. In order to create such ethnically pure territories, the Serbian aggressor had to murder or expel non-Serbs, in particular, Bosnians and, to a lesser extent, Croats.

This could be achieved only by brutal methods, including the mass extermination of civilians. Fifty years after Auschwitz, concentration camps appeared in Bosnia. The whole world saw terrible scenes of those camps on its television screens.

The statistics of the war in Bosnia are staggering. More than 200,000 civilians have been killed, including more than 17,000 children. Over 400,000 people have been wounded. More than 2 million people have been expelled from their homes. And all of this has taken place in a small country with a total population of only 4.3 million people.

War crimes and genocide in Bosnia continue even today. In Sarajevo, Bijac, Srebrenica, Gorazde and Zepa, the Serbian aggressor continues to besiege over 600,000 people. The hospitals, schools and streets of these

cities are constant artillery targets. People in these circumstances lack food, water and medicine. It sounds almost cynical that all these places have been declared "safe areas" and are under the so-called "protection" of the United Nations.

All the while, the world watches everything that has been happening on its television screens. It is, de facto, the public execution of a U.N.-member country and its people.

Can the international community do anything more than pass tens of resolutions on Bosnia that are not implemented? Can it do anything more than maintain an illegal and invalid arms embargo against a United Nations member state under brutal attack? Can it do anything more than devise a Contact Group peace plan and allow it to languish for months on end with no hope of results?

I am going to say a few words now on the Contract Group and its plan.

Let me make clear that we are under no illusions about the Contract Group or its plan. The Group does not drive any strength from the authority of principle, justice, and order. Instead, realpolitik and pragmatism are the order of the day. Force, the one effective instrument of realpolitik, is not part of this order. The Contact Group is thus left with neither the authority of principle nor the leverage of force.

That is why the Contact Group can not take "no" for an answer. To do so would entail steps and measures that these governments are not prepared to undertake. This game, a substitute for action, could continue until the end of the Contact Group or until the last Bosnians are driven from their homes or killed.

The only beneficiaries of this process are the warlords in Belgrade and Pale, whose strategy of maintaining the status quo converges with the Contact Group's so-called "strategy of containment" of this conflict. The Serbian radicals know full well that containment, plus a "realistic approach" that takes into account the "realities on the ground," spell victory for them. All they have to do is to continue to say "no" in different ways. And of course, the notion that giving Milosevic and Karadzic victory in Bosnia will serve the goal of containment is, of course, absurd. Is it not obscenely ironic that Western governments are seeking to "contain" perpetrators of genocide by appeasing them, even as we mark the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz?

Now, the arms embargo. Let me also make clear that we are also under no illusions about termination of the arms embargo. We, unlike some voices in Washington and Europe, understand that in the absence of international will to confront Serbian aggression, ending the embargo offers the best chance for peace. For 3 years we have negotiated. We have signed one peace plan after another. We have endured delay after delay in action to end the embargo because yet another so-called "critical moment" in the negotiations had arrived. But why would the Serbs agree to any of these plans when they were being allowed to occupy 70 percent of Bosnia without consequences? The fact is that the Serbs have not paid any price for rejecting peace. Lifting the embargo is the only alternative for the diplomatic process and for our survival.

We are also under no illusions because we understand that, rather than Americanize the war as some say, ending the embargo would "Bosnianize" the war, and that's what we want. For the moment, because we can not defend ourselves, the war is only "Serbianized." We want our future to be put back into our own hands. We are not asking

U.S. ground troops to fight for us or with us. We only want to be able to defend ourselves. Furthermore, if the arms embargo is lifted, we are willing to agree to conditions on U.S. military assistance.

We understand that, while some countries have chosen to enforce this invalid embargo multilaterally, no country can escape the unilateral responsibility to oppose genocide and aggression.

We also understand that some countries may unilaterally decide to withdraw their United Nations troops from Bosnia. This decision is theirs to make, not ours. We will not prevent any U.N. troops from leaving. But we will work with countries that are willing to remain, to join, or even to increase their support for this mission. And we will work with the majority of nongovernmental organizations that have decided to stay even if UNPROFOR forces withdraw.

We believe that the United States, as the leader of the free world, has the responsibility to work for solutions that are morally correct and consistent with international law. We understand that if the United States leads by terminating the embargo, dozens of countries would follow suit immediately. Indeed, approximately one hundred U.N.-member states are already on record in support of Bosnia's inherent right to self-defense.

We must all understand that the embargo has resulted only in death and destruction and has helped the aggressor. We must all understand that those who argue that ending the embargo would lead the aggressor Serbian forces to overrun Bosnia fail to explain what is restraining the Serbs now. It certainly is not the hollow threat of air strikes. It is our forces that are restraining them. We must also understand that these arguments are dangerously similar to those used to appease the Nazis half a century ago.

And we must understand that there is a fundamental flaw in the policy toward Bosnia pursued so far; it does not work. In order to change this course and chart a new one, we propose the following measures:

(1) That a meeting of the Contact Group be called at the Ministerial level.

(2) That a deadline be set for a definite and final answer from the Serbian side to this peace plan, which must be yes or no.

(3) That if the Serbs accept the plan before the deadline, changes to the maps offered by the Contact Group may be discussed within the "51-49" percentage formula, for no longer than 30 days.

Chairman SMITH. Mr. Prime Minister, I apologize.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Yes.

Chairman SMITH. What was the first point you made?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. That a meeting of the Contact Group be called at the ministerial level and that, as soon as possible,

The second one, that a deadline be set for a definite and final answer from the Serbian side. And this is extremely important to understand, Mr. Hoyer, it is the deadline. Because this plan has no deadline now and a plan without a time schedule is not a plan. Especially this one that has this quality of take-it-or-leave-it. So, we think that a deadline should be set, a firm deadline should be set as soon as possible and within this period of the cease-fire which lasts until the first of May.

(4) We also think that alterations of the map be made only by consensus and that, if consensus can not be reached, the Contact Group map stands as it is.

(5) That after this negotiation about the constitutional arrangements, transitional arrangements, and international guarantees can be discussed.

We believe that this is an understandable and acceptable proposal. But the Contact Group must answer the question of what to do if the Serbs from Pale reject the plan again.

In this case, our suggestions are:

(1) That the measures contained in the Communiqué of the Ministerial meeting of the Contact Group issued on July 30, 1993, be reaffirmed. This means that measures envisioned in this Communiqué must be applied, including the tightening of economic sanctions, and the expansion and better protection of the safe areas, including by use of airstrikes. The Communiqué provides for lifting the arms embargo as the last resort. In the absence of action by the international community to stop aggression and genocide in Bosnia, the recognition of the right of self-defense is the minimum that must be granted to the victims.

(2) Finally, the Contact Group plan, including maps and ministerial communiqué, should be placed before the U.N. Security Council and adopted as a document of the Security Council.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister, for your excellent testimony. I do apologize for having to leave—and this may happen again. Mr. Weldon has the same problem. Our respective committees are marking up legislation and we must physically be there in order to vote. Should I, or any other member, be called away, that is the reason.

I have a number of questions, and I know other members of the panel do as well. My first question really revolves around UNPROFOR. You and others have been very critical of the mission of UNPROFOR. The French and the British continually threaten to pull out. There's always that sense that if this happens, UNPROFOR will leave. At this point in time, does the Bosnian Government want UNPROFOR to pull out? Do you want them to stay? What is the position of the government?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. As I've said, this is a decision that rests with the governments that have troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. If they insist upon leaving, we call them in and we shall assist them to leave.

Chairman SMITH. Prime Minister, a moment ago you mentioned the importance of the Security Council receiving the plan which would finally be agreed to by the Contact Group and yourselves in Bosnia and the Serbs.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Right.

Chairman SMITH. What would be the advantage? Can you elaborate on why it's important that the Security Council approves this plan? Do you think that gives them further ownership?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, I think it's time to say enough. This plan is an international peace plan. We worked on it for more than 2 years. It is a plan that is not just. It is an unjust plan, but our Parliament accepted it. That is the legal Parliament and this is the legal government of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We say to the international community, "OK, this is the plan. Now, let's make peace."

So, this should become a law. The peace and the international order and law should not be stopped and blocked by a few people on the Parliament that seek to create greater Serbia. So, this should be the law and

this is why this plan is different. It is take-it-or-leave-it. Now, the legal government took it. So, the international community should take it to the U.N. Security Council and adopt it.

And if I may add to the UNPROFOR question that you have just asked me, I would say that UNPROFOR is not cost-free. Mr. Chairman, if I understand well, your country spends about \$1/2 billion per year to keep UNPROFOR there, which is, at least for Bosnia, a big sum of money, big money. That money is, of course, used in good purposes. But I'm afraid it also keeps the status quo. It also protects the gains by force and genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We had the arms embargo. We had the UNPROFOR there. We had them keep peace in Bosnia while there is no peace. But it's time to say now, "enough is enough. You killed 200,000 people, among them 17,000 children. You destroyed half the country. Now it's time for peace. If you do not want to accept peace, if you hope that the international community will legalize your gains by forcing genocide, then you're wrong."

And I'm talking about genocide here, Mr. Chairman. If you'll allow me, it will take only a few minutes, I will remind you all of what genocide really is, what constitutes a genocide. I will read Article II from the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide." And it says—"In the present convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group as such." So, that's following.

- (A) "Killing members of the group."
- (B) "Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group."
- (C) "Deliberately inflicting on the group, conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part."
- (D) "Imposing measures intended to prevent birth within the group."
- (E) "Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."

This is exactly, Mr. Chairman, the description of what is going on right now in Bosnia. It says "killing members of the group." It says "causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group." It says "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part," and so on. This is exactly, word-by-word, the description of what is happening in Bosnia for 3 years now.

So, it's genocide. It's not ethnic cleansing. So, the governments, the parties to this convention and to, of course, the General Assembly declaration in the United Nations—it's Resolution, actually, 96 of December 11, 1946—they're all obliged to react to this and not only punish the genocide, but also prevent the genocide.

Well, that is not being done, ladies and gentlemen. We have genocide going on. I can tell you, I come from such a town, the town of Sarajevo. We have Bijac, Srebrenica, Zepa, Gorazde and others. The genocide is an ongoing business in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is a planned genocide. It is not ethnic cleansing. The ethnic cleansing is, of course, a euphemism for genocide and some governments are afraid to say that this is genocide, as they were afraid to recognize—although they knew very well—the existence of the concentration camps in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Concentration camps, rape camps, death camps. You knew about that only months, 4 or 5 months, after they practically were established in Bosnia-Herzegovina and there were 93 of them. In one of them, 3,000 people were killed in just 1 hour according to many witnesses.

So, we are talking about genocide. And please, do take into account what I say. We have to stop it. We have to prevent it right now and we have to punish those who dared to commit these crimes at the end of the 20th century.

Chairman SMITH. Your words are very well spoken, Mr. Prime Minister. On a bipartisan basis, this Commission has been a very strong supporter of your government. As a group—the distinguished member from Maryland, Mr. Hoyer, and Senator DeConcini, former cochair of the Commission, myself and other members supported you vigorously in trying to lift the arms embargo. We took great exception with both the Bush and Clinton administrations on this matter. I believe I can say without any fear of contradiction, that I concur that this absolutely is a genocide. It's regrettable that the political niceties, which so many of our diplomats in Europe and America engage in, have tried to keep those kinds of characterizations from being made. But, I fully agree with you.

I yield to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland, the ranking member of the Helsinki Commission, but I have a number of questions.

Commissioner Hoyer. Mr. Prime Minister, I apologize for my lateness. We have a number of meetings going on at the same time and I wanted to hear the bulk of yours, so I wanted to get that out of the way.

As the Chairman has said, and as you know so well, I had the opportunity along with Senator DeConcini, to chair this Commission from 1985 until January of this year. I look forward to working very closely with Mr. Smith. As you well know, he preceded me as a member of this Commission. He is the senior member of this Commission. He is, I guess, along with Congressman Markey. And as you know, there is nobody in Congress who has a stronger commitment to human rights and to the focus on the genocide of which you speak than Congressman Smith and frankly, his cochairman, Senator D'Amato, with whom I cochaired the Commission with.

During the course of my career on the Commission, I've had an opportunity to work on a lot of personal cases behind the Iron Curtain, in the Soviet Union, and in other areas of the world. I won't forget those but, Mr. Chairman, nothing comes more vividly to mind than the absolute agony of having to confront, directly, the aggression and genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the way in which the international community excused itself from the responsibility of stopping it when it had the opportunity to do so. I know I speak for Senator DeConcini when I say that.

One of the reasons that this was able to happen was and remains the characterization of the Bosnian conflict as a civil war, an internal conflict. In fact, as the Prime Minister knows and you know, we've had testimony to that effect from some of our colleagues from Europe who have testified on this matter. I'm not an expert on the Balkans, but I want to read from an excerpt from a recent book by Noel Malcolm entitled *Bosnia, A Short History*, to get a summation of the fact.

He says, "Paradoxically, the most important reasons for studying Bosnia's history is that it enables one to see that the history of Bosnia itself does not explain the origins of this war," as some would have us believe. "Of course, the war could not have happened if Bosnia had not been the peculiar thing that it was, which made it the object of special ambitions and interests. But those ambitions were directed at Bosnia from outside Bosnia's borders. The biggest obstacle to all understand-

ing of the conflict is the assumption that what has happened in that country is the product—natural, spontaneous and at the same time necessary—of forces lying within Bosnia's own internal history. That is the myth which was carefully propagated by those who caused the conflict, who wanted the world to believe that what they and their gunmen were doing was done not by them, but by impersonal and inevitable historical forces beyond anyone's control. . . . And the world believed them," or at least some did.

Mr. Chairman, the international response to the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina has been feckless, and the explanations for this response have been, in my view, unjustified. Of course, as time passes, the situation can become more difficult to change, and riskier as well. But as dismal as things look now, I am not at all optimistic about how it may look later this year if the United States and the international community continue with their current approach.

Mr. Prime Minister, I've had the opportunity of having you testify before this Commission on numerous occasions. I've had the opportunity of visiting with you in Sarajevo, and the president as well, and others. Let me assure you of one thing. When I joined the Helsinki Commission in 1985, as I said earlier, Chris Smith was a strong fighter for human rights. I am confident that he will continue to be so, and this hearing is critical. On a bipartisan basis, a number of us have looked at this and believe we need to do more.

I will stop now and I will have a couple of questions to follow on Chairman Smith's questions.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. May I just comment on your words here?

Yes, there are people that would like to portray this tragedy in Bosnia as a civil war. Of course, this is not a civil war. This is an aggression carefully prepared and designed in Belgrade, carried out by the instrument of the former Yugoslav National Army. But also, given the former logic, says that a civil war is not fought for territory. It is always fought for change of the system, not for territory.

This, obviously, is a war for territory, not for change in system. There is ethnic cleansing. There is an attempt to change the borders. So, it's a war of expansion. It is not civil war, even by that definition. Then if that's a civil war, what are the tanks and planes and troops from Serbia proper, doing in Bosnia-Herzegovina? They must answer that question. We all know that even when the borders are sealed off, there's a lot of things coming through. We all know that. Even the Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali says there are a lot of violations of that border.

So, how come it's a civil war? Because that border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia is one of the oldest borders in Europe. Because, as you know, Bosnia-Herzegovina is a very old country, 1,000-year-old country. It used to be a big kingdom. Now, it is what it is, but it is a country which has borders. This is the border between Bosnia and between Serbia. This border is being violated. The troops, the tanks, armored cars, ammunition came across this border, so they send invasion and an aggression. I think there is enough evidence of that, so I don't have really to take more of your time and try to prove it. I think that is self-evident.

Chairman SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. Especially since there are several press people covering this hearing, I think it is important that you have reminded us anew that this is not a civil war. It is very useful cynically-speaking, but very immoral fiction to continually

describe this aggression in those terms. It was very useful for the Bush administration to claim that this was Europe's problem. It is not just Europe's problem. It is humanity's problem. I appreciate your clarifying that this is not a civil war. I hope that it is not lost on those who are covering it today.

I yield to Mr. Cardin.

Mr. CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Along with Congressman Hoyer, in Sarajevo in July, I had a chance to witness, first-hand, how the people are struggling with their current conditions. There was a cease-fire at the time, but it was a war zone. The devastation that had occurred there was obvious. The living conditions were very difficult. And as I said earlier, I applaud the courage of the people in going about their lives under extremely difficult circumstances.

One of the problems I think we confront because this has been going on now for 3 years is a lost message about the atrocities that are taking place and the conditions that exist today in Bosnia. It's now cold there, very cold there. I'm wondering whether you could update for us, the current circumstances in Bosnia and in Sarajevo, as far as the housing.

We saw housing that was ravaged by the mortar shells in which people were living in. We saw transportation operating, but there was uncertainty with regard to continued utilities. We saw the vulnerability of the people to sniper attack and the impossible mission that the U.N. had undertaken to stop the sniper attacks that were taking place on the people walking on the streets. We saw the circumstances that would lead us to believe that during the winter it would be difficult as far as shelter, food, et cetera.

So, I'm wondering whether you could update for us how the people are coping with these winter conditions and what we can expect?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, yes, of course. The situation is particularly difficult in the encircled areas: in Eastern Bosnia, which is Srebrenica, Zepa, and Gorazde, in Bijac area, in Sarajevo. But may I draw your attention to one particular fact, and that is that we are very much afraid of the impact of all this on our children. It has been now 3 years of suffering. We call it a stone age situation. We're not talking about normal schools. We're not talking about food. We're talking about surviving here. I think if I tell you that I have seen with my own eyes, some gray-haired children, that will tell you enough of what happened there and what is happening there right now.

So, whatever happens to us, older people, is, of course, bad enough. But what happens to them is practically endangering the whole nation, and this is what genocide talks about. I just read that. The conditions of life are such that those people can not grow normally, don't have enough to eat. And it's for a prolonged time. It's 3 years now. I'm not talking about psychological problems, about traumas, about seeing their mothers raped, their fathers killed. I'm talking about those who are alive now. I'm not talking about the 17,000 children killed. I'm talking about those who are crippled, but still alive.

This is what we are very much worried about, and this is why we would like to see peace, Mr. Cardin. But peace can come only if the international community, including your government, takes a decisive step and says, "enough is enough." We, as a government, have tried our best. We have signed every single peace plan that came from the international community. We did not want to lift the arms embargo in the

beginning. We asked for demilitarization, and we have the 752 Security Council Resolution that calls for the removal of the heavy weapons. Nothing helped.

So, when we come here and talk about lifting up the arms embargo, I would like you to know that it is not because we want to wage war, it's because we must survive. And this is what we are talking about. It's not only killing, it's suffering. It's our children.

Mr. CARDIN. Let me congratulate you for coming forward with another opportunity for peace. There were many of us who felt a little bit uncomfortable with the 51/49 agreement when it was first suggested because we thought it did reward the aggression, to a certain degree, of the Serbs. But we applaud your effort to work with every opportunity for peace.

I will just make one observation. I think your initiative, which you brought forward today, makes a lot of sense. It's another opportunity that I hope we will grab upon. However, unless there is a clear commitment to carry out the sanctions if the peace process does not move forward, unless the international community is prepared to defend the safe havens, unless the international community is prepared to lift the arms embargo and unless all parties to the peace process understand the international community's commitment before the parties enter this process, then I'm not optimistic that your initiative will lead to peace. The international community must demonstrate that it is serious or this will be just another missed opportunity. But I applaud you for, once again, giving us an opportunity to move forward with the peace process.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Thank you. May I add just a few sentences here?

Let's make it quite clear, and I said that here, that we think the international community should stop this aggression. There is an obligation to do that. But we are not asking for the American troops to fight for us and with us in Bosnia. We have never asked for that. Some people are using this argument. We have never asked for that. All we ask is our right to defend ourselves. That should be quite clear.

On the other hand, if this international community is not ready to do it, is not ready to intervene, I would like to have the right to intervene. It did intervene on behalf of the aggressor. This is something that the Bosnians will never understand. Something that is beyond our comprehension. We would understand a neutrality. You know, "we don't care about Bosnia. It's far enough"—like they said about Czechoslovakia—"far away place of which we know little", 1939. That, we would understand. But the complicity is there.

This is not neutrality, this is complicity. Because they intervened with the arms embargo, now for 3 years—for 3 years, we have this arms embargo. We have our hands tied while we are being killed, raped, and so on. For 3 years now. And did it work? It did not work. So, the most serious problem with the Bosnian policy so far is the following: it does not work. And if something does not work, then you try something else. If the therapy is not successful, then you change your therapy. That's why we don't understand people who say, "well, let's try more of the same to the last of the Bosnians, of the last of the Contact Group." More of the same means more innocent people dead. That is something that we have to make clear here. More of the same means more innocent people killed, and we think that the United States' Government is not ready to be part of that business.

Chairman SMITH. Mr. Prime Minister, before yielding to Mr. Weldon, I think you've made it very clear that in your view, the U.S. Government has not done enough. Would that be a fair characterization? Also, would that apply to the other Western governments?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. I would like to say something. The multilateral embargo does not relieve of the unilateral responsibility. There is a unilateral responsibility here. That is, there is no doubt about it. There is an illegal arms embargo that violates the U.N. Charter, Article 51. 50 years ago, we made this a law that self defense is a law, and I hope that this will not continue on the part of the U.S. Government.

Of course, we would like this to be sold without the arms embargo and the arms—we would like to rebuild our country. But we have to survive. If the international community is not ready to do its job and its duty in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which it apparently is not, then it should not try to clear its conscience by saying that “this is a civil war. That if we give them arms, there will be more war. That it would be a catastrophe,” like we did not have a catastrophe there, like we do not have a catastrophe right now. That the Serbs have overrun Bosnia like their goodwill is restraining them now. Of course, it is not. It is we who restrain them now.

So, if there is no other way, after 3 years—and we are ready to wait for 3 months more—if nothing helps, then the last resort of—and the Contact Group has said this is the last resort, then try and lift it multilaterally. But if the European governments, permanent members of the Security Council, still insist upon the arms embargo, after all of what has happened in Bosnia—and the arms embargo only helped kill innocent people—in that case, we believe that the United States' Government should lift the arms embargo unilaterally because this is a unilateral responsibility. This is not a child's game. People die in Bosnia because of that.

Chairman SMITH. Mr. Weldon.

Mr. WELDON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Once again, Dr. Silajdzic, we appreciate your being here. Your forceful testimony will certainly help to continue the high level of interest and action that Members of Congress have been focusing on to bring this terrible situation to an end.

I'd like you to comment on two things. First of all, the status of the need—you've mentioned this in your comments, and I apologize for having to leave. We have other markups going on during the morning—the need for, perhaps, additional humanitarian assistance. What kinds of extra efforts should we be pursuing now, both unilaterally and as a world community in terms of assisting the people of your country? I mentioned one that I've been involved in personally. We've airlifted a number of supplies over to Sarajevo, but beyond that, what else should we be doing and could be doing?

Secondarily, I'd like you to have this opportunity with the meeting here and with Members of Congress and on the record, to respond to a hearing. As a member of this Commission, I, also, am a chairman on the National Security Committee which oversees all of our military operations. Last week we had a hearing with General Shalikhvili and Secretary Perry. We put the specific question to them about the lifting of the arms embargo which many of our colleagues and myself have

supported in the past, and feel that we need to move on. They gave a very impassioned plea to us not to do that because it would only lead to an involvement of American troops.

I would like you to use this opportunity to respond to both Secretary Perry and General Shalikashvili as you've done, I think, but I would like you to focus it on them about the need for America to move quickly on this issue to reassure them that this would not necessarily directly mean that our troops would have to be put into the soil of your homeland.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. I'll just say we now have at least 100,000 people waiting for arms, men ready to fight. Our fighters are most probably, at this moment, the best fighters in the world because they had to fight an overwhelming force of a whole army almost bear-handed for 3 years, and we have done it. We have succeeded in that. We're still alive. We survived.

So, we do not need American, British, or French, or whoever boys to come and fight for us, but we do need the arms. And we do expect the United States of America to help us in getting these arms because this embargo gave an enormous advantage to our enemy for 3 years. Now, they took 70 percent of our land because we did not have the means to defend ourselves. We do not expect, and we do not ask for the American troops to come to Bosnia. We have never done that. I think I made that quite clear.

Mr. WELDON. Thank you.

Chairman SMITH. I yield to Mr. Hoyer.

Mr. HOYER. Thank you.

Mr. Prime Minister, unfortunately, we've got another meeting now that I'm going to have to go to. I want to get clear on some things, and I think you were just pretty clear then.

I have argued on the floor, as you know, with respect to the lifting of the arms embargo that in conversations with you, you had said that if lifting the arms embargo required the removal of the UNPROFOR forces—because of course, the English and the French, and others as well—but the English and French most pointedly argue that—and now, the Russians have troops on the ground as well still—argue that if you lift the arms embargo, you subject UNPROFOR forces to great danger.

You have stated in the past that the UNPROFOR forces, in fact, were really helping the other side. And that if withdrawing the UNPROFOR forces was a condition precedent to lifting the arms embargo, that you believed that would be what the Bosnian Government would support. Am I correct in that articulation of that scenario? If so, is that still correct?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. As I said, this decision rests with the countries that have troops on the ground. If they insist upon leaving, we shall help them leave. But if after 3 months time, the first of May, there is no positive answer from the other side to end this and to have peace, then this would mean that the UNPROFOR troops, besides the good job they're sometimes doing there, are practically there to protect and keep the gains of the Serbs in Bosnia. This would mean exactly that.

And if we have to choose—we are not asking for this choice, but if we have to choose between lifting of the arms embargo and the UNPROFOR in Bosnia, we would choose the arms embargo lifted.

Mr. HOYER. The lifting of the arms embargo?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Yes.

Mr. HOYER. The purported or apparent split between the Serbians and the Bosnian-Serbs, do you believe that is real? Does it continue to this day?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, there is a power struggle there, but their aim, most of them is the same. That is to create Greater Serbia either through more use of force or through the creation of a status quo like now, in which the international community would gradually lose interest in Bosnia and would gradually accept the status quo and status de facto on the ground. This is what they both hope for. But there is a power struggle, yes. The problem is that I think that there is not enough pressure to widen those cracks that are appearing in their lines.

Mr. HOYER. As I understand what you said, in the context of the power struggle, does your intelligence and information that you have as a government, still lead you to believe that Belgrade is aiding and abetting the present ongoing military effort in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Absolutely. Because we have asked the regime in Belgrade to recognize our borders, international frontiers of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They have refused to do that so far. Why would they refuse it if they did not have any designs on Bosnia territory? So, they still have this idea of a Greater Serbia that would consist of parts of Croatia and parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Mr. HOYER. I understand.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. That is why they occupy those territories, and that's why they keep them until this day, so far, without impunity.

Mr. HOYER. Given that, do we have information that they are transgressing the borders for the purposes of aiding and abetting the military effort, i.e., logistical supplies, arms in particular, but other goods as well?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Yes.

Mr. HOYER. Do we have information that that is occurring, notwithstanding Milosivec's public representations that that is not occurring?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. There is the Secretary General's report, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, who says exactly that. It is generally observed, but still, for example in 1 day, 14 trucks full of troops crossed the border. That is in his report.

Mr. HOYER. How recent was that?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, as recent as 1 month ago.

Mr. HOYER. Within the last 30 days?

Dr. Silajdzic [continuing]. Situation—when they brought 8,000 people from Serbia into that area. Our intelligence which is, of course, only our's, is that only in the months of November—November, 1994—37 tanks crossed from Serbia into Bosnia. 40 armed vehicles, transporters, all of them repaired in Serbia; 42 tanks as direct new tanks—direct military from Serbia; 32 armed transporters of the direct military help from Serbia. 130 trucks with logistics, the materials, untied aircraft rocket systems of Russian-made fuel. 9,300 troops mobilized in Serbian Montenegro crossed into Bosnia. This is only a part of it.

And you all know that NATO air flights over Bosnia now—they fly very high if they fly at all. And you know why. It is because the Serbs have installed antiaircraft—modern antiaircraft weapons in Bosnia-Herzegovina that can reach to the Adriatic Coast. This is a fact. That is why we think that that border is not sealed off. But we do say yes, there

is a power struggle there. There is no doubt about it. But their aim is one and only one, all of them. It is to create Greater Serbia, and that can be stopped only by force.

Mr. HOYER. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Hoyer.

Mr. Prime Minister, some additional questions. I understand one of our Commissioners, Mr. Markey, is on his way and he would like to pose a few questions as well.

Obviously, you have been promoting peace for many, many years and in a very articulate and persuasive way. Unfortunately, the ears that could make the difference have not heard. With respect to the issue of justice, we all know that a War Crimes Tribunal is something that is being taken very seriously. What is your assessment of that Tribunal to date, and whether or not you have a realistic expectation that it will go to those levels that it must reach?

You might recall that our former Secretary of State, upon leaving office, made some very strong comments with regards to Mr. Karadzic, as well as Mr. Milosevic. He even called them war criminals. That is a very strong statement from a high diplomat in the U.S. Government. How do you think plans for that Tribunal are progressing?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, what I know about the Crimes War Tribunal in the Hague, right now, I understand that there is a very able group of people there, headed by Mr. Galstone. They are dedicated people with personal integrity, but they have a big problem. That's a financial problem. I must say that when I heard that, I was surprised. Because for a Crime War Tribunal to lack financial funds is something that I just could not believe. That is a very serious work they are doing there.

All I can say is that I hope that that situation will be improved. I hope that that is not an indication of a negative attitude and approach to the work that the War Crime Tribunal is doing.

Chairman SMITH. Thank you. That's something we need to look into. Justice deferred is justice denied. If we were to lose the opportunity to gather the necessary collection of evidence because of the lack of funds, that would be a real travesty.

Some additional questions and then I'll yield to Mr. Wolf, a Commissioner, for any questions that he might have.

I recall vividly, a meeting that Mr. DeConcini, Mr. Hoyer, myself and many others on our Commission had with President Izetbegovic when President Clinton, was very seriously considering lifting the arms embargo and using air strikes. After a very impassioned appeal by Elie Wiesel to "do something, Mr. President." The President did respond very forcefully, almost sounding like General George Patton. He was very, very forceful and many of us were cheering him on.

I'll never forget when we met with President Izetbegovic. He said that Mr. Radovan Karadzic said at the negotiations, that he believed the air strike threat was credible, but that the head of the Bosnian Serbs military did not. After waiting a certain period of time, the threat was seen as a quarrel or paper threat which did not come to fruition in any meaningful way, infact, it set the diplomacy back, significantly.

Given this on-again, off-again track record, how do we in the West, the United States, regain the credibility? Is it only through the lifting of the arms embargo that there will be an incentive, a reason to work in a meaningful way at the negotiating table with your government? It

seems that we've squandered that opportunity. As you know, once you make a threat, it has to be carried to its logical conclusion, otherwise, it is a meaningless gesture.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. May I be very blunt, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman SMITH. Please do.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. If I were you, I would not hand over the command of my air forces to anyone else, and especially not the U.N. hierarchy. That is a very serious matter and that is how the credibility was lost. We had these air strikes that looked very cosmetic and that practically relayed a message that the international community is completely impotent. That is what encouraged the aggression.

We still think that these three more months left of the cease-fire, until the first of May, should be used to put pressure, with credible threats and sanctions. But then, if it does not work, as it has not for 3 years now, that we all must make a decision to take a decisive step to do something. The credibility is regained by credible deeds, not words.

Chairman SMITH. Thank you.

I yield to Mr. Wolf.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I don't know that I really have—maybe I have one question. I left another committee just to welcome you. As you know, I've been a strong supporter. Three-and-a-half years ago, Chris and I were in Vucovar when they were bombing, when the Serbs were bombing, just a couple of weeks before the city fell. I've been in Mostar during the siege with your people. I was in a Serbian prisoner of war camp and saw the conditions. I may be the only Member of Congress that has been in the camps.

I hope we can help you lift the arms embargo. I hope it will be lifted. Perhaps what we're seeing in Chechnya and other places is really an off-shoot of the fact that the West and the world didn't respond in any way with regard to your situation. Therefore, dictators and tyrants and bad people around the world can think they can do whatever they want to.

I know the answer to this, but just for the record, under no circumstances, positively, categorically, you are not asking for anything from the American people and the American Government such as troops or anything like that? Your basic concern is that when the time ends, if there has not been a positive conclusion to this, that the arms embargo be lifted, is that correct?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Yes, you have not been here, Mr. Wolf. I have repeated twice that we have never asked for the American troops to fight for us or with us in Bosnia. We have enough men. We do not have enough arms to fight.

So, this should be on the record and quite clear that we are not asking for that. We're asking for something else. The troops are yours to use. We are not asking for them, but our right of self-defense is ours. So, we ask for something that is ours to be given back to us. I think we have a right to do that.

Mr. WOLF. How is your relationship with the Croatian Government now? Are you working side-by-side in better cooperation?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, it's a working relationship. We do have some—

Mr. WOLF. Is it getting better, or is it flat?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. I think it could be better. Let me put it this way. I hope with the help of the U.S. Government, we'll try in these days, to have another meeting. We have some problems, some of which are serious, because some people do pay lip service only to the Federation of the Croats in Bosnia. That was a big achievement. It's still big. It's a big achievement because we do not fight each other for almost 1 year. That should be supported in a more forceful manner, both politically and financially.

Also, I would like to comment about the Vucovar. You mentioned Buchavar. And I believe that had the international community had enough courage to stop them at Buchavar, this would not have happened. Because in Vucovar, killing patients in the hospital, they proved that they are what they are, and they are fascists. So, that's why I think Buchavar is important.

Mr. WOLF. Well, Mr. Smith and I came back and made that statement.

The last question is this, I think former President Carter has played a very positive role because there is a cease-fire—although not a perfect one, there is one. Would there be any merit of having President Carter go back, or anyone else?

Well, I hear some chuckles there in the audience which, hopefully, are friendly chuckles, but I don't know if they were. They can chuckle all they want, but many of the people who speak out on this issue and who even sit in this audience are people who have never lifted a rifle in Vucovar or Mostar, or Sarajevo or any other place. I think what President Carter did was a very positive thing by going over there, because there was no other effort being made by anybody else that was bringing any kind of cease-fire. And having been to Sarajevo and having seen what's taken place, they can chuckle. They can laugh. But compared to what President Carter has done compared to what many of these people who have chuckled have done, they have done literally nothing.

The question to you is, do you think there would be any merit of President Carter going back over there, or somebody else of that stature, to try to get these things moving? So that when we do come to the end of the time, we can honestly say, "everything has been tried." So, we can honestly go to the Congress, the House and the Senate, and particularly the new Members and say, "we have done this. We have done this. We have done this. We've tried that. Carter has been over there. X has been over. Y has been over there and it hasn't worked. Therefore, our only conclusion now is that it is important that we lift the arms embargo and allow the Bosnians to move."

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Mr. Wolf, I think that we can say that now. We have done everything possible. We have explored all avenues, even at the expense of the lives of Bosnians. We have tried. We have appeased them. I'm here under obligation to speak openly. The cease-fire process was already in the works when President Carter came to the region.

What I would like to do now is for the international community to give full authority to the Contact Group, not to distract attention from the peace plan and the Contact Group by any other visits there. There is a Contact Group. They should have the full authority there and full backing of their government. That is the only way to arrive to some kind of peace there. They are trying very hard, but they do not have the

backing of their governments to use force or settle force. That is why they are going, so many times, to ask the Serbs to accept the peace plan and they have so many no's for answer.

That is why I think we have done everything possible. Our conscience is clear. We've had 3 years of the arms embargo that only killed innocent people. While we have three more months and that's more than enough to say that we have tried everything possible. By God, we would like to have this ended without the arms embargo. Do we need arms there? We don't need arms. We need peace. We need to rebuild our country, but we have to survive, first of all. And if nothing else, then the last resort is, hopefully, multilateral lifting of the arms embargo.

If some governments still insist on the arms embargo after it proved to be a failure because the result is zero, then, as I said earlier, we believe that the United States of America Government should leave the arms embargo unilaterally, because that arms embargo is illegal.

Mr. WOLF. Well, my closing comment is that I want to thank you. I'm sorry that I did miss your opening testimony. And I do appreciate your faithfulness over the years in the many meetings. I, personally, speaking only for myself, favor lifting of the arms embargo.

Actually, I briefly read your statement where you mentioned the Holocaust. I visited the Holocaust Museum over Christmas time. I took my wife and children there, and I spent most of the day. At the beginning of the exhibit, there is an exhibit of photos from Sarajevo, from Mostar, from places like that. I have asked that when that exhibit is finished at the Holocaust Museum, if we can bring it up here and have it either in the Cannon Caucus room or somewhere so that people can see the faces of those people.

Your people have gone through just a terrible, terrible difficult time. I am totally and completely sympathetic. Actually, I pray for your country every night. When I see the hardships in Sarajevo and the people—most are living down in the basements and what happened, and it just doesn't seem fair. That's not a very diplomatic way, but it just doesn't seem fair that after all this has gone on, that they at least can not defend themselves. And as a father of five children knowing how I would feel if my wife and my children were put in that circumstance.

So, when the time comes, if there is a vote, I not only will vote for it. I will speak out and do everything I can to see that this Congress does it. Hopefully, the Clinton administration will listen.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Thank you, Mr. Wolf.

I would like to say something, a few words here, mentioning the Holocaust. The problem is, we don't learn from history. We pretend we learn from history. We don't learn from history, unfortunately.

The Holocaust could have been prevented. I remember the episode about bombing the rails leading to Auschwitz, Birkenau and other camps. And there were people who said "we must bomb these rails because there are death camps out there. They are killing people there." Unfortunately, there was a general here, if I remember well, General MacCloy, who wrote a letter to the State Department and said, "if we do that, the Germans, the Nazis, will get mad and will kill people." So, they did not bomb the rails leading to Auschwitz, so the Nazis killed only 6 million people.

Today, we hear the same argument. "If we lift the arms embargo, then the Serbs will get mad. They'll overrun Bosnia." And that's why they're not lifting the arms embargo. To those who say that, my mes-

sage is try and find a credible and valid argument that was and is not valid. It's too transparent. Serbs are not overrunning Bosnia because they don't want to. It is because they can not. And it is because we now have a credible and strong army that is stopping them.

Mr. WELDON. Mr. Prime Minister, before Congressman Wolf leaves and before we have our Commissioner Markey ask questions, just a follow-up on what Frank said about us taking every possible step, short of lifting the embargo.

Some have said in this country that perhaps our training of the Bosnian forces before lifting of the embargo might provide some additional signal. First of all, is that necessary? You've spoken here today that you think you have 100,000 people ready to go. They're prepared and perhaps don't need training. And too, what would be the reaction of the Serb militants if, in fact, that training were conducted? Is that something that we should consider doing?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, if asked, they would not like it. But yes, if new systems are introduced, we do need some training. Although, as I said, I believe the Bosnians are the best fighters in the world right now. And they even made their own weapons. But if new systems are introduced, of course, we would appreciate very much some training there.

Mr. WELDON. But would that have any impact on the Serb militants in terms of just our presence and doing the training? Would that, in your opinion, be another step that we should take or could take, short of lifting the embargo?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, yes, of course. We need training. Whatever they think about is their problem. They've got, as you know, Russian anti-aircraft rockets, very modern. We are not very happy with that, but what can we do. So, we need training—if new systems are introduced, we do need the training, yes.

Mr. WELDON. A leader in this issue, Commissioner Markey.

Mr. MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, sir.

In the January 19 New York Times, there's a picture of a shivering woman by a wood-burning stove in Sarajevo. What I was wondering is if you could tell us what the energy needs are of the people in Sarajevo at this time? What are the conditions like for the civilians?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, I'm glad you asked that question, Mr. Markey. We have a big problem there.

This winter we've been able, as far as Sarajevo is concerned—and that's more situation as far as energy goes—we've been able to bring a cable, with the help of some people including Mr. Joe Scherz. We brought a cable, independent of the other lines and the Serbs, into Sarajevo. So, we now have the minimal energy that they can not cutoff.

But gas is the main problem. We are trying now to get some more gas from Russia, natural gas, to go through Hungary and through Serbia into Bosnia-Herzegovina. We have asked from the Sanctions Committee in the United Nations to raise the quantity of gas flowing from Russia, Hungary to Serbia and Bosnia, in order to supply our citizens with gas. The quantities supplied now are very small.

And of course, there is oil, fuel. We have been able to provide some donations in oil from some countries. But those quantities are, of course, not big quantities. But I think we shall survive this winter despite these difficulties.

Mr. MARKEY. What does the U.N. say to you in response to your request for more assistance in gaining access to natural gas?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. They're considering it.

Mr. MARKEY. Excuse me?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. They're considering the request.

Mr. MARKEY. They're considering it.

What are the considerations?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. The considerations are whether if we live, it's partial lifting of the sanctions on Serbia because more gas is flowing in Serbia. If we're lifted, what happens? Because if Serbia takes 90 percent of the gas, there is practically nothing left for Bosnia and Sarajevo. That's why we want to increase the quantity. And to tell you the truth, we have raised that request maybe 5 weeks ago, 6 weeks, but we have no answer yet.

From Washington, DC, I am flying to Moscow and I hope I'll be able to discuss that matter which is very important for us.

Mr. MARKEY. Is that the issue that you're trying to negotiate with—

Dr. SILAJDZIC. One of the issues.

Mr. MARKEY. One of them. One of them.

What is the level of suffering in Sarajevo because of the lack of energy? Are deaths a result of this, or is it something short of that?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Yes. It is, as far as death occurrences are concerned, it's elderly people usually, people living alone that can not provide for themselves otherwise. And as I said earlier while you were not here, Mr. Markey, the biggest problem we have is our children: the impact, the health—both mental and physical health of our children.

Mr. MARKEY. OK.

When President Carter negotiated, was the restoration of utilities, of electricity, part of the settlement?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, it has always been part of settlement, but nothing happens there. Those are declarations and agreements not carried out because they need the agreement of both parties. And of course, there is a foreign delegation coming, there is the exposure. Those Serbs from Pale—I'm talking about the Serbs from Pale, not talking about all the Serbs in Bosnia because there are Serbs loyal to their country and the government. I'm talking about the Serbs from Pale. They usually make a show of being very cooperative. Once the delegation leaves, everything is the same. So, that's why we are where we are.

Mr. MARKEY. What do you think when you deal with the United Nations or the United States? They're unwilling to lift the arms embargo. Most of us on this Committee have voted to lift the arms embargo, but we're in the minority. And at the same time, they're not willing to take a strong stand in terms of what the expectations from these countries would be in ensuring that civilians are not harmed because of a cutoff of energy or food or other supplies which are vital to innocent civilians.

How do you respond to that? What would be your message to our Government and to the United Nations on that issue?

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Well, as far as the United Nations go, I really don't have any message to them. But to your government, as I said earlier, I think the new collectivism is a euphemism in my mind for the lack of determination and orientation, and the lack of understanding that it

has always been, throughout history, that great nations lead other nations. It is very important to understand that it is now the case more than ever.

We are all waiting for your government to take the lead because many other countries will follow. We would understand the neutrality, complete neutrality in the case of Bosnia. We do not understand complicity. Because it is now quite clear that the arms embargo and the lack of action killed innocent people. So, if there is no action—which is bad enough—then the arms embargo should be lifted.

That is what we believe. We believe that the United States of America should lead and the other countries will follow on. We're sure of that.

Mr. MARKEY. Well, I agree that we should lead.

I thank all the members of this Committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WELDON. Thank you, Mr. Markey.

Mr. Wolf, do you have additional questions?

Mr. Smith is tied up in markup in the International Relations Committee. We apologize, as we said earlier, for members having to walk in and out. We have a number of markups taking place today and with the elimination of proxy voting, we have to be there in person.

Certainly, there is a great interest, as you know, on the part of the Members, bipartisan Members of our Congress, in what's happening in your country. Your testimony here today was eloquent and forceful, and I think will help to allow us to continue to make the case that you have made to us today, and to the world community.

The Helsinki Commission is dedicated to principles to not have the kinds of things take place that have been taking place in your country for 3 years. Hopefully, your testimony will allow us to move aggressively to convince the administration that more needs to be done.

We thank you for being with us today. We thank you for your testimony and assure you that we will continue to press the case of the people of your homeland. Thank you.

Dr. SILAJDZIC. Thank you.

Mr. WELDON. The meeting is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, the meeting was concluded at 11:43 a.m.]