

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF THREE MEASURES RELATING TO U.S. TROOP DEPLOYMENTS IN BOSNIA

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 12, 1995*

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, today, we asked to vote on three measures regarding the deployment of United States troops to Bosnia. Ten days ago, I joined 14 of my colleagues from the House and Senate on a factfinding trip to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Croatia. I did so because I wanted to fully understand the implications of the United States being involved in the Balkans. We meet with the Presidents of the Yugoslav Republic, Croatia, and Bosnia, the United States Army, and NATO Commanders, as well as U.N. military authorities. And we all saw images in Sarejevo I'm sure we'll never forget.

The devastation is staggering beyond comprehension around Sarajevo—the host of the 1984 Winter Olympics. Once a city of 500,000, its population, it has been reduced in half. Virtually every building is damaged. Electricity, water, sewer, and other basic services are sporadic. Most troubling, however, is the human toll—many thousands of civilians have been killed in the conflict and there are perhaps as many as 3 million Balkan refugees scattered across Europe. They are the innocent victims of this conflict. It was obvious to all on our trip that life will never be the same for those who live in this troubled region of the world.

Now, the President has made a decision to send 20,000 Americans to Bosnia to join with other NATO Forces in implementing the peace agreement. I think the policy that led to this decision was wrong. But the question of whether we should have gone there is largely moot. It now matters only that we succeed. This raises the question of how we should define success.

I believe that success should be defined as minimizing casualties to U.S. troops and ensuring the peace we enforce for 12 months can endure beyond that period. Regarding the safety of our troops, I am convinced our military is capable of protecting themselves and enforcing peace while they are there. Make no mistake, this is a tough assignment and it carries with it the dangers inherent to any military operation in a potentially hostile environment. However, our troops are well-trained, their mission is well-defined, and they have the requisite firepower and clear rules of engagement to protect themselves. Morale is high and I am confident they are well-prepared for the mission ahead.

I remain, however, doubtful about the prospects for long-term peace in the region. The NATO Forces have established a self-imposed 1-year deadline for the departure of troops. It hardly seems plausible that a 1-year respite in the fighting will be sufficient to secure the lasting peace contemplated by the Dayton Agreement and coveted by the people of that war-torn region.

It has been my consistent view that a stable military balance is essential to achieve lasting peace in the Balkans. That means, in my

view, during the next year, the Bosnian military must be armed and trained in the use of weapons. If the deployment of American peacekeepers is inconsistent with an active effort to arm the Bosnians—by whomever—as some of our allies and some in Congress assert, then American peacekeepers should not be deployed because lasting peace cannot be achieved because of the extreme military imbalance that exists today. We must have a commitment from our allies on this issue in advance or this mission will almost certainly be doomed to failure. It is impossible to imagine the Bosnian Republic living in harmony without a sufficiently armed and trained Bosnian military force. I am disappointed that, in the House of Representatives, we have not had the opportunity to consider initiatives to compel the administration to extract such a commitment from our allies.

Furthermore, I see little in the peace accord to address the monumental problem of the nearly 3 million refugees who have been displaced from their homes. While the agreement calls for these people to return to their homes and villages in territories controlled by former enemies, it provides no guarantees of security for them. If the Bosnians, Serbs, and Croats cannot return to their homes with assurances of safety, it is a virtual certainty that they will remain refugees, with all the attendant problems such a massive population displacement will cause. It could easily lead to a situation similar to that which has plagued Israel and Palestine for over 40 years.

Despite my reservations about the wisdom of the President's decision to deploy United States forces to Bosnia, now that the decision to deploy them has been made, I am committed to providing full support to our troops. I will vote now, and in the future, to provide them with whatever resources are deemed necessary to allow them to accomplish their mission. Certainly, the brave men and women serving in our Armed Forces deserve no less.

TRIBUTE TO COL. VLADIMIR SOBICHEVSKY

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 18, 1995*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute a great military leader, U.S. Army Col. Vladimir Sobichevsky. The colonel retires from the U.S. Army this month after serving for the last 3 years as the commandant of the Defense Language Institute located in my district.

A native of Russia, Sobichevsky fled the former Soviet Union with his mother in 1943. Settling in Germany, the two emigrated to the United States from a displaced persons camp in 1949. He enlisted in the U.S. Army just 7 years later, joining the first Special Forces group.

At the time, Sobichevsky said he was motivated to become a soldier because you could earn U.S. citizenship by serving in the Armed Forces for 5 years. He recently told a reporter:

I was going to join the Marines. I kind of fell into the Special Forces. I was the dumbest kid you could've met, with virtually no education, due probably to a poor start in life.

I was standing in a drugstore in Geary Street in San Francisco, reading a magazine,

and I saw an article titled "The Apes of Rath," about Colonel Rath, who was putting together the first Special Forces group. I thought they had nice headgear, the green beret.

I joined the Army without any idea of what I was getting into. I began to realize it at the Airborne School at Fort Benning (Georgia).

And after nearly 40 years in uniform, there is little doubt that Sobichevsky made the right choice. Indeed, his career in the Army has been very distinguished. Completing three tours of duty in Germany, two tours in Korea, and one in Panama, Sobichevsky saw combat first in Laos as part of the White Star initiative and then in the Military Assistance Command Vietnam's Studies and Observation Group.

After earning both bachelor's and master's degrees in government from the University of San Francisco, Sobichevsky also graduated from the Army Command and General Staff College and the National War College.

After serving as operations director for the Special Operations Command, Pacific, Colonel Sobichevsky was transferred to the Defense Language Institute, which will mark its 50th anniversary next year as the premier military institution for foreign language instruction in support of national security requirements for all four military services.

During his 3-year tenure at DLI, the largest language training institution in the world, Sobichevsky is credited with incorporating the school into the network of Monterey Bay educational and language facilities. DLI now works cooperatively with other Monterey Bay institutions of higher learning dedicated to foreign language training, including the Monterey Institute of International Studies and the Naval Postgraduate School. The consortium of institutions that provide graduate-level training in foreign language in the Monterey Bay area have a strong leader in Colonel Sobichevsky and DLI.

More importantly, the commandant has improved the training at DLI. "Our goal is to have students achieve a Level II proficiency in listening comprehension, reading and speaking," Sobichevsky said. "That's not a native speaker, but that's pretty darned good."

According to Sobichevsky, while just 12 percent of DLI graduates had level II proficiency in 1985, 64 percent have it this year.

"I don't want to take credit," Sobichevsky modestly added. "We built on the building blocks of previous commandants. The credit goes to the 650 faculty, seven school deans, 80 military language instructors. They deserve the credit."

As each student who has received language training at DLI will attest, Sobichevsky is to be commended for enhancing the language preparedness of its students. Colonel Sobichevsky is a soldier's soldier and deserves the Nation's heartfelt appreciation for his military service.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 1995*

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, there were a number of environmental matters in this year's