

potential for a nuclear arms race by Islamic nations in South Asia and the Middle East. Indeed, if that does occur, if Iran does join the nuclear club, Israel will certainly react.

So the point I am making is I think the President can use my initiative not just to solve one of our foreign policy problems as it relates to Pakistan. He can use it to show our continued friendship with Taiwan. Taiwan is a democracy and a growing economic power in the Pacific. Taiwan usually is on our side 100 percent, even though we do not treat its leaders that way when they come here. Our relationship with Taiwan is one of the ironies of history.

My initiative sends a signal to the Chinese that we are going to be tough in that region and we will look after our allies, and that includes the Philippines, which would also get eleven of the F-16's under my initiative.

As I said earlier, my initiative is a bold step, but it is a partial solution. It is a step forward. I am glad that President Clinton has apparently begun to embrace this concept, to explore with these countries to see if we can get the F-16's out to Taiwan and the Philippines. Again, it is an initiative that can get some money back to Pakistan, although I would not necessarily guarantee full compensation because frankly, Pakistan had their eyes open when they went into this deal. Further, the Government of Pakistan was not being candid with the President of the United States at that time about what was going on in their nuclear program.

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEDICARE

Mr. PRESSLER. Mr. President, I would like to speak on the subject of Medicare.

There has been much unjustified criticism of the Republican budget plan by the Democrats. As my colleagues know, we will be voting in this Chamber possibly tomorrow night on the budget of the United States for the next 7 years, the basic outline. And for the first time in nearly three decades, we are moving toward a balanced budget by the year 2002. I am proud of this great achievement.

This is the toughest budget since I have been a Member of Congress. It is tough, it is sound and it is right. If we can pass it in the House and in the Senate, it will be the first time in a long time that we have gone in the other direction—the right direction. Finally we will start to pay our bills as they become due.

Up to this point, we have been going in the wrong direction—of runaway spending and the build up of a huge Federal debt.

Included in the budget plan are reductions in the rate of growth in Medicare. I want all senior citizens to understand this budget. I am a champion of senior citizens. My mother is a senior citizen living in Sioux Falls. In fact, I will be one someday in the not too far future. So I am concerned about this subject. My goal is to save Medicare for our seniors. This budget saves Medicare. This budget will provide senior citizens with stability.

The present rate of increase of Medicare is about 10 percent a year. It is growing too fast, and if left alone, it will go bankrupt by the year 2002. This budget slows the rate of increase to about 7.2 percent. Thus, Medicare is still going to grow, but it is not going to grow quite as fast. We are slowing the growth to save the program from overheating and breaking down altogether.

How do we get the savings? It comes from streamlining some of the national administration. It comes from certain cost control reforms, and so forth.

Americans should not be misled about what we are doing here. Both Democrats and Republicans agree that Medicare is going to go bankrupt unless somebody steps forward with a plan to save it. So I would say to my liberal friends, what is your plan? The Republicans have a solvent plan. The Domenici-Dole plan in the Senate will save Medicare. We have to save Medicare.

Let me say a word or two about some of the other areas. This budget takes an across-the-board approach. I know every group that has a stake in the Federal budget will feel it. But I would say to farmers, ranchers, small businessmen, students, and others, that lower interest rates are one of your main concerns. Students, for example, pay back their loans at the going rate of interest after they have graduated from college. To the students of America, I say that one of the greatest threats to your economic security is, the massive Federal debt. That debt keeps interest rates high, forcing students to pay their college loans back at high interest rates. We are going to have high interest rates if we do not do something about the size of our deficit.

A third area of concern here is inflation and the soundness of our monetary system internationally. If we continue to build up the huge Federal debt, we also will be building up the specter of high inflation, high interest rates, and a currency that is not respected in the world, a currency that is weak, and a currency that will eventually be overtaken by the German mark or the Japanese yen.

So, Mr. President, as we engage in this debate on the budget for the next 2 days and as we vote on it here in the Senate tomorrow evening, let us remember that we are trying to save

Medicare. We are trying to save our economy for our children—an economy with lower interest rates, a solvent dollar, and low taxes.

We are going to have many eloquent speeches in this Chamber about how the Federal Government is taking away money from here and taking away money from there. But if the Federal Government does not have any money to give, it ultimately has to take that money back either through inflation, high interest rates, and higher taxes, which will lead to all types of economic suffering.

So in conclusion, Mr. President, my concern here is to explain why I will be voting for the Dole-Domenici approach. I urge my colleagues to vote for it. We will have to fight off false charges that we are against senior citizens or that we are against farmers or we are against workers. That is not true. We are for them. This is an historic budget plan for all Americans. Everyone agrees the alternative is bankruptcy, the loss of the Medicare Program, and economic chaos. We are going to save our budget. We are going to save Medicare. We are going to save our economy. We are going to save our children's future.

I urge my colleagues to join us in voting for the Dole-Domenici budget.

Mr. President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ASHCROFT). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BIDEN. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. President.

Are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are. The Senator can speak for up to 10 minutes under the previous order.

Mr. BIDEN. I thank the Chair. I seek recognition for the purpose of speaking on the issue of the arms embargo in Bosnia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

LIFTING THE BOSNIAN ARMS EMBARGO

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to argue again for lifting the illegal and what I believe to be immoral arms embargo against the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Actually, Mr. President, we should not even be in a position today of having to lift an embargo. In April 1992, when the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was recognized internationally and granted admission to the United Nations, it automatically became covered by article 51 of the U.N. Charter, which grants every State the elemental right of self-defense.

Inexplicably, however, the Bush administration was asleep at the switch

and failed to act to abrogate the illegal embargo.

For 3 years, Mr. President, I have repeatedly advocated lifting this unfair and illegal embargo. I would prefer that the timing of the lift be responsive to the wishes of the Bosnian Government which, after all, is the aggrieved party. The aggrieved party is literally fighting for its life.

Not only am I frustrated and angry at the current situation, I am also disturbed that our country, which has been the beacon of hope to freedom-loving people around the world, should even be contemplating refusing to give the Bosnians the tools with which to defend themselves.

How much more, Mr. President, do the Bosnians have to suffer? They have been invaded across an international border by troops equipped and assisted by the fourth largest army in Europe. Against the Bosnian Serbs with sophisticated, modern weapons including planes, tanks, rocket launchers, and heavy artillery, the Bosnian Government forces have fought with small arms and dogged determination. Although recently they have been able to capture a few heavy weapons, and reportedly have been covertly supplied with modest defense weaponry, the Bosnian Government forces are still vastly underarmed compared to the Serbian aggressors.

Mr. President, let me repeat the phrase that I just used: Serbian aggressors. There is no moral equivalence in this conflict. The Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, one of the successor states of the former Yugoslavia, gave absolutely no provocation to the Bosnian Serbs, who have torn this small country apart.

On the contrary, in 1991 and early 1992, while Serbs and Croats were fighting in neighboring Croatia, the Bosnian Government strove to retain the multiethnic and multiethnic fabric of its own State. But unscrupulous demagogic politicians like Milosevic in Serbia and Karadzic in Bosnia, in order to implement their vicious racist ideology, exploited fears and successfully widened existing religious and socioeconomic divisions. From this incitement came the centrally planned murder, rape, and vile ethnic cleansing that have so revolted the civilized world.

Mr. President, let us not tolerate criminals cynically wrapping themselves in religious garb. The Bosnian Serbs' behavior has absolutely nothing to do with Orthodox Christianity. French President Jacques Chirac forcefully made this point at a dinner of European Union leaders when he reportedly rebuked the President of Greece, an apologist for the Bosnian Serbs. He said, "Don't speak to me about any religious war," Chirac said. "These are people without any faith, without any sense of law. They are terrorists."

Yet somehow Western European statesmen have criticized the Bosnian Government forces and chastised them

for trying to break the blockades of Sarajevo and Bihac. Imagine the impertinence, Mr. President. Sarajevo has been blockaded for 38 months, more than 3 years. Its long-suffering population has been shelled and sniped at, and denied water, food, medicine, electricity, and gas. Mr. President, they literally string blankets and sheets across the narrow streets of the old parts of Sarajevo. When I was first there, I thought it was an unusual way of drying their laundry. I asked, "why are they hanging sheets and blankets there?" I was told that they are hanging there for only one reason—to thwart the Bosnian Serbs from sniping at Moslem, Croatian, and Bosnian Serb children. That is why they are there. No one denies this. Sniping at children is the Bosnian Serbs' calculated plan, which they carry out nearly every day.

Senator DOLE and I went to visit a hospital in Sarajevo. The only people there were children from ages 6 to 20 who were the victims of sniper fire—not random fire, not what they are doing with random shelling—sniper fire. So there is, in fact, a campaign of terror going on. And so here you have Sarajevo and Bihac, Sarajevo blockaded for 38 months, shelled and sniped at, the target of terrorist activities.

And so now, when outgunned Bosnian Government forces try to break the siege, which contravenes the U.N. resolution, not to mention basic human rights, what is the reaction of the most advanced industrialized democracies?

Well, Mr. President, in mid-June, we got a taste of their reaction at the G-7 summit in Halifax. The world's wealthiest nations, the United States included, called upon all parties, even those who have been under siege for 38 months, to display the greatest restraint. Is that not nice? This callous declaration surely set a new standard for arrogance, for blaming the victim.

I would ask the well-fed gentlemen of the G-7 if they could look into the face of an undernourished, weakened Sarajevo mother who gets shot at, literally shot at, while running to fetch a plastic jug of water for her children, and tell her that her government's army should display the greatest restraint.

Mr. Akashi, a great world citizen, a top U.N. diplomat in the Balkans, in deliberate violation of his own organization's declaration, announced on June 9 that UNPROFOR, the U.N. protective forces, henceforth would act only if the Bosnian Serbs agreed. Keep in mind that the Bosnian Serbs have Sarajevo, Bihac, and other cities under siege.

Mothers literally cannot go to get water because all the water has been cut off. The gas and electricity has been cut off. So they go to a public fountain, a spring, and are shot at, murdered cold-bloodedly—in cold blood. And Akashi says on June 9, that by the way, we, the U.N. forces, will take no action on any matter unless we first check with the snipers, the Bosnian Serbs.

Now, is that not wonderful? Is that not wonderful? But if the Bosnian Serbs do not agree, then the United Nations will not act. What is the Bosnian Government, having been criticized for trying to break the siege, supposed to do? They are under siege—no water, no food, no electricity, in a campaign to kill their children. And their government is told not to act unless the United Nations first talks to the Bosnian Serbs.

Well, Mr. President, the criticism of the Bosnian army for attacking to break the siege would be laughable if it were not so utterly grotesque. Nonetheless, some West European governments have criticized the United States for our advocacy of the victimized Bosnian Moslems.

Perhaps the following piece of counterfactual analysis might be helpful to our friends in London and Paris.

What if, Mr. President, a Moslem-dominated Bosnia and Herzegovina had attacked a peaceful, Orthodox Christian Serbia, carried out barbaric atrocities against Orthodox Serbian civilians, and then proudly announced that its policy of so-called ethnic cleansing had been successful—would Christian Europe then be sitting idly by, conjuring up excuse after excuse for not halting the cruel and cowardly aggression? I think the answer is self-evident.

Bigotry, sad to say, spreads more easily than tolerance. So we must not allow ourselves to fall into the trap of labeling all Serbs—in Bosnia, Serbia, or elsewhere—as racists. Nearly 200,000 Serbs, sometimes referred to as the forgotten Serbs, continue to live in the territory under the control of the Bosnian Government.

When I first visited Bosnia several years ago, I met with the Council of Leadership of the Bosnian Government, four of whom were Serbs. The army was 28-percent Serbian. It was a multiethnic country—the army and the Bosnian Government made up of Serbs, Croats, and Moslems, all of whom were Bosnians.

So I want to make it clear that not all the Serbs, by any stretch of the imagination, in fact, are like the aggressors.

I might add that when I visited Belgrade over 2 years ago and met with a group of about 75 leaders from business, academia, and other walks of life, including the press, two things were clear: First, the vast majority of the people living in Serbia did not know the truth. Second, if they did they would not support either the ethnic cleansing by the Bosnian Serbs or the actions taken by their own government. I felt they did not support what Karadzic was suggesting. But all they had was a totally government-controlled television outlet, like the old Communist days in Yugoslavia. So all they saw on the news were Bosnian Serb children being slaughtered and even hung up on racks like chickens. All pure propaganda, not true. The world acknowledges this now.

Milosevic did it to enrage his population, to play on centuries-old fears and divisions, and it worked. But the vast majority of the Serbian people are good, honorable, and decent, but they do not know the truth.

In the Government-controlled portion of Bosnia, there is an organized Bosnian Serb political opposition to Mr. Karadzic and his fellow thugs in Pale. There are many Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats serving in the army of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the Government army's deputy chief of staff who is a Bosnian Serb.

Indeed, there are thousands of decent, moral Serbs in Sarajevo, Belgrade, and elsewhere whose personal values rise above the primitive, provincial racism of Karadzic, Milosevic, and company.

Despite the almost unbelievable privations endured by Sarajevans, the Bosnian capital's Moslem, Orthodox, Catholic, and Jewish citizens are still living together, hoping against hope that their sophisticated city can receive the basics—food, water, and medicine—currently denied them by the Serbian bullies in the hills who cowardly snipe at their children and indiscriminately lob shells at innocent civilians.

I have already outlined the legal basis and moral imperative for giving the Bosnian Government the means to defend itself. Now I would like to address the tactical arguments often given against lifting the arms embargo.

Some critics assert that the Bosnian Serbs would react by overrunning the eastern enclaves of Srebrenica, Gorazde, and Zepa. I would remind those critics, first of all, that the Serbs have been attacking Gorazde for weeks without success. More importantly, the U.N. Security Council has called for defense of the safe areas with air power, if necessary, and with vigorous American leadership, NATO could do so.

A second criticism is that lifting the arms embargo would induce UNPROFOR to pull out. But I regret to say, Mr. President, that UNPROFOR troops have become the world's most expensive hostages and have ceased to be able to carry out their mandate. UNPROFOR has publicly abandoned its attempt to protect Sarajevo from bombardment of heavy artillery. On June 17, a U.N. spokesman admitted: "The policy of weapons-collection points has now been abandoned."

Moreover, the United Nations is manifestly unwilling to honor its commitment to use all necessary means—that is what the U.N. resolution says—all necessary means to bring supplies to the desperate civilian populations of Sarajevo, Bihac, and the eastern enclaves.

Mr. President, UNPROFOR is now mainly in the business of protecting itself, which I do not blame it for doing, but that is all it does. It has outlived its usefulness and should be withdrawn, independent of whether or not we lift the arms embargo.

Another frequently heard criticism of lifting the arms embargo unilaterally is that it would cause a rift in NATO. Mr. President, in case anyone is not looking, there is already a rift in NATO, and it is going to get bigger as the American people think over why we spend \$110 billion a year, every year, for NATO. For what purpose? For what purpose? If they cannot affect events in Bosnia, for what purpose are our American taxpayers spending \$110 billion a year?

Mr. President, I step back to no man or woman in this Senate in being a supporter of NATO. I respectfully suggest that I have been one of its strongest advocates for more than 20 years. But it seems to me that if we do not move and do something, NATO will be split and fractured more than by our unilaterally lifting an arms embargo.

NATO will be signing its own death warrant by a continuation of its ineffectual response in Bosnia, hobbled as it is by incomprehensible U.N.-controlled rules of engagement.

Some critics claim that lifting the arms embargo would automatically lead to spreading of the conflict to other parts of the Balkans. Mr. President, this assertion flies in the face of the facts by ignoring the example of the deterrence policy already employed by the United States on Serbia's southern border.

There, an outstanding success story of the Clinton administration's Balkan policy has been the sending of several hundred American troops to join the Nordic U.N. contingent in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Combined with our warning to Milosevic not to even dream of attacking, this action—not the existence of the arms embargo—is what has kept Belgrade's hands off the fledgling Macedonian State.

He knows we mean it there and he has not moved. We should extend the warning to Milosevic that any intervention of his army in the conflict in Bosnia, either to aid the Bosnian Serbs after the lifting of the embargo or to harass the evacuation of UNPROFOR troops, would result in massive, disproportionate retaliation against Serbia proper.

Finally, some opponents of lifting the embargo foresee a dire precedent for unilateral embargo-breaking elsewhere, such as those currently in effect against Iraq and Libya.

The line goes, "If we unilaterally lift the arms embargo against Bosnia, won't our allies lift the arms embargo against Iraq and Libya?" But surely, Mr. President, one can point out even to the most disingenuous foreign politician that there is a world of difference between sanctions against Bosnia, the victim of international aggression, on the one hand, and an embargo against Iraq, a notorious international aggressor, on the other hand. We can and should use our considerable leverage against countries who would

threaten deliberately to ignore this obvious and fundamental distinction.

In conclusion, Mr. President, in actuality, opponents of lifting the illegal arms embargo against Bosnia ignore a much more ominous precedent than breaking the U.N. sanctions.

The geostrategic reality of the future is that the primary danger to peace will much more likely come, not from nuclear missiles, but from regional crises, often in the form of ethnic conflicts and oppression of minorities.

In that context, therefore, the more dangerous precedent would be to reward an aggressor for his cold-blooded invasion, vile ethnic cleansing, murder, rape, pillage, and starvation by blockade. Europe, unfortunately, has other potential Milosevics and Karadzics. That is the sad reality to which we must adjust as we prepare to enter the 21st century. That, Mr. President, is not feel-good idealism. It is nuts-and-bolts realpolitik, and we should begin to practice it.

I yield the floor.

OFF-SHORE OIL AND NATURAL GAS DRILLING

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to commend the House Appropriations Committee for its vote yesterday to restore the moratorium on off-shore oil and natural gas drilling. A bipartisan coalition of coastal State members led the successful fight to rightly reverse the subcommittee's recommendation to lift this needed ban.

Mr. President, our Nation's coastline is perhaps our most beautiful and cherished natural resource. With the Fourth of July weekend fast approaching, many American families are planning to head to the beach to escape the heat, walk along the boardwalk, and swim in our oceans. When they look out to sea, the only sight should be the Sun melting into an endless horizon. They do not want to see gigantic oil and gas drilling rigs and most importantly they do not want to expose their children to pollution.

Mr. President, for 14 years the Congress has stood behind the off-shore ban, which strikes a fair balance between the need for development of natural resources and environmental protection. Yesterday, the full Appropriations Committee recognized the necessity of this balance and I again commend committee members of both parties for their foresight.

I remain deeply concerned, however, that there may be yet another attempt to lift the ban as the appropriations bill moves through the legislative process. I will watch this situation closely and will oppose vigorously any attempt to open our shoreline to needless exploitation.