

Wilson

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

MAY 7 1992

May 7, 1992

COSPONSOR TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS (TPS) FOR NATIONALS OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Dear Colleague:

Life in Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia and other parts of the former Yugoslavia continues to be perilous. Despite ongoing peace attempts the towns and villages in these areas continue to suffer bombings, snipings, and armed ethnic conflict. According to U.N. officials, this civil war has created the greatest flood of homeless civilians in Europe since World War II. Citizens of the conflicted areas now in America will face real dangers if they return.

We write to ask you to cosponsor HR 4008, a bill to grant temporary protected status, "TPS", to nationals of the former Yugoslavia who are temporarily in the U.S. TPS permits foreign nationals of designated countries to extend their visits here if they cannot return safely to their country. HR 4008 would treat all ethnic groups equally. It would not differentiate between Serb, Croat or other ethnic backgrounds.

The current situation in the former Yugoslavia clearly meets the requirements for TPS. The Immigration Act of 1990 authorizes TPS designation if there is "an ongoing armed conflict within the state and, due to such conflict, requiring the return of aliens who are nationals of that state ... or any part of such foreign state, would pose a serious threat to their personal safety." This is exactly the case today in Yugoslavia.

In December, one of us wrote to Attorney General William P. Barr urging him to utilize his authority to administratively extend TPS to nationals of Yugoslavia in the U.S. On January 28, Assistant Attorney General W. Lee Rawls acknowledged the "turbulent conditions currently in existence in Yugoslavia" but dismissed the need for TPS because "at any given time, 30 to 50 countries around the world are in the midst of either civil strife or other forms of national crisis."

But the Immigration Act of 1990 did not contemplate that a country's TPS status should be weighed on the basis of how many other countries might or might not qualify. The current situation in the former Yugoslavia is extremely critical, and really not like any other country.

We hope you will join us by becoming a cosponsor of HR 4008. If so, please call Al Zepp or Brandon Mazur at 53571.

Sincerely,



Lee H. Hamilton, M.C.



Jim Moody, M.C.



Helen Delich Bentley, M.C.



Barbara F. Vucanovich, M.C.



Edward F. Feighan, M.C.