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Helsinki Commission Efforts Regarding the Yugoslav Republics -- 1991-1992

The Helsinki Commission has followed events in Yugoslavia closely and has sought to encourage a positive resolution of the present crisis. A Commission delegation led by Co-Chairmen Dennis DeConcini and Steny H. Hoyer first visited the country in April 1990 and visited Slovenia to observe the elections in that republic, the first multi-party elections in post-World War II Yugoslavia. The delegation also met with high-level federal and Serbian officials in Belgrade and visited Kosovo. After the Commission staff observed each of the remaining five republic multi-party elections during the course of 1990, Co-Chairman DeConcini led a return Commission delegation in March 1991, which visited Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in addition to Belgrade.

In 1991, Chairman Hoyer and Co-Chairman DeConcini and members of the Commission staff have met with a number of Yugoslav visitors to Washington, including both public officials and private citizens, among them the president and a Serbian member of the collective presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatian parliamentarians, the foreign ministers of Slovenia and Macedonia, the former foreign secretary of Montenegro, opposition party leaders in Serbia, representatives of the Albanian communities in Kosovo and Macedonia, and journalists from Croatia and Montenegro. The Commission also maintains contacts with U.S. State Department officials who cover Yugoslav affairs, the Embassy of Yugoslavia in Washington and Americans of Yugoslav descent. In October 1991, the Commission convened a public hearing to discuss the effectiveness of the international response to the Yugoslav crisis.

In 1992, the Helsinki Commission continued to follow Yugoslav events closely. Chairman Hoyer, Co-Chairman DeConcini and/or the Commission staff met in Washington with the presidents of Macedonia and of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the foreign minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a representative of the Croatian Office for Displaced Persons and Refugees, representatives of Croatian and Macedonian media, Croatian human rights advocates, members of Serbian opposition parties. Contacts with the Department of State and the Yugoslav Embassy in Washington continued, and contacts were further developed with official representatives of Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia. In February 1992, the Commission convened a public hearing on the prospects for peace and human rights in the Yugoslav republics. Later that month and into March Commission staff travelled to Bosnia-Herzegovina to observe the referendum on independence in that republic.

In addition to the above-mentioned activities, the Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Commission regularly raise human rights and other concerns regarding Yugoslavia in correspondence with Yugoslav officials, *Congressional Record* statements and numerous press releases. The following public statements were made by the Helsinki Commission Chairman and Co-Chairman in 1991 and 1992:

1991

1. Dennis DeConcini, "Yugoslavia and the CSCE," *Congressional Record*, January 24, 1991.
2. Steny H. Hoyer and Dennis DeConcini, "Commission Urges Yugoslavs to Refrain from Violence," *CSCE News Release*, January 24, 1991.
3. Dennis DeConcini (with Helsinki Commissioner Bill Richardson, U.S. Representatives E. Clay Shaw, Bob McEwen and Bob Dornan, and U.S. Commerce Department Commissioner William Fritts), "Statement of the Helsinki Commission Delegation at the Conclusion of its Visit to Yugoslavia," *CSCE News Release*, March 27, 1991.
4. Steny H. Hoyer and Dennis DeConcini, "Helsinki Commission Opposes Use of Force to Resolve Yugoslav Conflict," *CSCE News Release*, June 27, 1991.
5. Dennis DeConcini, "Tragedy in Yugoslavia," as reprinted in *Illyria*, July 5, 1991.
6. Steny H. Hoyer, "Helsinki Commission Urges Peaceful Dialogue in Yugoslavia," *Congressional Record*, July 9, 1991.
7. Dennis DeConcini, "A Solution Must be Found in Yugoslavia," *Congressional Record*, July 31, 1991.
8. Steny H. Hoyer, "Human Rights in Yugoslavia," *Congressional Record*, August 2, 1991.

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9. Steny H. Hoyer and Dennis DeConcini, "Helsinki Commission Leaders Seek Further CSCE Efforts to Bring Peace to Yugoslavia," *CSCE News Release*, August 19, 1991.
10. Steny H. Hoyer and Dennis DeConcini, "Helsinki Commission Leaders Seek CSCE Peacekeeping Force, Greater Support for Individual Republics in Yugoslavia," *CSCE News Release*, August 29, 1991.
11. Dennis DeConcini, "Continued Concern over Violence in Yugoslavia," *Congressional Record*, September 11, 1991.
12. Dennis DeConcini, "Further Action Must be Taken to Stop the Fighting in Yugoslavia," *Congressional Record*, September 20, 1991.
13. Dennis DeConcini, "Senate Resolution 224 -- Relative to the Recognition of the Yugoslav Republics," *Congressional Record*, November 19, 1991.
14. Steny H. Hoyer, "Some Overlooked Yugoslav Tragedies," *Congressional Record*, November 26, 1991.

1992

1. Steny H. Hoyer and Dennis DeConcini, "Helsinki Commission Leaders Welcome Recognition Move, Call for Efforts to Resolve Other Yugoslav Problems," *CSCE News Release*, January 17, 1992.
2. Steny H. Hoyer, "Statement on Yugoslavia," January 23, 1992.
3. Steny H. Hoyer and Dennis DeConcini, "Helsinki Commission to Observe Independence Referendum in Bosnia-Herzegovina," *CSCE News Release*, February 19, 1992.
4. Steny H. Hoyer and Dennis DeConcini, "Hoyer, DeConcini Condemn Action of Militant Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Call for Resolution Through Constructive Dialogue and Democratic Processes," *CSCE News Release*, March 2, 1992.
5. Dennis DeConcini, "Referendum in Bosnia-Herzegovina," *Congressional Record*, March 5, 1992.
6. Steny H. Hoyer and Dennis DeConcini, "Helsinki Commission Welcomes U.S. Moves Toward Recognition of Yugoslav Republics, Calls for Human rights Improvements," *CSCE News Release*, March 11, 1992.
7. Dennis DeConcini, "Helsinki Commission Co-Chair Comments on U.S. Recognition of Yugoslav Republics; Calls for Peace and Democratic Developments Throughout Region," *CSCE News Release*, April 7, 1992.
8. Dennis DeConcini, "Recognition of Yugoslav Republics," *Congressional Record*, April 8, 1992.



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YUGOSLAVIA AND THE CSCE

Mr. DECONCINI. Mr. President, dealing with a very critical matter, although our attention is focused on the grave situation in the Persian Gulf, it is important that we not lose sight of the events elsewhere in the world.

Yugoslavia is a country that has received considerable attention in the United States Congress in recent years. This is primarily because of the oppression of the Albanian population of Kosovo by the Serbian Government. It is a sad situation that persists and undoubtedly needs to be a focus of our human rights concerns this year.

Today Yugoslavia is going through a major crisis of which Kosovo is only one tragic part of it. The conflict, based on national and ethnic hostilities in Yugoslavia, is one that we must be persistent in insisting on human rights.

To those who have followed Yugoslavia over the years, divisions are nothing new. But the prospects for a real breakup of the federation are now more immediate than ever before.

As of last December, each of Yugoslavia's six republics has held multi-party elections. They varied significantly in the extent to which they were free and fair, but the leaders of the republics can now claim a popular mandate with which to participate in talks which have just begun on the country's future.

The question now is whether these leaders can produce an agreement that is acceptable to all the peoples of Yugoslavia, or whether irreconcilable differences will lead down the road to violent uprisings and perhaps civil war.

Principled, responsible behavior is needed if Yugoslavia is to find a peaceful, just, and lasting solution to its current dilemma. The peoples of Yugoslavia have found their way through difficult times in the past and they hopefully will rise to the challenge now before them rationally, wisely, and peacefully.

Many who follow developments in Yugoslavia have suggested that the CSCE, or Helsinki process, can serve as an international forum through which the United States, along with Canada and Europe, can encourage a positive outcome.

As cochairman of the Helsinki Commission, I would like to submit, for the RECORD the following statement on the situation in Yugoslavia and how the CSCE can help ensure that a democratic result be peacefully achieved. I hope that my colleagues will find this statement useful.

I ask unanimous consent that a statement prepared by the Helsinki Commission, the Commission on Security Cooperation on the subject matter of the recent events in Yugoslavia and the different republics there be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

YUGOSLAVIA: FINDING A CSCE SOLUTION

In April, Slovenia and Croatia, the two northernmost of Yugoslavia's six constituent republics, held the first multi-party elections in that country since World War II. In November, more than six months later, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina did the same, followed by Serbia and Montenegro in December. Opposition parties with nationalist leanings were the winners in the first four, while the communists retained power in the latter two, including Serbia's President, Slobodan Milosevic.

The degree to which these elections were free and fair varied considerably, but these quarreling republics nevertheless have finally all crossed the line from the one-party state into the world of political pluralism. The question now is whether they will be able to work together peacefully in resolving the problems of Yugoslavia as a whole, or will instead sink into the depths of civil war. A six-hour meeting of the republic presidents on January 10 was a positive sign; it resulted in agreement to meet further, first in smaller groups and then again as a whole. However, the Yugoslav military, judging by its recent and ominous rumblings, is willing to come to the federation's rescue by cracking down on independence-minded republic governments, but the army can provide no long-term solution and may find that dissent in its own ranks and stubborn resistance among the population will deny it even short-term success. The economic reforms introduced last year by the federal Prime Minister, Ante Markovic, created hopes for finding a more peaceful and lasting solution in renewed economic prosperity, but the reforms have, at best, stabilized the economy and are limited by opposition in republic governments from doing very much more. Given the poor performance of Markovic's political party, the Alliance of Reform Forces, in the republic elections in which it took part, the population seems more interested in first staking out their various national positions than in trying to cure the ills of the Yugoslav economy.

Why all the delay and trouble, at a time when most of Central and Eastern Europe has moved on to the greater challenges of building democratic institutions at home and pursuing integration into Europe? The main answer lies in the fact that, while other Central and East European states, except for Czechoslovakia, are essentially defined by one national group despite sizable minorities (whose accommodation adds to the complexities of building democracy), Yugoslavia is in essence a collection of many national and ethnic groups—none of them constituting a majority of the population—with tremendous historical, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity among them. This has turned Yugoslav politics into the Sisyphean task of achieving a balance among a myriad of peoples who seem to have little in common.

Compounding the problem is the fact that Yugoslavia is a victim of its own success in adapting to communism. Josip Broz Tito led his Partisans to power on their own accord and not with the help of Soviet tanks. His subsequent independence from Moscow and reformist course of communist development gave Yugoslavia's communists a certain legitimacy other communist regimes lacked. This has made a clean break with the past more difficult to achieve, even though, with the exception of Serbia and Montenegro, the recent elections have shown general dissatisfaction with communist government. As a result, Yugoslavia has been in the awkward state of being both in front of and behind the wave of political liberalization which swept through the region in 1989 and 1990.

Essentially, the republican elections have divided Yugoslavia into three camps. In the north, Slovenia and Croatia elected non-Communist, nationalist parties to power and are poised for outright secession if agreement cannot be reached on forming a new, loose confederation. The people of Slovenia have, in fact, overwhelmingly approved independence and sovereignty for their republic in a plebiscite on December 23. Serbia and Montenegro, alternatively, have chosen to stay with their current communist leaders who also have heavy nationalist overtones but insist on maintaining the present Yugoslav federation. The people of Bosnia-Herzegovina and, to a lesser extent, Macedonia have also voted for nationalist parties but are in a precarious middle position: they probably can accept almost any approach as long as it maintains the unity of Yugoslavia, which respects their territorial integrity.

A common thread of the elections is the heavy nationalist tilt in the programs of each of the victors, even the communists, in most cases outdone only by a few small fringe parties. While all of the newly formed governments should therefore have a popular mandate to negotiate terms for keeping Yugoslavia together while defending the interests of their respective nationalities, their animosity toward each other and unwillingness to suggest compromise make a serious attempt at maintaining Yugoslavia's unity questionable at best. The range of options seems narrow, and there is a strong possibility that the military will step in. Senior Yugoslav military officials and hard-line communists have, in fact, organized a party with an apparent aim of doing just that.

The alternative—letting each republic peacefully go its own, independent way—seems, on the surface, the simplest course. After all, it could be argued, Yugoslavia, in all its diversity, was only created in 1918 as an expression of the national aspirations of the South Slav peoples who had finally and fully been liberated from centuries of division and domination by the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. Spanning the divide between Central Europe and the Balkans geographically, historically and culturally, Yugoslavia was only able to function briefly under conditions of democracy and equality for its diverse national and ethnic groups. Furthermore, the experience of World War II, when internecine warfare led to more Yugoslav deaths at the hands of fellow Yugoslavs than of foreign invaders, has left deep scars and distrust that have yet to disappear. The source of the problem dividing the Yugoslavs today is that they cannot escape the historical circumstances in which they live.

While an attractive option to some, the dissolution of Yugoslavia into independent states is unlikely to happen easily or peacefully. One reason is that the two largest national groups, the Serbs and the Croats, live in sizable numbers in each other's and some of the other republics in addition to their own. Any proclamation of independent statehood will lead to dispute and conflict over present borders, especially in regard to Bosnia-Herzegovina, where a Slavic people officially considered to be ethnic "Muslims" make up only a plurality of the population. Similar fears of carving new borders exist among Macedonians, whose national identity has been recognized as such within the federation but is questioned if not denied by their larger Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian neighbors while they themselves contend with an expanding Albanian population within their own republic. Even Montenegro might seize upon an opportunity to annex parts of neighboring Herzegovina and that part of Kosovo province known as Metohia.

Moreover, even within the confines of the federation, the Albanians who make up the overwhelming majority of the population of Kosovo, one of two provinces in the Serbian republic, have experienced harsh repression and no longer want to remain part of Serbia. For this reason, they almost universally boycotted the recent Serbian elections. An attempt to gain complete independence is likely if the federation were to dissolve, but the Serbs view this province as the birthplace of their nation and culture and will not let it go. The situation there has already been violent, and a full-scale popular uprising, likely to be met by brute military force, would only be a matter of time outside the federation. Developments in neighboring Albania may exacerbate the tensions which now exist.

Given this rather dismal picture, the question of what the United States and other concerned members of the international community can do to encourage the most democratic, peaceful result is of immediate importance. Our historical support for human rights, democracy and the self-determination of peoples (ironically, reasons once used by Woodrow Wilson in advocating the formation of Yugoslavia) seems to be fundamentally at odds with our traditional policy of support for the unity and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, and our own reasoned approaches to dispute resolution seems to have few ears in a place where anger and hatred have such deep-seated roots.

In addition, it may be true that a united Yugoslavia is of less importance to our own national and Western security interests, since there no longer appears to be a Soviet threat for which a buffer state like Yugoslavia is needed. It may also be true, since Tito's own brand of "self-management" communism is no longer a model for the best that can be hoped for from a communist state—we learned in 1989 that they can go one step further by ceasing to be communist. However, our support for a united Yugoslavia has been more than just a reflection of our narrow self-interests; it was and may continue to be what we would perceive as the most viable solution economically and politically for the peoples of Yugoslavia. Moreover, our international commitment to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, as of other countries with which we have relations, would preclude us from actively supporting the dissolution of Yugoslavia. After all, the future of their country is for the citizens of Yugoslavia themselves to decide.

The newly revamped Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, commonly known as the CSCE or Helsinki process, is viewed by many as a forum where Europe, along with the United States and Canada, might help Yugoslavia—a CSCE member—to find a way out of this quagmire. Developing CSCE mechanisms in conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes have been suggested for the task, but so far these mechanisms are considered to apply, in the CSCE context, more to peace and security between than within states. This does not have to be the case, but Yugoslavia may already be in flames by the time new institutions are set up and mandated to deal with the situation. In any event, given their history the Yugoslavs are unlikely to give the necessary consent to having their problems handled directly by anyone but themselves.

While the CSCE cannot provide immediate answers to the troubles plaguing Yugoslavia, it can provide the ground rules for constructive dialogue from within Yugoslavia itself. This can be accomplished by holding the main Yugoslav players—the republics—to strict compliance with the commitments contained in the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent CSCE accords, regardless of whether they keep the federation, negotiate a new confederation or simply go their own, separate ways. The leaders of the republics seem to share one common objective: to be integrated into the whole of Europe to which they feel they belong. None of them feel that their interests would be best served outside the community of free European nations, and joining this community can only be achieved by adherence to Helsinki's principles in their relations with each other.

Thus, if we are to have any role at all, we must not only hold the present Yugoslav federal government accountable to the CSCE commitments it has already undertaken, but also obtain the agreement of each of the constituent republics to abide by and be held accountable to these commitments in their relations with each other. In practice, this means first having the republic leaders in Yugoslavia express publicly a willingness to live by the same CSCE standards to which the Yugoslav federal government has committed itself. The government and assembly of Slovenia has already taken steps in this direction. The following principles are of particular relevance to the Yugoslav situation:

Respect for Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. This includes the right to free association and expression, the latter of which has been particularly restricted by a new verbal crimes law in Serbia. It also includes the equal application of the cultural, religious and other rights of all national and minority groups, from the Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia to the Serbs in Kosovo and Croatia.

Equal Rights and Self-Determination of Peoples. This could but does not necessarily mean secession and independence, a frequent and mistaken assumption. In fact, unlike the Soviet situation to which it is often compared, the essentially voluntary nature of the original joining of the Yugoslav peoples brings less sympathy to arguments for Yugoslavia's breakup. This principle certainly does include, however, the right of any of the democratically elected republic governments to suggest reshaping their relationships with the others if they feel the current political configuration does not reflect the will of the peoples they represent, and a subsequent commitment on all sides to sit together and work things out. The meetings of republic presidents are a fortunate first sign that this can happen. It also means that Albanians, the third most populous people in Yugoslavia, and other peoples in Kosovo as well as the mixed population of Vojvodina, Serbia's other province, must be allowed to participate in this process through their freely chosen representatives.

Territorial Integrity, Inviolability of Frontiers. Despite the minority and other problems which may result from the current borders of Yugoslavia, these borders exist, and they should not be altered except in cases when it can be done peacefully, with the full, free and mutual consent of everyone directly involved. Such cases rarely come about, and seeking instead to improve the situation for people within current borders combined with an opening of borders will be much easier to achieve.

Refraining from the Threat of Use of Force. Regardless of the eventual political configuration of Yugoslavia and its six republics, the result cannot be brought about by the threat or use of force. A solution brought about by force would not only be wrong but, as a practical matter, would be neither stable nor lasting.

Peaceful Settlement of Disputes. A clear, firmly stated commitment to resolve disputes within Yugoslavia peacefully through willing and mutual agreement to arbitration, mediation and other means for finding solutions to differences would add a degree of trust among the Yugoslav republics which is now absent.

Acceptance and adherence by the republics to these principles, and others which are spelled out in detail in numerous CSCE documents, are in a real sense prerequisites for Yugoslavia as a whole or the republics individually to remain—part of Europe. We cannot decide for the Yugoslavs what their future will be, but we can insist that if they wish to participate in Europe's affairs they must adhere to Europe's principles. Subsequent international calls to abide by CSCE standards could build confidence among the Yugoslav republics and provide a framework for resolving differences through dialog, just as they have done for Europe as a whole.

Principled, responsible behavior is perhaps the best chance for Yugoslavia to go through a difficult but inevitable transition without the misery and suffering which has marked its past. If successful, Yugoslavia, which in its short history has already found practical answers to complex questions of national and ethnic identity, can serve as a model for resolving similar problems currently plaguing other countries in the region, not to mention the Soviet Union. The Yugoslavs will hopefully rise to the challenge before them rationally, wisely and peacefully.

CSCE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Dennis DeConcini, Chairman
Steny H. Hoyer, Co-Chairman

202/225-1901

COMMISSION URGES YUGOSLAVS TO REFRAIN FROM VIOLENCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 24, 1991

Contact: Jamie Ridge 225-1901

WASHINGTON--Following is the text of a telegram sent today to Borisav Jovic, President of Yugoslavia, by Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) and Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), chairman and co-chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission).

"There are numerous reports of threatening movements by the Yugoslav Army in Croatia and especially in the Zagreb area. We are deeply concerned about the possibility that military force will be used in that republic, which, as Co-Chairmen of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, we would consider to be counter to the aims of the Helsinki Final Act and other CSCE documents, including the Paris Charter for a New Europe which you signed last November. Military force cannot provide a just and lasting solution to Yugoslavia's crisis. We therefore urge you to order a halt to any planned military action in Croatia or any other republic, to reaffirm your commitment to a peaceful and serious dialogue, and to call upon all those concerned to do the same."

CSCOE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Dennis DeConcini, Chairman
Steny H. Hoyer, Co-Chairman

202/225-1901

March 27, 1991

PRESS RELEASE

STATEMENT OF THE HELSINKI COMMISSION DELEGATION AT THE CONCLUSION OF ITS VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA

From March 24-27, 1991, a delegation of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe - - the Helsinki Commission - - visited Yugoslavia. Led by Senator Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ), the Commission's Co-Chairman, the delegation included Representative Bill Richardson (D-NM), a member of the Commission, and Representatives E. Clay Shaw (R-FL), Bob McEwen (R-OH), Bob Dornan (R-CA), and Helen Delich Bentley (R-MD), and Mr. William Fritts, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Commerce and also a member of the Commission. Senator DeConcini, Representatives Richardson, Shaw, McEwen and Dornan, and Mr. Fritts made the following statement at the end of their visit:

"The delegation of the Helsinki Commission came to Yugoslavia with a deep concern over recent crises and tensions. We came with an open mind as to the future character of the country and the relations of the republics and provinces of Yugoslavia with each other, a matter which is for the Yugoslav peoples themselves to decide. What is important in our minds is that any changes in these relations be carried out peacefully, in accordance with democratic principles and respect for equal rights towards all.

"During the course of our visit, we travelled to Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia and the republic of Serbia, and then to Zagreb, the capital of the republic of Croatia, and to Sarajevo, the capital of the republic of Bosnia Hercegovina. We met separately with the President and Vice-President of the collective Presidency of Yugoslavia, the President of the Federal Executive Council (Prime Minister), the presidents of each of the three republics and many other high-level government and parliamentary officials. We also met with opposition parties and members of various groups, including various religious denominations and organizations representing the Albanians of Kosovo and the Serbs of Croatia. We are extremely grateful to those who took time from their busy schedules to meet with us, and who extended warm hospitality to us during our visit.

"Yugoslavia today is at a crossroads where it seeks to define its future against the background of political uncertainties and economic crisis. The future of Yugoslavia is for the Yugoslavs to determine. Our main concern is that decisions be made in a peaceful, democratic fashion, regardless of what future political arrangement will emerge. We found, in our meetings, general agreement among Yugoslavs on this critical point, regardless of their nationality, religion or political persuasion. We were encouraged to hear from many Yugoslavs that the path to a solution of Yugoslavia's ethnic problems lies in the greater democratization of the country. We fully agree with these observations and believe that this path must be pursued urgently and universally throughout Yugoslavia.

"We encourage the Yugoslavs to solve the economic problems which have exacerbated political tensions. We see the continued efforts by the federal government of Prime Minister Markovic to bring about economic reforms as key in this regard. Free market economic principles and private enterprise must be driving forces of the Yugoslav economy if it is to improve, painful as the reforms may sometimes be. The Prime Minister also indicated the urgent need for Western assistance in achieving economic recovery and helping the reform process.

"Particularly in the area of democracy, the delegation noted positive developments since the last Helsinki Commission visit almost one year ago. For one thing, each of the six Yugoslav republics has now held multi-party elections. While they varied in the degree to which they were free and fair, these elections have ushered in a new, long-awaited period of growing political pluralism in Yugoslavia, and a consequent increase in the openness of society and respect for human rights.

"At the same time, we learned that the situation in Yugoslavia had worsened in some respects. The once promising reforms of Yugoslav Prime Minister, Ante Markovic, are threatened by a lack of support from republic governments. The Serbian authorities, after taking a few positive steps last year, have reverted to a policy of political repression in Kosovo and have, in fact, stepped up their crack-down on the Albanian population there, which has led to many human rights abuses, in clear violation of the human rights commitments in the Helsinki Final Act.

"Although personnel changes may bring welcome changes, freedom of expression, including press freedoms, remain unduly restricted in Serbia and, to a lesser extent, complete freedom of expression has still not been attained in some other republics as well. The Serbian community in Croatia maintains that its rights are not protected fully in the new republic constitution and that there has been a pattern of discrimination in employment in the public sector and other areas.

"Our main concern during the visit, however, was the current crisis of Yugoslavia itself, which has created, in the past few weeks, a period of turmoil unsurpassed in the country's post-World War II history. This turmoil, and continued differences among the republics on the future character of the country and their mutual relations, have raised fears of either armed ethnic conflict or a military effort to maintain the unity of Yugoslavia by force. We would strongly oppose such efforts, which would be neither just nor lasting, and would almost certainly lead Yugoslavia into civil war. Clearly, the use of force will not solve Yugoslavia's problems and would complicate the traditionally good relations Yugoslavia has had with the United States of America and possibly with its neighbors and most of the free world as well.

"Fortunately, we saw in our meetings a new desire to find a peaceful solution to the crisis in Yugoslavia. Republic and federal leaders have exercised restraint at the very moment when open conflict seemed almost inevitable, and what we hope will be a constructive dialogue between the republics seems to have begun in earnest during the course of our stay. The republics should remain committed to this dialogue to find a common agreement instead of undertaking unilateral action.

"Yugoslavia, as a signatory to the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and the 1990 Paris Charter of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), has pledged to act in conformity with detailed and clearly worded commitments regarding human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, the free flow of information and economic development based on market principles. Acceptance and adherence to these provisions are, in a real sense, prerequisites for the integration of Yugoslavia, including all its parts, into a democratic and prosperous Europe. We remain committed to our efforts to encourage full Yugoslav compliance with CSCE commitments. We hope that these efforts will bring to all of Yugoslavia the democratic, pluralistic conditions and mutual understanding which are key to its peaceful future."

CSCCE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman
Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman

202/225-1901

HELSINKI COMMISSION OPPOSES USE OF FORCE TO RESOLVE YUGOSLAV CONFLICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jamie Ridge 225-1901

June 27, 1991

WASHINGTON--Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), made the following statement today regarding the conflict in Yugoslavia:

"We are extremely disturbed by the conflict and ethnic clashes in Slovenia and Croatia, the two northernmost republics of Yugoslavia which proclaimed their independence from the federation earlier this week. We join the many other concerned parties in condemning the use of force and violence in Yugoslavia, such as the present deployment of federal armed forces in Slovenia, which in the past few days have led to several, totally unnecessary deaths. We urge, in the strongest terms, that all of the federal and republic leaders in Yugoslavia take immediate measures to avoid confrontation and intensify their efforts to reach mutual agreement on the future course of the country through the ongoing series of meetings between them.

"As the crisis within the Yugoslav federation has unfolded over the past year, we have repeatedly called for a peaceful dialogue aimed at the achievement of a just, lasting and democratic solution to the problems plaguing the country. We have stated our opposition to the use of force as a means for solving these problems, including any force used to maintain the federation. At the same time, we have sought to discourage any of the republics from taking unilateral actions. We recognize and reaffirm the right to self-determination of all peoples of Yugoslavia -- a right stated in the Helsinki Final Act -- but view the right of any one people as so closely linked to that of the others that there is no other choice but to work together to find a solution.

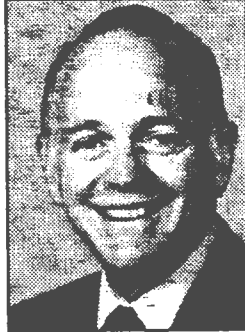
"We applaud the decision of the nine members of the Western European Union (WPU), who, in reaction to the growing conflict in Yugoslavia, have called for invoking the CSCE Emergency Meeting Mechanism formulated in Berlin to address, within 48 hours, any "serious emergency situation." We call upon the U.S. Administration to add its support to this effort in order to help achieve the endorsement of 13 CSCE countries, which is necessary to bring the mechanism into effect in this situation. Other countries which have sought to utilize the Helsinki process to help alleviate the tension in Yugoslavia, and neighboring Austria in particular, will hopefully also lend their needed support to this emergency effort as well.

"In the meantime, we call upon all of the republics of Yugoslavia as well as the federal government to act in full accord with the principles embodied in the Helsinki Final Act, especially those regarding refraining from the use or threat of force and respect for human rights. These principles set the basis for true security and cooperation in Europe, and Yugoslavia is bound to respect them in this present crisis situation regardless of what its future political character may be.

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TRAGEDY IN YUGOSLAVIA

Mr. DeCONCINI. Mr. President, this week we are witnessing a tragedy of enormous proportions in Yugoslavia. Following declarations by the republics



Mr. DeConcini

of Slovenia and Croatia proclaiming that they were, in effect, seceding from the country. Yugoslav military units moved in to ensure that this would not happen. The result, among other things, is the absolutely unnecessary loss of life, the death of Yugoslavs at the hands of fellow Yugoslavs. The unfortunate news today is that the con-

conflict seems to be escalating.

Yesterday, as Cochairman of the Helsinki Commission, I joined with Representative STENY HOYER, the Commission's Chairman, in condemning the use of force and violence in Yugoslavia, such as the deployment of the Federal armed forces in Slovenia. We opposed the use of force in Yugoslavia as a method by which to solve that country's many problems, including the use of force to maintain the federation.

The CSCE, or Helsinki process, has been viewed as a forum where the United States, along with Canada and Europe, can best seek to bring peace and dialog back to Yugoslavia. Indeed, the crisis in Yugoslavia is increasingly been on the agenda of recent CSCE meetings. Now, several West European countries have called for using, for the first time, a newly developed emergency mechanism to convene a meeting to focus exclusively on the conflict in Yugoslavia. It is, in my view, not only appropriate but critical that the United States give its immediate endorsement to this proposal, and that the meeting be convened quickly.

Bringing Yugoslavia back to peace must be our first priority. Making Yugoslavia fully democratic must be an immediate second if further outbreaks of violent clashes are to be avoided in the future.

Whether Yugoslavia will remain a federation, confederation, association of sovereign states or fully independent countries is, of course, for the peoples of Yugoslavia to decide for themselves. One thing, however, must be clarified. The steps Slovenia and Croatia have taken at times may not have been the ones preferred by the international community, but nobody- I repeat, nobody- has done more to undermine the preservation of a united, Federal Yugoslavia than those who have sought to maintain it through undemocratic means. These officials reside not in Ljubljana nor in Zagreb, but in Belgrade. They have given the Slovenes, the Croats, and increasingly the Bosnians and Macedonians all of the reasons they need for wanting to go their way. Choosing republic independence has therefore, over time, become to these people synonymous within choosing individual freedom.

Demonstrations by opposition groups in Kosova, and in Belgrade this year, indicate that all Yugoslavs, in fact, want to live peacefully and in freedom. If respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, along with other aspects of democratic government, does not become universal in Yugoslavia, no dialog will produce mutual agreement among all parties in Yugoslavia on the fate of that country, and conflict and violence can be expected both to continue and spread. I truly hope that the leaders of Yugoslavia choose the democratic course before it is too late.



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House of Representatives

HELSINKI COMMISSION URGES PEACEFUL DIALOG IN YUGO- SLAVIA

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 9, 1991

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, the conflict in Yugoslavia today poses critical policy questions not just for the peoples of Yugoslavia, but for the nations of Europe, the Soviet Union, and the United States. The outcome of this struggle between the ideals of self-determination and the bonds of a modern nation state will be relevant to the future of national political movements, whether in the Soviet Union, Ethiopia, Cyprus or elsewhere. The present crisis will also test new institutional mechanisms established by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to work toward the resolution of political conflicts.

As the crisis within the Yugoslav federation has unfolded over the past years, the Helsinki Commission, of which I am chairman, has repeatedly urged the parties to engage in a peaceful dialog aimed at the achievement of a just, lasting, and democratic solution to the problems plaguing Yugoslavia. The use of force will neither resolve the political crisis nor will it in the long run unite the Republics of Yugoslavia.

The Commission applauds the efforts being undertaken by the European Community to broker a peaceful resolution of the conflict, and I believe that the Yugoslav military's present restraint is in some measure a reflection of the pressure brought upon it by the international community. While bloody civil wars may have been considered anachronisms in modern Europe, age-old tensions rekindled in Yugoslavia underline the staying power of national/ethnic conflicts, the danger of widespread arms proliferation and the difficulty of avoiding such problems, despite their obvious existence.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues and the administration to call on all of the Republics of Yugoslavia and the Federal Government to act in full accord with the principles embodied in the Helsinki Final Act, especially those regarding restraint from the use or threat of force, and respect for human rights. These principles established the basis for true security and cooperation in Europe, and Yugoslavia is bound to respect them in this present crisis as its political future unfolds.



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No. 119—Part II

Senate

A SOLUTION MUST BE FOUND IN YUGOSLAVIA

● Mr. DeCONCINI. Mr. President, practically every morning we have been reading in the newspapers of the mounting death toll in Yugoslavia. Following the military attack on Slovenia 1 month ago, the violence has now shifted to Croatia, where Croatian police and paramilitary units are fighting local Serbian militants and federal forces. A new cease-fire now is being sought, but there is little doubt that any agreement to bring hostilities to a halt will be extremely fragile.

The basis for the conflict is, as we all know, the disagreement which exists among the leaders of the Yugoslav republics regarding the future character of their relations with each other. Some want to maintain a federation; others advocate the creation of a confederation or association of sovereign States. These differences are exacerbated by historical animosities and virulent nationalism, which perpetuate an aversion to compromise, a distortion of truth and an attraction to unreasonable and sometimes violent alternatives.

As the violence grows, Yugoslavia itself may be added to the list of casualties. Indeed, if the fighting continues, the question which begs an answer in my mind is no longer why the country must fall apart, but why it should—and how it can—stay together any longer. And no one has done more to undermine the preservation of a united Yugoslavia than those who have sought to maintain it through undemocratic means and the threatened or actual use of force. These individuals have replaced honest dialog with destructive conflict to nobody's advantage.

Restoring the peace in Yugoslavia must be our first priority. The fighting must stop now and stop for good. There is absolutely no possibility for constructive dialog and a lasting, mutually agreeable solution while tanks are crossing the fields, jets are sweeping overhead and gunshots echo through the valleys. Making Yugoslavia fully democratic must then be an immediate second step to help outbreaks of violent clashes in the future.

Aware of the problems plaguing Yugoslavia, I suggested earlier this year that the CSCE, or Helsinki process, be internalized in Yugoslavia as a framework through which the people of that country could find an answer to their differences. The Helsinki principles have worked for a divided Europe, and they can work for a divided Yugoslavia as well. To an extent, some of the political players in Yugoslavia have acted upon this suggestion, but others unfortunately have not.

I would like to repeat some of these 10 principles, Mr. President, because I believe that they continue to provide an avenue for achieving lasting peace, democracy and stability in Yugoslavia. The ones most relevant to the Yugoslav crisis today are:

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

This includes the right to free association and expression, as well as to have a freely and fairly elected government which respect the concepts of the rule of law. It also includes the equal application of cultural, religious and other rights of persons belonging to all national and minority groups, from the Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia to the Serbs in Kosovo and Croatia.

TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, INVIOABILITY OF FRONTIERS

Despite the minority and other problems which may result from the current borders within Yugoslavia, these borders exist, and they should not be altered except in cases when it can be done peacefully, with the full, free and mutual consent of everyone directly involved. Such cases rarely come about, and seeking instead to improve the situation for people within current borders combined with an opening of borders will be much easier to achieve.

EQUAL RIGHTS AND SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES

This does not necessarily mean secession and independence, a frequent and mistaken assumption. This principle certainly does include, however, the right of any of the democratically elected governments within Yugoslavia to suggest reshaping their relationships with the others, in accordance with their laws, if they feel the current political configuration does not reflect the will of the peoples they represent, and some subsequent commitment on all sides to sit together and work things out. It also means that Albanians, the third most populous people in Yugoslavia, and other peoples in Kosovo as well as the mixed population of Vojvodina, Serbia's other province, must be allowed to participate in this process through their freely chosen representatives. Finally, it means a recognition by all political leaders in Yugoslavia, including at the republic level, that the self-determination of the peoples of Yugoslavia are so inextricably linked that the course set by the will of one people cannot but impact, sometimes negatively, on the course sought by another people, making an agreement acceptable to all necessary.

REFRAINING FROM THE THREAT OR USE OF FORCE

Regardless of the eventual political configuration of Yugoslavia and its six republics and two provinces, the result cannot be brought about by the threat or use of force. A solution brought about by force would not only be wrong but, as a practical matter, would be neither stable nor lasting.

PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

A clear, firmly stated commitment by everyone to resolve disputes within Yugoslavia peacefully through willing and mutual agreement to arbitration, mediation, and other means for finding solutions to differences would add

a degree of trust among the Yugoslav republics which is now totally absent.

Acceptance of and adherence to these principles within Yugoslavia, are in a real sense prerequisites for Yugoslavia as a whole or the republics individually to remain part of a democratic Europe. We cannot decide for the Yugoslavs what their future will be, but we can insist that if they wish to participate in Europe's affairs they must adhere to Europe's principles.

Mr. President, the Committee of Senior Officials of the CSCE, which includes Yugoslavia, held an emergency meeting in early June regarding the crisis in Yugoslavia, which focused primarily on the conflict in Slovenia. It endorsed the observer mission sent by the European Community countries to help stabilize the situation. Now, EC efforts are being broadened to include the fighting in Croatia. This, in my view, is a good but only temporary solution.

The Prague meeting had also agreed that the CSCE would be willing to send a good officers mission to Yugoslavia, to facilitate the political dialog among the parties concerned. This mission would not only help to stop the fighting where it now exists, but will help to keep it from spreading to other parts of the country. By working with relevant parties at the Federal, republic, and local levels, it could also encourage effort to achieve a workable compromise as the basis for further talks, such as appeared to be the case in regard to the plan tabled by representatives from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia in June. I believe that the CSCE good offices mission should be organized by the CSCE States immediately. Representatives of Germany, which is currently chairing the Committee of Senior Officials, should get together with the Yugoslav authorities as soon as possible to work out the composition and scope of the mission.

As Cochairman of the Helsinki Commission, Mr. President, I have had the opportunity to travel to many parts of Yugoslavia and to meet with many people from that country. I have also had the opportunity to meet with many Americans whose roots go back to Yugoslavia. I am well aware of the richness of their diverse cultures of the peoples of Yugoslavia, the pride they have in their respective histories, and the natural beauty of their lands. If they fall into civil war, the peoples of Yugoslavia needlessly put at risk all that they have. In conclusion, therefore, I urge governments at all levels in Yugoslavia and all of the people in that country to put the killing behind them now, to return to the negotiating table, and to open the dialog to all who are willing to engage in it. ●



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House of Representatives

HUMAN RIGHTS IN YUGOSLAVIA

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 1, 1991

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we are all aware of the ethnic tensions, political confrontations and armed conflicts which have recently brought Yugoslavia to the brink of civil war. Efforts are underway to try to bring the fighting to an end, as well as to break the stalemate in negotiating a new political framework among the federal authorities and the representatives of the six republics. We hope that these efforts will bear fruit soon, so that additional destruction and more senseless deaths can be avoided.

While historical and cultural differences among the many, diverse peoples of Yugoslavia provide the impetus for the current confrontation, it must be kept in mind that human rights problems in Yugoslavia have been a cause of today's problems, and a resolution of the current crisis in that country cannot succeed unless it includes full respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of everyone in all of the republics and provinces as a centerpiece of any final agreement.

While its reformist path provided for a traditionally more open society than existed in other Communist countries in Eastern and Central Europe, Yugoslavia nevertheless remained a one-party state until the wave of liberty and freedom swept through the region in 1989 and 1990. As a result, political pluralism, respect for the rule of law, a free press and other aspects of democratic government are only now developing in Yugoslavia, in some republics more so than others.

Moreover, the denial of basic human rights in Yugoslavia continues, and, unfortunately, in some instances it has worsened in recent years. This is especially true in Kosovo, a province of the Serbian republic which is inhabited mostly by ethnic Albanians. Beginning in the late 1980's and continuing to this day, the Serbian Government has brutally repressed the Albanians of Kosovo. Beyond denying the province its autonomy, peaceful demonstrations have been broken up, and Albanians have been detained or imprisoned simply for expressing political views. Thousands of Albanians have been fired from their jobs. There have been many reports of physical harassment, including beatings, as well. In the schools, teachers must teach a new, pro-Serbian curriculum. These actions not only violate the rights of Albanians but are also counterproductive. By refusing instead to engage in a dialog with ethnic Albanian representatives in Kosovo, Serbian authorities have made the problems plaguing the province all the more difficult to solve.

There are indications of increasing discrimination against the Albanian population of Macedonia, particularly the closing of Albanian-language schools. While a multiparty system has been introduced in Macedonia, there appear to be limits to meaningful involvement in the public affairs of that republic by Albanians, despite the fact that they represent a sizable percentage of the population. And while the violence encouraged by local militants must be condemned, there are legitimate concerns regarding the rights of Serbs living in Croatia that need to be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, on September 10, a 4-week meeting of the CSCE, or Helsinki process, will convene in Moscow to discuss human rights and other humanitarian issues. The Moscow meeting is the third of three meetings mandated in 1989 by the Vienna Concluding Document as part of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE. The Moscow meeting, as part of its mandate, will review implementation of past CSCE commitments in the human dimension. These commitments encompass basic human rights, including those of persons belonging to national minorities, as well as free elections, political pluralism and respect for the rule of law, which were adopted at the Copenhagen Human Dimension meeting 1 year ago.

The Moscow meeting, Mr. Speaker, presents a timely opportunity for Yugoslavia to meet its CSCE human dimension commitments. The implementation review which traditionally takes place at CSCE meetings encourages greater compliance by holding the participating states to account for their performance. I am confident that the United States delegation to the Moscow meeting—to be led by Ambassador Max Kampelman, who has had long experience with the CSCE and East-West negotiations—will seek a thorough, detailed and comprehensive review of implementation by all CSCE States, Yugoslavia included. This is one of the more important ways in which the United States and other concerned countries can encourage a positive and lasting solution to problems which Yugoslavia currently faces.

CSCE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman
Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman

202/225-1901

HELSINKI COMMISSION LEADERS SEEK FURTHER CSCE EFFORTS TO BRING PEACE TO YUGOSLAVIA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 19, 1991

Contact: Jamie Ridge, Robert Hand
225-1901

Washington, DC – Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), today made the following statement in regard to events in Yugoslavia:

"We are extremely concerned about continued fighting in Croatia, a republic in Yugoslavia, in violation of a fragile cease-fire established earlier this month. Unless the violence stops immediately, it will become very difficult to reestablish peace and avert full-scale civil war.

"We agree with the decisions reached at the reconvened CSCE emergency meeting on Yugoslavia, held on August 8-9 in Prague, finally to expand the coverage of the European cease-fire observer teams to Croatia in addition to those already deployed in Slovenia, and to move toward the inclusion of additional CSCE States on the observer teams. We also view the second offer of a Good Offices Mission under German leadership to facilitate the political dialogue in Yugoslavia as a positive step that should be acted upon. It is unfortunate that these decisions could not have been made more quickly, but the main point now is that these decisions be implemented fully to bring fighting to a permanent halt and to initiate a genuine dialogue on the future of the country.

"In this regard, we are deeply concerned that renewed fighting may not only easily escalate but quickly spread to other parts of Yugoslavia as well. This would especially be the case if there is any attempt to impose by force a solution along the lines of the recently announced proposal of Serbia and Montenegro, along with some representatives from Bosnia-Herzegovina, for a smaller federation. Such an effort, we believe, would likely be resisted not only in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but could also set-off unrest in Kosovo and possibly Vojvodina. Indeed, the potential exists for the fighting to move to Macedonia as well.

"We believe that it is necessary to act now, before there is more bloodshed, to obtain some political solution to the Yugoslav crisis, or at least an agreed framework for dialogue in which all parties in Yugoslavia can participate to resolve their differences. This would establish a greater degree of stability, which would in turn help end the violence. The Good Offices Mission would be a good first effort in this regard, but it might be better now to move to a broader and ongoing mediation effort, perhaps under CSCE auspices, to get things moving.

"As Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, we have repeatedly stressed our desire to see a solution to the Yugoslavia that is peacefully achieved, democratic in nature and agreeable to all. This remains our view, and we oppose any use or threatened use of force in Yugoslavia. The United States and other CSCE States should make clear that the violence must cease completely and immediately and that the only viable solutions which remain are those achieved through negotiation. The longer such solutions are resisted and conflicts continue to occur, the more likely Yugoslavia stands to brand itself a pariah state in Europe."

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The U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) is mandated by law to monitor and encourage progress in implementing the provisions of the CSCE Final Act, commonly known as the Helsinki accords. The Commission, created in 1976, is made up of nine Senators, nine Representatives and one official each from the Departments of State, Commerce and Defense.

CSCE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman
Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman

202/225-1901

HELSINKI COMMISSION LEADERS SEEK CSCE PEACEKEEPING FORCE GREATER SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUAL REPUBLICS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 29, 1991

Contact: Jamie Ridge, Robert Hand
202-225-1901

Washington, DC -- Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), today made the following statement regarding the intensified fighting in Yugoslavia:

"We condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the breaking of the ceasefire and escalation of the conflict in Croatia, where federal military units are reported to be openly siding with Serbian militants against Croatian forces. The violent course on which Yugoslavia has embarked is in complete contradiction with the many positive developments which are now taking place throughout Europe, including the Soviet Union, and are clearly counter to the aims of the CSCE, or Helsinki process. Yugoslavia, once considered a model for other countries in the region, has today become the pariah of Europe, not because of its deeply rooted problems, but for the way in which it has chosen to handle them. The current government leaders of Serbia bear by far the greatest responsibility for this tragic turn of events.

"Those within Yugoslavia who seek to remain on this course must not be allowed to succeed. Any Yugoslav unity, whether a federation or confederation, cannot be maintained by force, nor can the borders of the republics be changed by force. As the current situation in the USSR now demonstrates, only mutual agreement, democratically and peacefully attained, can provide lasting and supportable results. In today's democratic Europe, armed forces and guerrilla warfare are not acceptable means for determining a country's affairs and future.

"Senior officials representing the participating States of the CSCE have now met twice in emergency session in Prague with the goal of restoring peace in Yugoslavia and getting the republic leaders and other relevant parties back to the negotiating table. As the fighting continues, these efforts have become insufficient, and a more active as well as higher-level involvement must now be considered if full-scale civil war is to be averted.

"On September 3, the senior CSCE officials will reconvene in Prague. We believe that they should make arrangements for a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of all CSCE States to condemn the breaking of the ceasefire and consider further measures in response to the conflict. One possibility would be the organization of a CSCE peacekeeping force. Such a force could be deployed throughout Yugoslavia in order to help bring fighting to complete halt where it now exists, and to prevent clashes from erupting elsewhere in the country. There would have to be consensus among all 35 participating States before the CSCE could respond in this manner, and the number, composition and mandate of the forces would, of course, have to be agreed upon as well. Yugoslavia, as a CSCE participant, would have a say in the arrangements made. With the death toll climbing ever higher, however, consideration should be given to any means to halt the violence and pave the way for negotiations.

(more...)



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WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1991

No. 124

Senate

CONTINUED CONCERN OVER VIOLENCE IN YUGOSLAVIA

● Mr. DeCONCINI. Mr. President, many dramatic events occurred during the course of the congressional recess. First among them was the attempted coup in the Soviet Union, the subsequent unraveling of that country, and the now fully recognized independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Representative STENY H. HOYER and I, as cochairs of the Helsinki Commission, have just led a Commission delegation to each of three Baltic States, to several Soviet republics, and to Moscow where we witnessed the long-awaited granting of full Baltic membership in the CSCE.

These historic events have deservedly captured our attention, but we cannot forget other recent events of concern. We need to focus in particular on the tragedy that is transpiring in Yugoslavia, especially in Croatia where Serbian rebels supported by the Yugoslav Army have been fighting Croatian forces and wreaking havoc on many Croatian towns and villages. Day after day, more people have been killed or injured in this fighting. Many are innocent civilians, trapped by the senseless violence.

The European Community countries have repeatedly sought to restore the peace, and have been supported in their efforts by three emergency meetings of CSCE senior officials. Yet, the fighting has continued, in violation of an agreed cease-fire. A new truce involving Serbian leaders in Croatia was achieved only yesterday, a day which also saw approximately 30 more people killed in fighting in various regions of the Croatian Republic.

I have condemned on several occasions the fighting in Yugoslavia, and I applaud the recent decision of European officials not to recognize external or internal border changes made unilaterally and by force. Any credible solution to the Yugoslav crisis must be achieved peacefully and by mutual agreement, consonant with the principles of the CSCE. At present, the international peace conference in the Hague, chaired by Lord Carrington, is attempting to do just that, and it deserves our strongest support.

If the fighting continues, however, the United States and other concerned countries must be prepared to take stronger measures. Earlier, Helsinki Commission Chairman HOYER and I had recommended that the CSCE meet at the level of foreign ministers to consider such measures, including the deployment of CSCE peacekeeping forces. These forces would be better able than monitors to deter any further breaking of an agreed cease-fire, and they could be deployed not only in Croatia but in other areas where violence seems ready to erupt. Bosnia-Herzegovina, with its volatile mix of peoples and its location between Serbia and Croatia, is of immediate concern in this regard, along with Kosovo, where violence occurred just yesterday as Servian security forces broke up a demonstration by ethnic Albanians calling for educational rights. Macedonia is also a concern in light of a referendum which was held in this southernmost Yugoslav republic on September 8 in which the overwhelming majority of voters opted to become sovereign and independent rather than in an unequal federation.

The United States and other countries must also be ready to respond to what seems to be the most likely outcome of the current crisis if the current fighting continues: the breakup of Yugoslavia. As interethnic conflicts move closer to full-scale civil war, the prospects for Yugoslavia to stay together become increasingly remote.

Today, however, it is vital that the United States and other countries take a strong stand in favor of peace and democracy throughout Yugoslavia, no matter what the future political structure of that country may be. Many countries took this stand yesterday, at the opening of the Moscow CSCE meeting on human dimension issues, and we need to reinforce these efforts here in Congress. We cannot remain silent as the tragedy goes on. ●



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WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1991

No. 131

Senate

FURTHER ACTION MUST BE TAKEN TO STOP THE FIGHTING IN YUGOSLAVIA

● Mr. DeCONCINI. Mr. President, the latest efforts by the European Community to restore peace in Yugoslavia have just failed. The most recent agreement to a new cease-fire in Croatia was broken before the ink was dry, and all signs point to a further escalation of the conflict. Tensions are heating up in neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina as well, and civil war on a massive scale now looms on the horizon.

Who is at fault for this tragic state of affairs? Political leaders on all sides of the conflict have each made their share of mistakes. Most have fanned nationalist sentiment in the service of their own political interests; few have condemned or done anything to stop the discrimination and atrocious, violent acts of hatred this has encouraged. There has been little if any effort to try to meet legitimate concerns of ethnic minorities in the republics where they exist. Most have engaged in a game of mutual accusation and criticism; few have taken serious efforts to improve the economic opportunities or standard of living of the people they are supposed to represent. Ethnic passions and a mad desire for vengeance have conquered objectivity and any attempt at mutual understanding.

This said, there can be no doubt that one man—Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic—is more responsible than any other for the violence, the death, and the destruction which has been taken place every day in Yugoslavia over the last 3 months. Others, for all their faults, have agreed on several occasions to stop the fighting and to give international efforts to find a solution to the crisis a chance to succeed. The government of Mr. Milosevic, on the other hand, has encouraged political chaos at the Federal level which has allowed the Federal Army to spin out of control. It has resisted past attempts to reach agreement to a cease-fire and done little if anything to stop those in the field from breaking agreements that have been reached. Now, it is the government of Mr. Milosevic that has stated it would oppose any European proposal to send peacekeeping forces which could make a cease-fire less fragile. The result: Yugoslav tanks stationed in Serbia have today crossed into Croatia en masse, with fierce fighting in Osijek and other towns and cities in the eastern Slavonian region of the Croatian Republic. The estimat-

ed death toll is now moving toward 500, and there are no signs that the killing will stop.

President Milosevic first tested his powers of repression on the Albanians of Kosovo. Now, Croatia is feeling the brunt of his force. Bosnia and even Macedonia may be next. Indeed, as events earlier this year have shown, the Serbian people themselves are not immune from his wrath. His reaction to opposition from within Serbia shows that he does not seem to trust the people he serves as President under conditions of democracy.

With the efforts of the European Community at an apparent impasse, there is a real frustration over what more can be done to remedy this tragic situation. Some are hoping to salvage EC efforts; others are looking for new initiatives from the United Nations. There is a growing consensus that the United States needs to elevate its efforts. I frankly cannot understand why President Bush and Secretary of State Baker are not making greater efforts to utilize the considerable influence the United States has to press for the fighting to stop. This is not just a European problem. Conflicts in Yugoslavia can cause instability and threaten the peace in Europe, which certainly would be to the detriment of United States interests. Moreover, many Americans have close ties to Yugoslavia and are deeply concerned about the welfare of their friends and relatives. The United States, at a high political level, should therefore forcefully and persistently condemn the violence and encourage a positive solution.

As Cochairman of the Helsinki Commission, which has actively followed events in Yugoslavia and sought to encourage a solution to the current crisis acceptable to all, I would urge President Bush and Secretary of State Baker to seek to get the CSCE process more deeply involved. To date, the CSCE has provided support for EC efforts, but it should now seek to involve itself in these efforts as well. The CSCE includes the member States of the European Community, but it includes the remainder of Europe as well. The United States and Canada are also participants and can add their voices to those of Europe opposing the continuation of the conflict. CSCE membership is limited to the most interested countries and can therefore be less cumbersome than the larger United Nations in formulating a response.

In my view, the CSCE States should meet immediately at the level of foreign ministers to condemn the continued violence. Such a high-level statement would send an important message. The foreign ministers should also consider additional responses, which should continue to include peacekeeping forces. Serbia is wrong to oppose such an international effort. With the Yugoslav Army fighting on the side of Serbian militants, there is no neutral party in Yugoslavia to help keep opposing forces separated. Opposition stems from fear of losing what has been wrongfully gained through the use of force. Economic and other diplomatic measures should also be considered. There can be no assistance nor business as usual with those that are blocking peace and democracy in Yugoslavia.

The United States can and should take these efforts, but, Mr. President, in the end the real solution to the crisis must come from the peoples of Yugoslavia themselves. They are the ones who are suffering from the conflict. Some are losing friends and relatives, some are losing their homes and communities. They will all face the worsening economic circumstances. They must therefore join the effort to restore peace. They must pressure their respective political leaders to agree to stop the fighting if they have not already done so. They must each put hatred and prejudice aside and make an effort to accommodate the legitimate concerns of the others. They must insist upon the democratic conditions necessary for these concerns to be accommodated and for their own rights to be respected. It is not too late for them to pull themselves out of the quagmire into which they have fallen, but they must make their strong desire for peace and democracy clear to those leaders who are prolonging the conflict for their own ends. ●



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WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1991

No. 171

Senate

●Mr. DeCONCINI. Mr. President, I rise to introduce a sense-of-the-Senate resolution calling for the United States to recognize, upon request, the independence of those Yugoslav republics which have declared their independence. While I believe that it is important that we consult with the Europeans in the hope of having a common, multilateral approach to this issue, we must do more than consult. We should encourage recognition, and the United States should itself take a stand and recognize the Republics now. The United States stands in this world as a symbol of freedom and independence for all peoples, and it is critical that we do not abandon our principles in our response to the crisis in Yugoslavia.

The conflict in Yugoslavia has a complex network of intertwining historical roots, and the mutual accusations and one-sided reporting coming from the disputing parties makes it difficult for us to find easy answers. I would nevertheless like to make the following comments, which I believe justify recognition of the sovereignty and independence of the individual republic.

First, it is a simple fact that the Yugoslavia we once knew has now disintegrated. The blame for this rests not on the so-called separatist governments of Slovenia and Croatia, but on the government of Serbia and its ally, the Yugoslav military, which claim to be preserving the Yugoslav state. In other words, the best arguments for recognition have come not from Ljubljana and Zagreb, but from Belgrade itself.

It is true that the people of Slovenia and Croatia elected governments which indeed have sought to break up the existing federation, and exercise of their right to self-determination. It is also true that this right is, for these two peoples and for all others, tempered by the principle of the equal rights of peoples. This means that, instead of taking unilateral actions, they must take into account the aspirations of others, in this case their countrymen in the other Yugoslav republic and provinces. In fact, for the first 6 months of this year, Slovenian and Croatian officials engaged in negotiations that attempted to do just that. Even after the conflict started, the Croatian officials remained in the federal system in the hope of working things out.

During that same time, Serbian officials sought to undermine the federal system they were claiming to defend. They stole federal funds. They ensured that the representatives of Kosovo and Vojvodina were not the independent voices they constitutionally should be at the federal level. They resigned from the federal presidency, only to return and then block the normal rotation of the head of that body. Most recently, they claimed to take control of the presidency and assumed the powers of the federal assembly. These arbitrary actions created the political chaos that denied Yugoslavia the legitimacy it otherwise

had. With these acts, they have provided the other republics with the most genuine reason for wanting to leave the federation. And while they all nevertheless agreed to create a new Yugoslavia on the basis of a plan proposed by the European Community for an association of sovereign and independent states, Serbia turned the plan down. As a result, I believe that the future of those who have attempted to negotiate a mutually agreeable solution should not forever be determined by those who have not.

Second, the boundaries between the Yugoslav republics were not internationally recognized frontiers, but that does not mean that changing these boundaries by the threat or use of force is in any way an acceptable practice. By seeking to change these boundaries by force, the efforts of the Yugoslav Army and the Serbian government have made them the equivalent of international frontiers. Indeed, it is likely that we would not feel compelled here today to recognize the republics and their existing borders were it not for the Yugoslav Army attacks on them.

Finally, with all the violence that has occurred, whether we like it or not Yugoslavia has been shattered to the extent that it cannot be put back together except by the free will of its peoples. Given what has happened, reconciliation among the neighboring peoples of Yugoslavia is more likely to occur if they each first have their own sovereignty and independence.

I am under no illusion, however, about what recognition means. Like sanctions, it is unlikely to bring a sudden and complete halt to the fighting, since the fighting is really over territory and not maintenance of a federation. Recognition will not mean foreign intervention or military assistance to the independent republics, and it would be foolhardy, if not dangerous, to interpret it as such.

Recognition also does not mean approval of the policies of the republican governments, most of which have espoused nationalism, sometimes at the expense of democratic development, economic reform and respect for the rights of all peoples on their territories. None of the republics, including Croatia, can claim to be fully democratic. Of course, building democratic institutions might be difficult during the course of civil war, but such an effort cannot be abandoned. While independence may now be a precondition for further democratic development, I wish to make clear that, to the United States, democracy is far more important than either the unity of Yugoslavia or the independence of its republics, and opting to recognize the republics does not, in and of itself, mean full acceptance in the community of democratic nations.

While it is no cure-all, recognition does take a stand on what we and hopefully the rest of world will now accept as the best response to the Yugoslav crisis. Until recently, the Europeans and the United States have kept the door open to both sides of the dispute; we could have, were asked to, but chose not to recognize the republics earlier in the crisis. That open door has now been slammed shut by the Serbian government and the Yugoslav military, first and foremost by its wholly unwarranted assault on Dubrovnik.

Recognition will also provide needed symbolic support to those republics which have never been independent before and may have a difficult time achieving it now. As hard as it may be to realize, these republics may in fact be the scene of even more bloodshed than has been seen thus far in Croatia, and they desperately need our support.

In return for recognition, we should ask that those republics willing to develop relations on the basis of the EC plan should in fact do so. The plan is a good one, and the EC should proceed with it. It contains important elements on respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all people, without discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity or religious belief, that should not be quickly abandoned by governments genuinely committed to the development of democracy. And just as they were neighbors within the Yugoslavia of past, so too shall they be neighbors as separate, sovereign entities, making cooperation among them as envisaged in the EC plan inevitable.

If the Serbian government continues to choose to reject the plan, so be it—they choose their own isolation from the remaining Yugoslav republics and also from the rest of Europe. In the end, I hope the people of Serbia will decide to join the community of free European nations rather than accept the isolation their government has brought them. When that time comes, Serbia's neighbors must be prepared to extend their welcome. ●

SENATE RESOLUTION 224—RELATIVE TO RECOGNITION OF THE YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS

Mr. DeCONCINI submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 224

Whereas the United States and other concerned countries view the future of Yugoslavia to be a matter only for the peoples of Yugoslavia themselves to decide;

Whereas the United States and other concerned countries have urged the people of Yugoslavia to resolve their differences peacefully through negotiations;

Whereas negotiations between the political leaders of Yugoslavia and its republics and provinces have thus far failed to produce a mutually acceptable agreement on the future character of their relations with each other;

Whereas the representatives of most of the republics of Yugoslavia have nevertheless acted in good-faith in seeking a peacefully achieved, mutually acceptable agreement, as well as in accordance with the general will of the people of the republics they represent;

Whereas the Government of the Republic of Serbia and its current supporters at the federal, republic, provincial and local levels have attempted instead to resolve differences not through good-faith negotiations but through the threat and use of force;

Whereas the Federal Armed Forces of Yugoslavia have not acted as a neutral party to bring an end to the fighting but have instead openly sided against the Republic of Croatia;

Whereas these actions are in clear violation of the principles and provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and other documents of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE);

Whereas these actions have caused the death of thousands of Yugoslav citizens, including innocent civilians, and the bodily and material harm of countless others;

Whereas there is a great potential for the conflict to spread to other republics and provinces in Yugoslavia;

Whereas the member states of the European Community and other concerned countries have sought to restore and maintain peace in Yugoslavia, as well as to encourage negotiations that would lead to a peaceful resolution of difference;

Whereas these efforts have been supported throughout by the CSCE and its Committee of Senior Officials;

Whereas a continuation of the threat and use of force to resolve the crisis in Yugoslavia makes it impossible to achieve a mutually acceptable and democratic agreement on the country's future and especially one in which the republics and provinces would remain together; and

Whereas, under such circumstances, the future of those in Yugoslavia who have made good-faith efforts to find a mutually agreeable solution that is peacefully attained and reflects the will of the people should no longer be determined by those who have not: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the United States—

(1) condemns the ongoing use of force and violence in Yugoslavia;

(2) opposes and refuses to recognize any changes in the internal or external borders of Yugoslavia achieved through the use of force;

(3) supports the efforts of the European Community and other concerned countries, as mandated by the CSCE, to restore and maintain peace as well as to encourage negotiations leading to a peaceful resolution of differences;

(4) calls upon all parties in Yugoslavia to refrain from the further use of force and violence, and to separate, withdraw and disarm in accordance with the provisions of the most recent ceasefire;

(5) calls upon all parties in Yugoslavia also to declare their commitment to all principles and provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent CSCE documents, and to implement immediately these commitments in their relations to each other;

(6) recommends that the participating States in the CSCE convene at the level of foreign ministers and consider the formation of a peacekeeping force to be deployed where needed in Yugoslavia to deter the resumption of fighting and its spreading to other parts of the country;

(7) urges the President of the United States to give more active support to international efforts to restore peace and to achieve a resolution of differences in Yugoslavia;

(8) urges the President to work closely with the European Community and other countries in imposing, enhancing and enforcing necessary diplomatic and economic sanctions against governments in Yugoslavia at any level which violate cease-fire agreements;

(9) urges the President to extend immediate and formal recognition, upon request, to any of the Yugoslav republics where declarations of sovereignty and independence have been based on the clear will of the people; and

(10) notes that this recognition is in accordance with the European Community proposal for on transforming Yugoslavia into an association of independent states, and therefore calls upon the leaders of all republics which have supported this proposal to use it as the basis for their future mutual relations, and calls on those who have not supported this proposal to do so.



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House of Representatives

SOME OVERLOOKED YUGOSLAV TRAGEDIES

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 26, 1991

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, surrounding the crisis and conflict which we see today in Yugoslavia are important, controversial, and interrelated issues such as the self-determination of peoples, the changing of borders, civilian control of the military and the actions a state may take to prevent its own breakup. As chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe—the Helsinki Commission—I have already addressed these issues extensively, including here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Today, however, I do not want to address these issues, or to prescribe any particular scheme which I feel could provide a just and lasting solution to the crisis in Yugoslavia. Instead, I want to raise one aspect of the many personal tragedies being experienced by those individuals caught up in the crisis, if not the conflict itself.

Consider what is confronting the many young people in Yugoslavia—with their hopes and dreams for a bright future in what is supposed to be the most united, prosperous, democratic, and peaceful Europe ever—who are now suddenly being mobilized to fight in a conflict they do not want. Many of them have fled rather than be drafted into the Yugoslav military and taken to the battlefield. Ethnic Hungarians from Vojvodina and ethnic Albanians from Kosovo in particular want to avoid being sent to fight in Croatia; they do not view this as a conflict of their making or as serving their interests. Indeed, many young Serbs feel the same way. They know that the use of force is not the way to resolve differences, even in regard to what may be very legitimate concerns regarding the situation of Serbs in Croatia, just as they know wide-scale repression is not the way to address what may have been legitimate concerns regarding Kosovo.

Unfortunately, the authorities have attempted to silence through intimidation those who seek to act upon their rights to free expression and assembly to protest the Yugoslav Army's waging of war in Croatia. Recently, organizers of and participants in peaceful gatherings in Vojvodina and Kosovo faced official intimidation, harassment, and detention. Independent voices in Belgrade have also been harassed, and their officers vandalized. As one Belgrade-based opponent of the war recently said in a *Financial Times* article "We Are Threatened: Any Opposition to the War is Tantalum to Treachery."

More specifically, the events in Vojvodina are a telling example of this problem. In early November, Nenad Canak of Novi Sad and Janos Szabo of Ada, who have been publicly critical of the fighting in Croatia and the calling up of reservists, were both arrested, possibly because of the antiwar protests. Five others also face charges for being involved in a meeting protesting the conflict. Canak allegedly was informed that he was going to be called up for military service, and Szabo was reported to be undergoing medical treatment for a heart condition. I am extremely concerned about these individuals, whose only crime appears to have been their protest of the war in Croatia. In Kosovo, Albanians are reportedly taken right off the streets and put into service. Meanwhile, more and more young people regardless of their ethnic background are going to the front and being killed.

This, Mr. Speaker, is not to say that fault for the current crisis can only be found on one side. Croatia's record in regard to press freedoms and respect for other basic human rights has had its share of shortcomings as well. But today I wanted to focus on this one issue: the young people who are being sent to the front against their will to fight in this senseless, evil war. Their particular plight, often overlooked, can be added to the tragedy of the thousands who have died in the battle and the hundreds of thousands who have lost their homes and possessions. Their loss on the battlefield is the loss of youthful and eager talents that could have been put to much better use in the creation of a new era of democracy and prosperity in the Yugoslav republics and provinces.

For their sake, and for the sake of future generations, I therefore strongly urge that those officials in Yugoslavia who are responsible for the continuation of the conflict to bring the fighting to a complete halt now. Recourse to force as a means to achieve political ends has been condemned by the international community, including the participating states of the CSCE process, and its continued use can only bring greater diplomatic isolation and economic decline. I cannot see how this is in the interest of anyone involved.

CSCCE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman
Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman

202/225-1901

HELSINKI COMMISSION LEADERS WELCOME RECOGNITION MOVE, CALL FOR EFFORTS TO RESOLVE OTHER YUGOSLAV PROBLEMS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 17, 1992

Contact: Jamie Ridge, Bob Hand
202-225-1901

WASHINGTON – Today, Representative Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Senator Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Chairman and Co-Chairman respectively of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), made the following joint statement in regard to recent developments in Yugoslavia:

"We welcome the decision taken by the European Community (EC) and other countries to recognize the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. Our main interests have not been to see Yugoslavia's breakup but to see instead a full restoration of peace and the building of democratic institutions throughout. Given the tragic course of events in the past year, however, we hope that these interests can now be achieved through recognition of the republics.

"Assuming that it will make a positive contribution, we view this move by the EC to be only a small step in the path to a lasting and just resolution of the Yugoslav crisis. While we extend our congratulations to the Croatian and Slovenian peoples on their recognition, and our condolences for the severe losses they have incurred in the civil conflict, our concern must be for the well-being and human rights of all peoples of the region. Indeed, we are very concerned that a settlement between Croatia and Serbia, which we all want to see, might nevertheless be reached in such a manner that the conflict in the Yugoslav lands would not end but simply move south to other republics or provinces, where it will become increasingly difficult to stop and more likely to be internationalized.

"Of particular concern are recent reports in the press of secret talks between Serbian and Croatian officials for the division of neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina, which has a very diverse and inter-mingled population. Outside attempts to destabilize and then divide that republic would represent major violations of the Helsinki Principles, and could easily lead to more bloodshed than has already occurred. For that reason, we believe that U.N. peacekeeping efforts should fully extend to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Similarly, we feel that Macedonia's future should be determined not by outside, neighboring parties, but by the will of the people of that republic. We also remain deeply concerned about Kosovo, where widespread denials of the human rights of the ethnic Albanian population have created a highly polarized and volatile situation.

"In addition to ending the conflict in Croatia, we urge the United Nations, the European Community and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) to address these other problems so that they are not settled through non-democratic means and the use of force. And we urge all the peoples of the region to begin to reconcile their differences and get on with the democratic and market-oriented reforms that are necessary to complete the resolution of the Yugoslav crisis."

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STATEMENT ON YUGOSLAVIA
by Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD), Chairman
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
(to independent Croatian media group)
January 23, 1992

My activities and interest in Yugoslav affairs stem largely from my chairmanship of the Helsinki Commission, a U.S. Government agency mandated to monitor and encourage compliance with the Helsinki Final Act and other CSCE documents. Yugoslavia has been a participant in the Helsinki Process, and we therefore have a real and legitimate concern about the situation there, particularly as it relates to human rights.

My main interest, as chairman of the Commission, has not been to see Yugoslavia's break up but to see instead a full restoration of peace, the development of democratic principles and institutions, and the eventual reconciliation of the peoples of the region. Given the tragic course of events in the past year, perhaps these interests can now be achieved through the recognition of the republics, as the EC and other countries have done.

From this point of view, the civil conflict which began last June is tragic not just because of the tremendous destruction and loss of life. Late last year, I raised in the congress my sympathy for the many young people in Yugoslavia -- ethnic Serbs, Croats, Albanians, Hungarians, and others. Their hopes and dreams for a bright future -- in what is supposed to be the most united, prosperous, democratic and peaceful Europe ever -- have been shattered by this senseless conflict, and their youthful energy and talents, which could be put to best use in helping to create this new era of political and economic progress, have been spent instead on fighting their neighbors.

I cannot see how this has been in the interest of anyone, and I hope that the recent successes of UN Envoy Cyrus Vance in achieving a ceasefire is a sign that those behind the conflict in Belgrade are realizing the senselessness of addressing even what may have been legitimate concerns through the use of force.

The only just and lasting solution to the current political crisis which has caused the civil conflict is one that is consonant with the principles and provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, such as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including those of minority groups, as well as the equal rights and self-determination of peoples and the inadmissibility of the use of force to achieve political objectives.

Knowing the importance of the past as a source of current grievances and concerns, ultimately there must also be a serious, honest and open assessment of the history of the region, especially in Croatia during the course of the Second World War. In my view, a candid public acknowledgement and condemnation of past wrongs is necessary if they are to be separated from the present. Until this is done and action is taken to ensure that the atrocities of the past will not be repeated today in any way, it is unlikely that the various peoples who have lived in Yugoslavia, and who will continue to be neighbors, can ever completely reconcile their differences and find real peace with each other.

One last point is that there must be a comprehensive solution to the Yugoslav conflict. The Helsinki Commission is concerned about all who live in the region. While we want to see an immediate end to the bloodshed in Croatia, we do not want to see the fighting simply move to neighboring Bosnia. We want to see a resolution to the problems plaguing Kosovo, especially the widespread denials of the human rights of members of the ethnic Albanian population there. We also want to see Macedonia's future determined by the will of the people of that republic and not by their neighbors.

In conclusion, I would like to extend my deepest condolences to those who have incurred devastating human and material losses from this conflict, especially in Croatia. I genuinely hope that the efforts of the Helsinki Commission will help to bring the fighting to a quick and permanent end. We will continue to work to that end.

CSCE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman
Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman

202/225-1901

HELSINKI COMMISSION TO OBSERVE INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM IN BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 19, 1992

Contact: Jamie Ridge, Bob Hand
202-225-1901

WASHINGTON -- Representative Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Senator Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Chairman and Co-Chairman respectively of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), made the following joint statement today regarding the referendum on independence in the Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, scheduled for February 29 and March 1, 1992. The statement followed a meeting between Co-Chairman DeConcini and Alija Izetbegovic, President of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"As President Izetbegovic was informed today, we are deeply concerned about the volatile situation which exists in the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This republic has a very diverse and inter-mingled population, and the break-up of the Yugoslav federation has caused increased tension between the main ethnic groups there over the future of the republic.

"There have been reports of outside agitation by Serbian and Croatian officials as part of an attempt to divide Bosnia-Herzegovina. Such efforts to destabilize this republic represent clear violations of Helsinki Principles and will only exacerbate the tensions there which already exist, which could easily lead to violence and destruction on a massive scale.

"On February 29 and March 1, 1992, the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina will hold a referendum through which the citizens of the republic can declare their views on their future. We would strongly oppose any attempt by any party to disrupt this referendum, or to threaten or otherwise intimidate those citizens, regardless of their ethnicity, who seek to participate in it. In his capacity as head of the Republic Referendum Commission, the Premier of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Jure Pelivan, has written a letter to the Helsinki Commission and others inviting foreign observers to be present for the referendum. This invitation was reiterated by President Izetbegovic during his meeting with the Commission.

"The Helsinki Commission will send two members of its staff to Bosnia-Herzegovina to observe this referendum and the manner in which it is held. We understand that there will be observer teams from the European Parliament and several European countries, and that other American teams may be present as well. We hope that a foreign observer presence will demonstrate to all the interest we and others have in seeing the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina determined in a peaceful and democratic way."

CSCE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman
Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman

202/225-1901

**Hoyer, DeConcini condemn action of militant Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina,
call for resolution through constructive dialogue and democratic processes**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Jamie Ridge 225-1901

March 2, 1992

WASHINGTON--Rep. Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Chairman and Co-chairman respectively of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the Helsinki Commission), made the following joint statement today regarding the confrontation in the Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina:

"We have learned today of the increasingly volatile situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the aftermath of that Republic's February 29-March 1 referendum on independence. We are particularly concerned about the armed confrontation which now exists in the capital of the Republic, Sarajevo, where road blockades set up by ethnic Serbs have in effect made the entire city hostage to demands of the Serbian Democratic Party in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This Party has boycotted the referendum and now wants its results nullified, as well as greater control over the Republic's political affairs.

"We emphatically condemn this action, which can accomplish nothing except to provoke a civil conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina and set back the democratic development of that Republic. We call upon all who have been part of this action to remove the barricades and blockades, to stop the shooting and bombing, and to let the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina stabilize. We also call upon ethnic Muslims and Croats who have taken similar action to do the same. That is in the interest of all.

"All sides within Bosnia-Herzegovina must resolve their differences through constructive dialogue and democratic processes--not through confrontation and violence. We do believe that these differences can be overcome if there is, on all sides, the desire and determination to do so.

"Despite obstacles, including the Serbian boycott and the refusal of some local officials to cooperate, the final results of the referendum, based on the observations of members of the Helsinki Commission staff present in Bosnia-Herzegovina, should be considered a legitimate reflection of the will of the majority of the people in this Republic, and the international community should respond positively to this result.

"The United States, the European Community, and other concerned countries have a strong interest in seeing the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina beyond the referendum determined in a peaceful and democratic way. This, we believe, can best be done by respecting the Principles of the Helsinki Final Act, especially those relating to the good faith fulfillment of international legal obligations, the inviolability of frontiers, the non-use of force, the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. These Principles should be fully applied by the Yugoslav Republics in their relations with each other just as they are between CSCE States."

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United States
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Senate

(Legislative day of Thursday, January 30, 1992)

REFERENDUM IN BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA

● **Mr. DeCONCINI.** Mr. President, last weekend the government of the Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina organized a referendum in order to put to the people of that Republic the question of where their future lies—in a new Yugoslav State or as an independent and sovereign Republic.

Following a meeting I had in Washington in February with the President of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic, Representative **STENY HOYER** and I—as cochairs of the Helsinki Commission—decided to accept an invitation from the Government of that Republic to send members of the Commission staff to observe the referendum. David Evans, senior adviser to the Commission, and Bob Hand, the staff member responsible for Yugoslav affairs, spent a total of about 5 days in Bosnia-Herzegovina, examining the overall political and economic situation in that Republic in addition to observing the referendum itself.

Unfortunately, during the last day of their visit, the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sarajevo, was surrounded by barricades set up by militant Serbian groups who are opposed to any separation of the Republic from the Republic of Serbia, regardless of the will of the people. These groups boycotted the referendum, and, when realizing that the results of the referendum would state clear support for independence, they decided to resort to threats and perhaps even the use of force to pressure the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina to nullify the results.

In light of this situation, the Commission staff and other foreign observers were unable to give any preliminary report on their findings before leaving Sarajevo. Indeed, their last day in that city was spent trying to learn how they were going to be able to depart safely in light of the barricades and widespread shooting, which led to a number of deaths.

The two Commission observers nevertheless had prepared a statement for that day, March 2, written before the barricades went up. I would like to insert this statement into the RECORD, because it explains what they did, where they went, whom they met, and what they saw. Their basic conclusion is that the referendum was a legitimate expression of the will of the majority of the people of that Republic.

In the very near future, the Commission will release a full report on the referendum, how it was conducted, and its results. In the meantime, I thought it important to share these initial conclusions with my colleagues, because, while most of the barricades have been removed, tensions are still high in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and full-scale violence could erupt at any time.

The population of Bosnia-Herzegovina is extremely diverse—is has been called a Yugoslavia within Yugoslavia—and the Republic will have to find a consensus among its people on how it will now proceed. But it is important for us to realize that, no matter how one views the conflict in Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina has in no way been its source. Instead, that Republic has been trying to deal with the realities of Yugoslavia's breakup in order to keep from becoming the conflict's bloodiest victim. The leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina, I believe, are seeking to maintain the peace, and to establish a democratic political system in which all peoples, regardless of nationality, can live together.

Times will likely continue to be difficult for Bosnia-Herzegovina, which has no history as an independent state. It therefore deserves our full support. I can think of no better way to express this support than to respond positively to the results of the referendum and recognize the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Those countries that have recognized Slovenia and Croatia should recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as Macedonia, and the United States should follow suit. We should also encourage as best we can the further democratic development of that Republic, which will be essential if the main nationalities there—Moslems, Serbs, and Croats—are to find real peace with each other.

STATEMENT BY THE U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION OBSERVERS OF THE REFERENDUM IN BOSNIA-HERCEGOVINA

SARAJEVO, March 2, 1992.—At the conclusion of their five-day visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina to observe that republic's referendum on independence, David Evans and Robert Hand, members of the staff of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), made the following statement:

"We came to observe the referendum in Bosnia-Herzegovina at the direction of Representative STENY HOYER and Senator DENNIS DECONCINI, Co-Chairs of the Helsinki Commission, who have been deeply concerned that the senseless conflict which has tragically torn Yugoslavia apart might spread to this diverse and centrally located republic. Reports of tensions between ethnic groups in some regions of the republics, as well as of possible outside agitation of these tensions by neighboring republics, added greatly to this concern.

"Our presence here, therefore, intended to do two things: to help ensure through international observation that the referendum was conducted smoothly, freely, and openly; and to demonstrate the strong interest of the Helsinki Commission in seeing the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina beyond the referendum determined in a peaceful and democratic way. This, the Commission believes, can best be done by respecting the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, especially those relating to respect for obligations under international law; the inviolability of frontiers; non-use of force; respect for human rights and freedoms; and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples. These principles should be fully applied by the Yugoslav republics in their relations with each other, just as they are in relations between CSCE states.

"During the course of our visit, we met with political leaders at the republic and local levels who represent, combined, the interests of all three main national groups residing in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Among these were several members of the collective presidency of the republic, the mayors of Banja Luka and Mostar and representatives of various political parties. We also held talks with members of the Office for Foreign Observers of the republic's Referendum Commission, as well as with observers from the European Community and other concerned countries. We also spoke with several private individuals, such as journalists and shopkeepers, asking them their views on the referendum and the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the days of the referendum, we visited many polling stations in and around Sarajevo, Banja Luka, and Mostar, and in several towns and villages in between.

"It is, of course, much too early to draw final conclusions on this referendum and the manner in which it was conducted. We have been seeking the observations of others to add to our own, and the Commission will issue a report on our findings in Washington in the near future.

"We can, however, factually state some of the things we saw or heard while observing the referendum. Generally, the media in Bosnia-Herzegovina seems to be relatively free and open, allowing various views in the referendum to be expressed. We also felt that the referendum was properly organized and carried out by the authorities, allowing the public a free choice. We did note, however, that these conditions varied somewhat from one region of the republic to another.

"We were concerned about the impact of the call of the Serbian Democratic Party to boycott the referendum, and the refusal of some officials to cooperate in preparing for and administering the referendum. These actions may have intimidated eligible voters, especially ethnic Serbs, who may otherwise have participated in the referendum, and made it more difficult for many others who did intend to participate. Among the regions where we observed the referendum, these actions seemed to have had a particularly negative impact in and around Banja Luka. While we could not agree with the reasons for such actions, we appreciated the willingness of those supporting them to explain them to us, and we also noted their calls on their followers not to disrupt the referendum.

"Unfortunately, the period leading up to and including the days of the referendum was held was marred by violence, which included bombing and shootings, the wide-scale tearing down of posters and other intimidating public activities, which impacted negatively on the referendum. Despite these obstacles, the final result of the referendum, based on our own observations, should be considered a legitimate reflection of the will of the majority of the people of this republic.

"With the referendum now over, we hope the international community and the other Yugoslav republics will acknowledge the results and respond to them positively and in accordance with the Helsinki Principles. Recognizing that significant differences still remain within Bosnia-Herzegovina, we hope that all sides will seek solutions through constructive dialogue and democratic processes—not through confrontation and violence. We do believe that these differences can be overcome if there is, on all sides, the desire and determination to do so.

"Finally we would like to thank the Office for Foreign Observers for facilitating our visit, and Portuguese Ambassador Moriera de Andrade, who coordinated the work of the various observer delegations in a way that maximized their effectiveness. And we want to thank all the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina whom we met, who made our stay so enjoyable and informative. We wish all the people of this republic a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future. Thank you."●

CSCE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman
Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman

202/225-1900

HELSINKI COMMISSION WELCOMES U.S. MOVES TOWARD RECOGNITION OF YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS; CALLS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IMPROVEMENTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 11, 1992

Contact: Jamie Ridge, Bob Hand
202-225-1901

WASHINGTON -- Representative Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Senator Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Chairman and Co-Chairman respectively of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), made the following comments regarding the March 10 United States-European Community statement in Brussels on the recognition of the Yugoslav republics:

"We welcome the US-EC statement on the Yugoslav republics released yesterday in Brussels, which indicates that the United States will join the many other countries who have recognized Slovenia and Croatia, and that the European Community countries and the United States may both do the same for two other republics requesting recognition -- Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia -- in the near future. This statement indicates a U.S. policy move in the right direction, and one that, at long last, recognizes the realities of the break-up of Yugoslavia.

"From our perspective, however, there is no reason why Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia should not be recognized at the same time as Slovenia and Croatia. Following the referendum in Bosnia-Herzegovina less than two weeks ago, which the Helsinki Commission observed, it can now be said that the majority of citizens of each of these republics have legitimately expressed their desire to be sovereign and independent states. Neither Bosnia-Herzegovina nor Macedonia have been responsible for the crisis and conflict in Yugoslavia, and it would be a sad mistake if they were in any way further destabilized as a result of a postponement of their recognition.

"In regard to Serbia and Montenegro, they should of course form a new, common state if that is the desire of their peoples, and we hope that all sides will be willing to negotiate in good faith a just and mutually agreed sharing of the assets and liabilities of the former Yugoslav federation.

"A continuing concern which we have is the human rights performance of governments of the Yugoslav republics, which vary considerably among them but which could all be improved. In particular, we find the human rights situation in Kosovo to be in gross violation of Helsinki and other CSCE commitments, with Serbian repression of the Albanian population there continuing with unabated severity. We urge that this issue, and other human rights problems such as limits on press freedoms in several of the republics, be given priority attention at the Brussels Conference on Yugoslavia, chaired by Lord Carrington, as well as at the upcoming CSCE follow-up meeting in Helsinki.

"The United States and European countries also must make human rights improvements a necessary parallel to the development of their bilateral relations with the republics. Without such improvements, the Yugoslav crisis will never be fully settled in a peaceful and democratic way."

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The U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) is mandated by law to monitor and encourage progress in implementing the provisions of the CSCE Final Act, commonly known as the Helsinki accords. The Commission, created in 1976, is made up of nine Senators, nine Representatives and one official each from the Departments of State, Commerce and Defense.

CSCE NEWS RELEASE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

U.S. Congress • Washington, D.C. 20515
Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman
Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman

202/225-1901

HELSINKI COMMISSION CO-CHAIR COMMENTS ON U.S. RECOGNITION OF YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS; CALLS FOR PEACE AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENTS THROUGHOUT REGION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 7, 1992

Contact: Bob Hand, Jamie Ridge
202-225-1901

WASHINGTON -- Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Co-Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission), made the following statement regarding the April 7 announcement by the White House that the United States will recognize three Yugoslav republics:

"I was very pleased to learn today that the United States will join the many other countries that have recognized Croatia, Slovenia and now Bosnia-Herzegovina as independent states. The recognition of Bosnia-Herzegovina, following a similar decision by the European Community members yesterday, is particularly welcomed, and I hope that this will help bring peace to that republic, which has been the scene of a very disturbing increase in inter-ethnic violence.

"In the past, I have called for international recognition of Macedonia along with the other Yugoslav republics requesting such recognition, a view I continue to support. A further postponement of a decision to recognize Macedonia will do little if anything to address the historical mistrust that has held up recognition to date, and it may in fact make the situation worse. Bringing all of the Yugoslav republics, including Macedonia, into the community of states bound to respect the Helsinki principles would contribute to stability in the Balkans. These principles include, among other things, the inviolability of frontiers, non-use of force, the equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual. I therefore hope that the United States and the European Community will be able to resolve expeditiously the outstanding issues between Greece and Macedonia that have so far succeeded in preventing the republic from being recognized.

"Recognition of the Yugoslav republics, however, is only a part of the solution to the crises and conflict that have plagued the Yugoslav region in the past year. All sides must stop fighting now, and remaining differences must be settled in a peaceful and mutually agreeable way. In the end, this can only be done by developing genuinely democratic institutions and respect for the rule of law in each of the republics, including a complete end to the severe repression of the Albanian population in Kosovo. Further developments in relations with the Yugoslav republics should be conditioned on the democratic improvements they make, and encouraging such improvements should be given high priority at the EC-sponsored peace conference in Brussels, chaired by Lord Carrington, as well as at the CSCE follow-up meeting currently in session in Helsinki."

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Senate

RECOGNITION OF YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS

● Mr. DeCONCINI. Mr. President, at long last the United States has joined the European Community and the many other countries which have recognized the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia. Several of my colleagues and I have been urging the administration for months to respect the expressed will of the people of these former Yugoslav Republics and recognize their right to be free and independent. I hope this important step will help bring about peace and stability to this troubled part of the world.

But, Mr. President, there is still one Yugoslav Republic—Macedonia—with an outstanding request for recognition. The objection to recognition comes from Greece, which, for reasons to be found in the history of the Balkan region, has problems only with use of the name "Macedonia" by an entity outside its own territory. The Republic of Macedonia, however, has not in any way been responsible for the crisis and conflict in Yugoslavia, and it and Slovenia were, in fact, the only two Republics which were viewed by the EC Arbitration Commission as meeting the essential conditions for recognition in January. I think Macedonia should be recognized as an independent state now and brought into the community of states bound to respect Helsinki principles, including the inviolability of frontiers and human rights and fundamental freedoms. Moreover, the people of Macedonia, have the right to identify themselves as they wish; the important thing is for them to respect Helsinki principles in their relations with other states, including neighboring countries such as Greece.

Recognition of the Yugoslav Republics, however, is only part of the solution. All sides must stop fighting now. In the end, this can only be done by developing genuinely democratic institutions and respect for the rule of law including an end to the severe repression of the Albanian population in Kosovo. The establishment of genuinely democratic systems must be given high priority at the peace conference in Brussels as well as at the CSCE followup meeting currently being held in Helsinki.●

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI ACCORDS

HEARING
BEFORE THE
**COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE**
ONE HUNDRED SECOND CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

THE YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS: PROSPECTS FOR PEACE AND HUMAN
RIGHTS

FEBRUARY 5, 1992

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THE YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS: PROSPECTS FOR PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1992

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
Washington, DC.

The hearing was held in room 192, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC, at 2 p.m., Honorable Steny H. Hoyer (Chairman) presiding.

Present: Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman; Dennis DeConcini, Co-Chairman; Commissioners, Representatives Christopher Smith, John Edward Porter, Frank R. Wolf, Senator Harry Reid.

Also present: Senator Albert Gore, Representatives Helen Delich Bentley and Jim Moody

Chairman HOYER. The Commission will come to order.

Today, the Helsinki Commission is holding its second hearing on the political crisis and civil conflict in Yugoslavia. This hearing is certainly a timely one, for it appears as if this conflict, which has brought death and destruction of unprecedented scale for post-World War II Europe, is at a critical stage. The fighting has ebbed considerably, thanks in large part to the efforts of U.N. Envoy Cyrus Vance, but it remains unclear whether the conflict will soon continue and in fact spread to other republics, or whether a peaceful settlement that is acceptable to all the peoples of the region is the course that will now be followed.

Fueling the conflict in Yugoslavia are feelings of universal anger, mutual bitterness and actual hatred in light of specific circumstances in which the country found itself as Europe entered this new age of democratic transformation. The two main antagonists, Serbia and Croatia, certainly perceive that they have been wronged by recent decades of communist rule. In my view, the legitimacy of their complaints is not mutually exclusive. That Croatia sees its future as an independent republic seems quite natural, and, indeed, this has many parallels in today's East-Central Europe and the former Soviet Union. At the same time, one can understand the concern Serbia has for the Serbs which live in Croatia and Bosnia, just as it has for the Serbs who live in Kosovo.

What is particularly disturbing and sad is not that there is legitimacy in the concerns of the various groups, but that these concerns are being addressed in an unacceptable manner, such as the use of force in Croatia or repression in Kosovo. In today's Europe, which has accepted the ten Principles of the Helsinki Final Act as universal standards for the behavior of governments, such methods and changes they create must be rejected. What is more, the course of

events in Yugoslavia has shown that violence and repression do not work, for they have led to the country's disintegration, and the pain of its people. The only way in which a just and lasting solution to the crisis in Yugoslavia will be found is through dialogue and negotiation, and by building democracy and respecting human rights.

We are fortunate to have as witnesses today two individuals who have only recently returned from Yugoslavia. One observed firsthand the repeated use of force while the other documented many human rights violations.

First, we have Ambassador Dirk Jan van Houten, who has been—until the rotation of the EC Presidency from the Netherlands to Portugal earlier this year—the head of the European Community Monitoring Mission in Yugoslavia. Ambassador van Houten was scheduled to appear at our last hearing on Yugoslavia, but the senseless shelling of Dubrovnik which began at that time precluded his departure from Yugoslavia to visit the United States. We are very glad, Mr. Ambassador, to see you here today.

Secondly, we have Jeri Laber, Executive Director of Helsinki Watch. Helsinki Watch has just released two reports on human rights violations in Yugoslavia, including those committed by both sides of the conflict in Croatia. The Commission has a high regard for the substantial and professional human rights monitoring efforts of Helsinki Watch over the years, and we look forward to hearing Jeri Laber's comments in light of her recent visit to the Yugoslav republics.

Let me say that I have had the opportunity to personally work with Jeri Laber over the years and with Helsinki Watch. They make a great contribution to the work of this Commission and to the focus upon human rights abuses all over the world.

It is, indeed, a pleasure to have Jeri Laber, who is such a dynamic, committed and courageous leader of that organization, with us today.

I'd now like to recognize the Co-Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Senator DeConcini.

Mr. DECONCINI. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. I'm truly looking forward to our witnesses today, and to these hearings. The prospects of peace and human rights in Yugoslavia is something that I have followed for some time. I highly commend Cyrus Vance for the progress he is attempting to achieve, and I believe is achieving, in bringing a ceasefire into the efforts and move a peacekeeping force into place in parts of Yugoslavia.

I also want to say that I welcome the decision of the European Community, and the many other countries, who have recognized the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. Given all that has happened in the past 6 months, I hope that this move will facilitate the achievement of a lasting peace. I would also urge the administration again, as I did when Senator Gore, our friend and colleague who is here, introduced a resolution that the United States should also recognize the independence of some of these republics, if not all of them.

These developments offer some room for cautious optimism, but there is good reason to remain deeply concerned about the fragility of the peace, particularly, in Croatia. Moreover, the increasing ten-

sion in Bosnia-Herzegovina could lead to an eruption of violence there that would be very, very hard to stop, in my opinion. The precarious position in which Macedonia currently finds itself is also very troubling, as some of us learned last week when the President of the republic, Mr. Kiro Gligorov, was here, it was a very disturbing report that he gave us of their inability to cope with a potential assault by the Serbian Army and being caught right between Croatia forces as well as Serbian forces. Meanwhile, the repression of the Albanian population of Kosovo seems to continue with unabated severity. Of course, efforts to stop the massive killings must be our first priority, but in the end, the international community—the European-sponsored peace conference, the CSCE process, and the United Nations—must address these problems as well if the Yugoslav crisis is ever going to be fully resolved.

I hope that this hearing will examine these issues as well, and that we could also take a closer look at what role the CSCE process has played in the shaping the international effort to resolve the Yugoslav crisis. Yugoslavia has presented the CSCE with what appears to be the first major challenge in the post-Cold War Era. While the EC and some other European countries took an active interest in responding to this challenge, in my view the CSCE States collectively fell short in dealing with the conflict. With the convening of the Helsinki Follow-Up Meeting in about six weeks, it would be useful to examine some of the lessons learned from the Yugoslav crisis as the CSCE is further enhanced in Helsinki to deal with the future challenges that might arise along this same area.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

First I'd like to recognize other members of the Commission, and then I'd like to recognize Bentley for a few words, but Senator Reid, from Nevada, a member of the Commission.

Mr. REID. I appreciate that, Mr. Chairman. I have a statement, I'll submit it for the record.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'll be very brief and ask that my statement be made part of the record.

Chairman HOYER. Without objection.

Mr. SMITH. I welcome the Ambassador, and I look forward to hearing Jeri's comments, and I'm just reading her testimony now.

I was in Croatia and Serbia in the end of August, early September, was in Vukovar Osijek with Congressman Frank Wolf, and saw first hand the tremendous devastation that was being leveled against civilians, buildings, the loss of human life was horrific to behold, and it seems to me that much progress has been made. The EC is to be commended for its work in trying to bring an end, certainly Cy Vance is to be commended for trying to bring the warring parties together.

My hope is that this hearing will be part of that process, to let those belligerents who remain committed to war, rather than peace, know that they have no allies abroad, and that the time for peace is now, and I would hope that we do everything humanly possible.

I would agree with Senator DeConcini, that the time has also come for this country to recognize Slovenia and Croatia. Other nations have taken that important step, we ought to do it as well, and take the same step.

So, I thank the Chair.

Chairman HOYER. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey.

Senator Gore.

Senator GORE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and to my distinguished colleague who is Co-Chairman, and my colleagues who are here.

I have a very brief opening statement. I have been active in an effort to understand what is at stake in this conflict, and I firmly believe that the testimony we will hear today runs to the heart of the matters at risk and the potential solutions for this whole struggle.

The struggle for self-determination, which Woodrow Wilson championed, is still with us. In fact, the issue of national self-determination was quite hot in the Balkans then in Wilson's day, and it remains so today, now, but national self-determination is an incomplete ideal.

We need to make certain that self-determination and respect for human rights go hand in hand.

Moreover, we have also established a new principle, one which is central to the CSCE Charter and vital to the peace of Europe, that is, that internationally recognized boundaries will not be changed by violent means. That principle is also at risk.

The Commission's record of activity of these areas is a matter of intense pride in Congress, and especially may I say for those who, like our Chairman, Co-Chairman, and the members of this Commission, have been deeply involved in this whole effort, and I would just conclude by saying how much I appreciate your invitation to sit in today.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Senator, and we are appreciative of your efforts and the fact that you are here.

The Chair would give Mrs. Bentley the last word, if she wants it, before we turn it over, or she can speak now. You'll take it now.

I want to say a few things about Mrs. Bentley. Mrs. Bentley has relatively strong ideas, as some of you may know, on this issue, but probably is as knowledgeable about the history of Yugoslavia, the Serbian position, as well as the position of others, as just about anybody in the Congress. She works very hard at it and has done some outstanding and in-depth research.

We don't always agree, but I have great respect for her opinions, and she has certainly contributed to the work of this Commission, although not a member of the Commission.

Mrs. Bentley.

Mr. REID. Would the Chairman yield?

Chairman HOYER. Certainly.

Mr. REID. Congresswoman Bentley not only has strong opinions on this, but on everything else.

Chairman HOYER. Senator Reid, those of us from Maryland do not need to be reminded of that, but I'm appreciative of the fact that you are bringing that to the attention of everybody else.

Mr. REID. The other thing I would like to mention is that she was born and raised in Nevada.

Chairman HOYER. The Chair recognizes the distinguished lady from Maryland, Mrs. Bentley.

Mrs. BENTLEY. I thank my fellow Nevadan and my colleague from Maryland for those kind remarks, but I'm just going to summarize quickly my introductory statement, Mr. Chairman, and I ask unanimous consent to have it all included in the record.

I want to touch on a couple of matters—

Chairman HOYER. Without objection.

Mrs. BENTLEY [continuing]. That have been said here today by some of my colleagues.

Number one, that it's the Serbian army that the Macedonians are afraid of. I think we need to have on the record that Serbia has no army, okay? The Yugoslavian army is headed up by Croatians.

Now, the bulk of the people—no, the general thought, and the bulk of the members are Serbian, because there were more Serbians in Yugoslavia than there were of any others. I think that's a fact that needs to be on the record here.

Secondly, I don't think anybody really has any objections to the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia per se independent. The concern is about the Serbians in Krajina, and Krajina, Senator Gore, you talk about international boundaries, Krajina was forced into Croatia by the Communists, and this is the issue. Krajina is the area where my parents happen to have been born and raised in, so I'm very familiar with that area, and the human rights violations there, this is where 750,000 Serbians, Jews and gypsies were killed, were massacred, in World War II.

There have been lots of massacres going on there now, violations of human rights there of those people. This is the fear, and I think we need—I'm going to just read a quote from Amnesty International in their November, 1991 report entitled, "Yugoslavia: Torture and Deliberate and Arbitrary Killings in War Zones," "Reports from the war zones of Yugoslavia over the past four months show that all sides in the conflict have blatantly flouted international human rights and humanitarian standards that explicitly forbid the murder and torture of captured combatants and civilians not actively involved in the fighting. Among the thousands of peoples killed in the conflict, mainly in Croatia and in border areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina were unarmed civilians and captured combatants who have been deliberately killed by police, military or paramilitary forces. People who have been detained in connection with the fighting have in some cases also been ill-treated or tortured, in some cases resulting in death. Reports from the media and other sources indicate that those responsible for committing those atrocities come from all parties in the conflict, the federal army, Croatian security forces, and Serbian paramilitaries."

And then, everything that I am saying here today we have looked into very carefully. We have—we have a number of tapes which show the atrocities against Serbians in that area, and these have been distributed. Some of them we know are very real, and some of them may be propaganda, just as the other side has issued a lot along the same line, propaganda as well as some facts.

This we have to look into very carefully, but what I'm saying here is indicative of the mood of intolerance and revenge that has been fueling the current civil war, and of the misinformation that has been obscuring many issues that must be addressed if there is to be a comprehensive solution of the crisis.

The war started because of the human rights concerns of the Serbian minority in Croatia, and their human rights continue to be blatantly violated, not just in the war zones, but also throughout the republic.

The agreements that were made with Cyrus Vance, Senator, already are in the process that they have to be reworked on the Croatian side, and I can tell you, I have talked to the very imminent Cyrus Vance in the last few days, and he says that the Croats were backing off from what they committed to do at an earlier date, and that simply is unacceptable.

And, this is what we have to look into. I mean, we just can't sit here and say that it's all one sided or anything else. I think we need to read that editorial that the Washington Post had the other day, in which it talks about the very subject of the independents' wishes of the cry in the region, and it says in part, "Here is a dilemma of Croatian self-determination. From a distance, Croatia looks like an integral territory easily broken off and accorded recognition on independence in the name of high principle, but what about those Serbs in Croatia who, to this day, have not received constitutional guarantees of their minority rights, and shall in any event resist living in other than a Serbian country." I mean, this is what is the problem, and it isn't that people don't want them to be independent. What happens to these people who are frightened to death?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Mrs. Bentley.

Lastly, I will recognize, before recognizing the Ambassador, Mr. Moody of Wisconsin, who has been to Yugoslavia a number of times and although not a member of the Commission, has himself been very active with our work.

Mr. MOODY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I recently returned from an eight-day visit to Yugoslavia, a country that I lived in for two years, and for whom I have great respect and admiration for the people, all the people of that country.

In my 2 years of living and serving Yugoslavia, I had many friends in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and elsewhere. I learned the language and learned to respect the culture of each one of those groups of people.

I'll briefly summarize my findings from the recent trip. On that trip I visited with the presidents in Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In Croatia, I met with not only President Tudjman, but also with General Tus, the General of the Croatian army, and with the Foreign Minister of Croatia. I met with comparable top officials in Serbian. I met at some length with both Serbian and Croatian leaders in Bosnia, as well as with the President.

My conclusions are, Mr. Chairman, that unless decisive action is taken, Yugoslavia stands at the brink of a catastrophic war that (1) could kill tens of thousands of people, (2) destabilize a region that is very important to the United States economically and politically

and historically, and (3) jeopardize the gradual democratization process that is taking place in that region.

There are three points and conclusions I would like to leave with the committee. First, the points: Point No. 1: The war that we now witness is essentially a continuation of an old conflict between Serbs and Croats. It is *not* an ideological struggle over Marxism, as some have alleged.

Point No. 2: The Yugoslav army has its own political and economic agenda which seriously jeopardizes the prospects for peace.

Point No. 3: Despite disagreement on details and timing, there actually are substantial points of agreement on both the Serbian and Croatian government sides that could serve as the basis of an agreement.

My conclusions are again three: No. 1: The shooting must be stopped and remain stopped, as it now is at the moment, as soon as possible, and permanently. The seething distrust and ill-will that exists makes it very hard to put peace back on the table if it is broken again.

No. 2: It is particularly important to prevent any fighting from spreading to Bosnia-Herzegovina, where a spark could ignite a bloody war of endless reprisals, involving not only Serbs and Croats, but also Moslems.

No. 3: The Yugoslav National Army, the second largest and most powerful army in Europe, must be brought under immediate civilian control. It now acts, and has been acting, largely autonomously and has itself become a major player in its own right in the crisis. Its composition has been predominantly Serbian, but it has institutional and political goals that are separate and apart from Serbia.

Let me add the following points: The two crucial concerns that must be addressed for any durable peace to take place in Yugoslavia are, first, the extreme concern by Serbia for the personal safety and free cultural expression of Serbs living under Croatian control. *This insecurity and fear is the single, most emotional element driving the war.* It is not unwarranted. Obviously, it springs from the 1941-1945 experience, when an estimated 700,000 Serbs were slaughtered under the last existing separate Croatian state. Croats were killed also during that period, but in far smaller numbers—and not because they were Croats.

Second, an issue that must be addressed in order for there to be durable peace, is Croatia's absolute insistence on legal and political independence of any and all parts of Yugoslavia. That is where the Yugoslav Army's separate agenda plays a crucial role.

The army's economic needs, and financial needs, because of its bloated size, are far in excess of what could possibly be supported by a reduced Yugoslav state, therefore, the army has a strong independent interest in keeping the state as large as possible and preventing further break up.

I support both sets of concerns, and they must be addressed—both the fear for personal safety and cultural expression of Serbs living in Croatia, as well as the Croatian desire to separate and leave the country.

The key issues will be *how* and *when* these two issues are addressed.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his very thoughtful statement. His statement in full will be included at this time in the record.

Mr. Ambassador, sometimes it must appear to witnesses that they will never get their shot, but it's almost time. Before you speak though, let me also welcome to the hearing room my good friend, Ambassador Hans Meesman. Ambassador Meesman is now the Dutch Ambassador to the United States, but has been an Ambassador to many Helsinki meetings on behalf of the Netherlands, and I might say has been, in my opinion, one of the most outspoken, toughest, forthright advocates of human rights concerns within the Helsinki process. I'm proud that he's my friend and colleague in the Helsinki process, and we're pleased to have him here with us here today.

I'm also informed that I have mispronounced your name, Mr. Ambassador, it's van Houten, not Hooten, and I apologize, but in any event, Senator DeConcini and I mispronounce so many names that it becomes commonplace for us.

Mr. Ambassador, we are pleased to have you with us.

**TESTIMONY OF AMBASSADOR DIRK JAN VAN HOUTEN, FORMER
HEAD OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MONITORING MISSION
IN YUGOSLAVIA**

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I think Mr. Moody has—

Chairman HOYER. If you could bring the microphone closer. I think if you'll push it down, it will go down a little bit. Yes, right. We can hear you, but I think the folks in the back probably cannot unless you speak into it. Thank you.

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. OK. Well, I think Mr. Moody has certainly given a very clear outline of the problems that should be resolved and the problems as they exist.

Let me first define a little bit what the European Economic Community Monitor Mission has been doing and how it has been set up, because I think there is a lot of confusion about the corridors.

When the conflict started, after the Declaration of Independence of Slovenia and Croatia, an agreement was reached in Belgrade on the 13th of July, in which the federal authorities of Yugoslavia and the parties in the conflict invited the European Economic Community to organize a mission to help stabilize a cease fire, to monitor the return of all armed forces to their previous positions, and to monitor the suspension of the implementation of the Declarations of Independence. This agreement would be running for about three months.

After two months, on the first of September, there was another Belgrade agreement, which extended the area to Croatia. The first agreement was only for Slovenia. And then after that, there was another agreement on Bosnia-Herzegovina on the first of October, in which the mandate was of the Monitor Mission to assist in maintaining the peace and stability and preventing occurrence of possible conflict within that republic. If conflicts would arise, the Monitor Mission will assist in establishing the facts in order to avoid further deterioration.

Now, I cite these few items from the various agreements because it really shows how the Monitor Mission in the going on of the conflict has become involved in something completely different from what it was set out to do. It was set out to monitor cease fires, there were no cease fires, and in the end it was just to try, by means of negotiation, in local conflicts to reach a peace.

The problem in Slovenia was easily solved, because, basically, there was an agreement that Slovenia maybe wasn't really worth the fight.

On the question of Croatia, the situation was very different. In the first place, there was the question of the Serbian minorities. In the second place, as the conflict started, the JNA units in their peacetime locations were being blockaded by the Croatian National Guard, and later Croatian National Army. And then, there are other elements which are based in aspirations of various elements in Serbia to maintain a federation of Yugoslavia, the aspirations to maintain a federation or at least a large Serbia. And, I think this point was very important in the agenda of the Yugoslav National Army.

According to my view, the National Army had developed from a defense organization to an organization which had a lot of self-interests to protect, and, therefore, the conflict is a different conflict for different elements. There's an interest of the federal authorities and the Serbian authorities, and there's an interest of the Yugoslav National Army. These are interests which do not necessarily coincide.

The EC Monitor Mission, if I place it in the context of the relations of the European Economic Community countries with Yugoslavia, I would say our relations run according to four lines. The one is the bilateral relations between the embassies, and important in that element is the question of consular relations, consular problems. Mercenaries have been shot, appeals have been made to the monitors to assist in retrieving bodies, and I did not want to get involved in that kind of work because the basis of our activity is to be a neutral broker and to be able to, at any time, speak with all the parties in the conflict and be credible as a neutral authority.

The second element is the personal representative of the President of the Council of Ministers of the Economic Community, Mr. Wijnandts. He was sent on missions from the presidency in direct contact with the presidents of Serbia, of Croatia, of the Federation, but also he negotiated cease fires, local cease fires with Mr. Hadjic and Mr. Babic.

The third element of contact was Lord Carrington and the Carrington Peace Committee, who negotiated the settlements of the conflicts and the future position of what was known as Yugoslavia.

And then, the fourth level is the level of the EC monitors who, as I explained, had originally been assigned the task of monitoring cease fires, but who, in effect, became negotiators and brokers in local conflicts.

Now, the concrete tasks of the Monitor Mission in the time that I was heading this mission, which was from the 13th of September until the 31st of December, was to execute agreements which had been made at the political level between the presidents of Croatia, of Serbia, of the Federation and the military. And, the first agree-

ment was the cease fire, observing a cease fire, and the second was the evacuation and the deblockading of these peacetime deployed JNA units.

Now, we have been negotiating on that point since the 8th of October, and these negotiations were extremely difficult. The first problem we faced was to keep the parties together at the table, and I think the first day we spent about 12 hours listening to history lessons, and this is one of the things I have learned during my negotiations, that history in Yugoslavia plays a very important role, and this is logical because if you look at the map of Yugoslavia we are at the borderline of the eastern and western Roman Empire, the Hapsburg Empire, and the Ottoman States. We have continuously had conflicts involving Croats and Serbs, and in the Second World War has played a very disastrous role. The churches, to my surprise and dismay I may say, were involved in the conflict, again, for historical reasons. And, we have, among our negotiations, negotiated exchanges of nuns and priests and popes.

So, it's a very—it's a region which is very heavily mortgaged by history, and that is something which is difficult for an outsider to understand.

Now, our problems with reaching—

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Ambassador, you heard that bell. I don't know how much longer you'll be, but we have 15 minutes in which to vote. I will suggest to the House members that we recess, go and vote, and then come back, so that we don't miss anything. Senator DeConcini will be back in 10 minutes. Perhaps, if you have finished your statement by the time we leave, then Senator DeConcini will be back and he can propound some questions until we get back. I just wanted to let you know, Mr. Ambassador, we'll have to leave here at 5 of.

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. At 5 of.

Chairman HOYER. Excuse me, 10 of, and then we will be gone probably 7 to 8 minutes and return from the vote.

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. OK.

Well, me just say that the negotiations, we managed to conclude after the European Economic Community, as a sign of exasperation, decided to apply sanctions to both parties because there was no progress in the negotiations, and these were negotiations which were going on the political level and on the ground level, from the 8th of October until the 8th of November. We were getting nowhere, that is to say, we were getting nowhere, we were getting someplace in the field, because there were a lot of conflicts, local conflicts, which monitor teams managed to negotiate and managed to prevent from escalating and exploding, but an overall cease fire was not reached and an overall agreement on deblockading was not reached.

What we noticed, and I think this is a point I'd like to make before I stop, is that the conflict in Yugoslavia is not one conflict, it's a sum total of many conflicts, many local regional conflicts, and monitor teams have been able to negotiate in many places cease fires which would hold for a certain time, and in other places cease fires would just occur, more or less, in a spontaneous way.

There were many events which I would like to discuss, but maybe we can have some questions, like the attacks on Vukovar,

the attacks on Dubrovnik, but again, the local elements of these fights they were the biggest problems, the big problem was also that the JNA in its dealing with the problem had become committed on one side and was waiting a war from a distance. Cities or villages were bombarded from a distance. People were terrorized to leave, and a lot of the mopping up operations was left in the hands of irregular forces, and that is, the irregular forces of both sides, that is where the atrocities happened, and that is where the element is out of control.

Mr. MOODY. Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, I couldn't hear that least statement. Would you say that again.

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. That is—

Mr. MOODY. Both sides, could you say that again?

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN [continuing]. That both sides, on both sides you have irregular units who are in the place, who do the mopping up of the villages, or the cities, or fight each other, and this is the place where atrocities are happening.

These are people, as we have seen it, they are not uniformed generally, they have their own fantasy costumes, and they could be extras in any spaghetti western.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Chairman, if I could just ask a question on that point. How would you assess the relative strengths of the irregular units on both sides, and under whose command, for example, are the Serb irregulars or, perhaps, the Croatian irregulars.

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. The Croatian irregulars are usually—let me put the Croatian side of the picture this way—when the fighting started, Croatia had no army. They had their guerrilla trained units, their reservists, but also a lot of volunteers of people who just had guns.

And, there has been a constant process of trying to bring these units under control. How far this has succeeded, I don't really know. There is that attempt.

On the other side, you have various local groupings who have seized arms and as Chestniks or other kind of organizations are active locally.

In our contacts with JNA officers, we were told that it was obvious that Mr. Hadjic or Mr. Babic could not make a cease fire, because he was not in control of that specific region. There were at least 32 different Serbian armies or Serbian barrages and hostages, and that is what makes this conflict so extremely difficult to deal with, and that is the problem we were facing in the field.

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Ambassador, if you will let us break at this time.

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. OK.

Chairman HOYER. And, we will be back for the balance of your testimony. Before we go to questions and answers, assuming we all get back at the same time, I want to ask Jeri Laber to testify, and then, perhaps, both of you would be available to answer questions.

Thank you, sir. We'll be right back.

(Whereupon, at 2:50 p.m., a recess until 3:09 p.m.)

Chairman HOYER. Mr. Ambassador, I was in error, we had two votes so that's why it took us longer. We had to wait for the first one to be finished, and now we have a third vote that may be coming up in about 20 minutes.

So, let me let you finish, and then I'll recognize Mrs. Laber, and then by that time I'm sure we'll have another vote by then.

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. Okay.

As I was saying, we had reached finally an agreement on the deblocking and the evacuation of the JNA troops, and we signed an agreement on the 22nd of November, and in this agreement one of the nice points was that we had made an arbitration board to settle problems which might arise on the way.

On the 23rd of November, the United Nations concluded an agreement in Geneva, also on the evacuation and the deblockade, and after that for some time we had some problems, because every time the arbitration board met or took a decision, which was unfavorable for one party or the other, both parties would say, well, the agreement of Geneva supercedes the agreement which we reached on the 22nd of November. And, this was just one instance which has delayed a little bit the evacuation process, but we could manage to solve this problem with Mr. Vance and Mr. Okun, and since that time, since really December, beginning of December, the cooperation between the Monitor Mission on the ground, and to the United Nations representatives when they came to Yugoslavia was very close, and I think that is a very good thing because one element we should always avoid is that the parties in the conflict have the feeling they can pick and choose the mediator which is most attentive to its cause. And, I think everybody is very well aware of that problem.

Let me just, in concluding, say—is this your bell?

Chairman HOYER. That's the Senate, the Senate is not here. We are on the Senate side, but—

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. Just before concluding, I mentioned shortly the task which the Monitor Mission has had in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the way we have been dealing with Bosnia-Herzegovina is that a monitor team visits every one of the 110 Opcinas or communities in Bosnia-Herzegovina on a regular basis, once a week, or once every 10 days, depending on the possibilities of the mission.

And, the thing we have noticed in this very volatile situation is that people of different religions, or people of different ethnic background, they don't communicate with each other and it really takes a third party, like a mission of monitors, to get the parties together, or at least to define what the problems are and to find solutions. This has been the work which the Monitor Mission has been doing since the first of October, and with success, there has been no outbreak.

Nevertheless, the situation in Bosnia is very serious and very tense. Everybody, in addition to everything, is armed to the teeth, and Bosnia is really the republic in Yugoslavia which is suffering very much from this conflict. You have material damage from the shellings and the destruction, but much greater is the immaterial damage and Bosnia-Herzegovina is suffering from that.

So, in addition to the very tense situation, you have a deteriorating social situation and economic situation, and we have to be very conscious of that, because Bosnia is a volatile and very dangerous point. I've stressed this many times, and I think in reaching a solution in Croatia and the protection of minorities in Croatia, which is

very important to reach any kind of basic peace, we should never forget the situation in Bosnia, and I think if I could make one recommendation I would very much like to see a United Nations presence or more monitors in Bosnia- Hercegovina.

I think with this I'll conclude my statement, and if there are any questions I'll be happy to answer.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador.

If you don't mind, I would like to now recognize Ms. Laber. I don't know when we are going to have to leave, and we want to hear from her, and then we'll go to questions with both of you, if that's all right.

TESTIMONY OF JERI LABER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HELSINKI WATCH

Ms. LABER. Thank you, Chairman Hoyer, and thank you for inviting me to testify here today.

I'm Jeri Laber. I'm the Executive Director of Helsinki Watch, and I've just returned from a brief visit to Yugoslavia, certainly not my first.

We found the human rights situation there has worsened dramatically in the past year. As you know, Helsinki Watch takes no position with regard to territorial claims or claims to independence in any of the Yugoslav republics. Our concern is that the human rights of all the individuals there, including ethnic minorities, be respected.

We have found, in our reports and have indicated this, that there are violations of the rules of war in Yugoslavia by all sides to the conflict, by the Serbian paramilitary groups, by the Federal Yugoslav Army, and by the Croatian military forces. And amongst the crimes that we have found, I will just summarize them, are the summary executions of civilians and disarmed combatants; the indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force against civilian targets; the torture and mistreatment of detainees; the taking of hostages; the forced displacement and resettlement of civilian populations; and the killing of and attacks upon a large number of journalists covering the war.

We are also concerned about disappearances of both Serbs and Croats in Croatia, and the harassment and repression of opposition political figures and anti-war activists in Serbia.

We also have been reporting for some time now about the persecution of the Albanian minority in Kosovo, which continues, and we are also concerned about restrictions of free expression and press in Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro.

Now, you've all received a copy of a letter that we brought to Belgrade with us, addressed to President Milosevic. Unfortunately, he was not available to meet with us. We did meet with some generals of the army and with someone in the Foreign Ministry and released the contents of the letter, which deals with violations by the Serbian Government and the Yugoslav National Army. We released this to the press in Belgrade two weeks ago.

We are also sending a letter detailing violations by the Croatian military in the war. We are sending a copy of this to President Tudjman, and as soon as he receives it we will release that, prob-

ably some time next week, and I'll make sure that all members of this committee get copies immediately. We also plan to go and see President Tudjman, if he'll see us, to discuss what's in our letter to him.

I'm going to elaborate very briefly on the summary that I just gave you, because I think some of the details are important to get out here today. In terms of summary executions and disappearances, we have documented 14 cases. I should say that everything I'm talking about today is material, that we've gotten not from the press, and not from various parties with a point of view, but material that we have documented ourselves. Helsinki Watch has sent six missions to Yugoslavia in the last year. We have had one staff member there almost continually in between these missions, and we have been out in the field. We've made three visits to Knin, and we've been behind the lines in Croatia. The information that we report on are things that we have verified to the best of our ability first hand. It's a war in which it's very hard to get the facts, as I'm sure my colleague here knows.

We have documented 14 separate instances in which groups of civilians were summarily executed in a very brutal manner by the Serbian paramilitary groups. We have also documented cases where non-Serbs were taken to unknown destinations and remain missing. The unofficial estimate is that more than 3,000 people are missing from the city of Vukovar alone.

We have also documented cases in which Croatian forces have abducted Serbian civilians, and especially a case in which 24 Serbs were massacred near Gospic.

We have compiled our own list of missing persons, and have presented that list to both sides, to the Croatians and to the Serbs, with the hope that they will try to respond and look into some of these cases.

We are also very concerned about the excessive use of force, particularly, by the Yugoslav army, which has resulted in thousands of civilian deaths and injuries in this war.

We are concerned about the fact that Croatian and Serbian forces have been guilty of torturing and mistreating people held in detention.

We are concerned about the harassment and discrimination against Serbian civilians in Croatian-held territory. That seems to be increasing. You may know that in the middle of last year there were loyalty oaths that were introduced, where Serbs living in Croatian territory had to swear loyalty to the Croatian Government. That practice appears to have ceased, but there's never been an acknowledgement of the fact that it was wrong, or no one has been punished for having tried to require it.

We are concerned also about the killings and attacks against journalists. At least 17 foreign and domestic journalists have been killed in Croatia in the past seven months, and although some of them may have been caught in crossfire, we have reason to fear, at least, that some were deliberately targeted because they were journalists.

We are concerned about restrictions on free expression. In Serbia there has been a campaign of harassment against anti-war activists and against the political opposition there. We're concerned about

restrictions on freedom of the press, in both Serbia and Croatia, where there is censorship now about reporting on the war.

And last, but certainly not least, there are the continuing human rights abuses in Kosovo, which are being carried out by the Serbian Government—physical mistreatment of the Albanian minority in detention, systematic discrimination against Albanians. Apparently, over 20,000 Albanians, including 2,000 medical personnel, have lost their jobs because of ethnic discrimination in 1991 alone.

Now, it's usually our practice when testifying in Washington to devote the end of our testimonies to what the U.S. policy should be. Although I don't think we were actually asked to do this today, I must say that I would find it rather hard to know what to say, because as far as I can see the U.S. policy and, unfortunately, the policy of CSCE as well have been virtually non-existent with regard to what's been happening in Yugoslavia.

The European Community, Lord Carrington, Cyrus Vance, these are the people who have been trying to do something. When I was in Yugoslavia I heard nothing but good words about the work that Vance, and before him Carrington, had done there.

I'm not even sure what the United States should be doing right now. I know what it could have been doing some time ago, and we did urge the United States, before the conflict in Croatia broke out, to restrict aid to the Serbian republic and to the Yugoslav Government—which then still existed—but to no avail. I think at that point the United States was more concerned with trying to hold Yugoslavia together than with trying to distinguish between those republics that were abusing human rights severely and those which were not.

Do you have to go now, or shall I—

Chairman HOYER. No, no. Let me explain to you where we are. We now have 15 minutes to make a vote, and because it will then be so close to 4 I will not be able to get back here because I have a 4 meeting with the Speaker. I don't know about Mrs. Bentley, but let's see what we can do for the next 12 minutes.

Ms. LABER. OK. Well, I'm really practically finished. At this point, I don't know what the United States should be doing, quite frankly. I mean, I think it's obviously past the point of holding Yugoslavia together. I think the U.S. Government made the same mistake in the Soviet Union, trying to prop up Gorbachev long after it became clear that it was no longer going to work.

I do think CSCE has a role, and I can understand why it's very new to CSCE to be playing this role, it's new to us also. As an organization that has been monitoring human rights in the CSCE countries for more than a dozen years, it's only in the last year that we have been dealing with the kinds of problems that have suddenly erupted, which involve different sorts of activities, such as mediation, such as peacekeeping. We are not experienced in it, and neither is CSCE, but I suspect and hope that CSCE will become experienced in such things. I don't think it's our role—I don't think it will ever be the role of Helsinki Watch—but I do think it's a role for CSCE.

I think I can end here. I'm very happy to answer any questions you might have.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Your statement will be included in full in the record, and I appreciate your statement.

One of the themes, certainly through what both Congressman Moody and Ambassador van Houten had to say, is that essentially the Yugoslav army is in many respects an independent actor.

Would rogue army be too strong a phrase in the sense that there is no central control of the army's policy either from Milosevic or from anybody else. Is that what I hear?

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. It's not completely there, but that's the way it's going. Local generals, local commanders, take larger liberties. We have witnessed the shelling of Dubrovnik on the 6th of December, which then later was labeled to be a regrettable mistake and a misunderstanding. These kind of misunderstandings happen.

Sometimes I've heard the JNA described as "an army without a country."

Chairman HOYER. Yes.

Jeri, did you want to comment on that?

Ms. LABER. I agree with what you say. It's a very frightening phenomenon.

Chairman HOYER. Now, Ms. Laber was of the opinion that—or lacked an opinion at this point on what the United States really could do.

CSCE, of course, has discussed this, met about it, in effect, both the United States and CSCE took the position that the EC would sort of be lead on this, and I think we're sort of hoping for greater success than occurred.

Mr. Ambassador, what, if anything, do you think the United States could or should do at this point in time? Now, you may not want to comment on that, but if you feel comfortable commenting on that.

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. It's a question I find very difficult to answer, because it's a situation which is so volatile and so subject to change.

I think rather than what should one do, or what should one not do, I'd rather say what one should not do, and that is do sudden things which upset one party or the other. I think in the question of recognition at this moment, one should be very careful and take into consideration the referendum in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the problems which are going there. It's more that any action or inaction should be taken with taking into consideration the local situation at any given moment. And, even now, I have been away for two weeks from Yugoslavia and from the situation on the ground, and I just wouldn't know how the local situation is at this moment to make a recommendation.

Chairman HOYER. I have other questions, but because our time is so brief I want to give my colleagues an opportunity. Let me yield to Mrs. Bentley.

Mrs. BENTLEY. I would just like to ask Ms. Laber, Paraga in Croatia, do you know whether or not he is incarcerated now or not? I saw no reference to him.

Ms. LABER. I know he's been charged. I don't know whether he's actually incarcerated at the moment. He's facing charges for things like illegally smuggling weapons and arming paramilitary groups,

and the government of Croatia seems to have distanced itself considerably from his activities.

Mrs. BENTLEY. From him. OK.

Are there any political charges against him at all?

Ms. LABER. Well—

Mrs. BENTLEY. Would that be part of it?

Ms. LABER [continuing]. There may be a political aspect to them. Does it seem so to you?

Mrs. BENTLEY. Well, half and half.

One other thing I'd like to ask the Ambassador then, on old Dubrovnik, we've heard both pros and cons as to whether it was damaged or not damaged. What did you view when you were there, the old part of it?

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. There has been fighting around Dubrovnik for more than a month. Old Dubrovnik was heavily damaged on the 6th of December.

Mrs. BENTLEY. The old on the 6th of December.

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. The old part.

Mrs. BENTLEY. Up until then, it had escaped the—

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. Well, it had received shells, but not substantial. The substantial shelling was on that one day, and that was the day before an agreement was reached on a cease fire in Dubrovnik, which still holds.

Mrs. BENTLEY. OK. That's all I have to ask right now.

Chairman HOYER. Let me ask you, Mr. Ambassador, and then Senator DeConcini will proceed as soon as we leave, which is about in another 3 minutes—what, if anything, do you think the CSCE—realizing that its conflict prevention unit is somewhat new and very small in size, though there have been meetings in Prague about this relatively regularly—could be doing to assist, other than obviously supporting the EC efforts?

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. I think the CSCE has been assisting this effort in a large way. We always speak about the EC mission, but we forget that there are also four other countries from the CSCE, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Canada and Sweden, who are also involved.

I believe that at this stage in the conflict, the CSCE and any other country should try to give as much support as it can to the EC efforts, to the EC monitors, and to the United Nations, short of getting involved in the conflict themselves.

Chairman HOYER. If, in fact, the army is not subject to any political control at some point in time—you indicated that was the direction it appeared to be moving—would it then be appropriate if that happened for some sort of United Nations action. I suppose one could call upon European forces to accomplish that objective. In other words, if the army just is no longer subject to political control, no longer wants to talk to anybody, do you foresee the possibility of that occurring, where joint international military action might be required?

Ambassador VAN HOUTEN. Mr. Chairman, the fact that you ask this question shows how far we have moved in this last year or two years, from the times when the world was split into the East and West. In the old days, one party would have sided with one side,