

RESALE OF ARMOR PIERCING BULLETS TO CIVILIANS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, last week the Senate passed the Department of Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001 which included an amendment I sponsored to outlaw the resale of military surplus armor piercing ammunition, including .50 caliber ammunition, to civilians.

This amendment requires the Department of Defense to ensure that military surplus armor-piercing ammunition is not sold or transferred to anyone except foreign militaries or law enforcement or other government agencies. Armor piercing ammunition is extremely lethal and is powerful enough to pierce an armored limousine or helicopter. It has no legitimate civilian use.

Last year, Congress approved legislation which instituted a one-year restriction on the civilian sale of military surplus armor piercing ammunition; the amendment approved by the Senate last week would put that temporary restriction into permanent law. Before the one-year restriction was enacted, under the Conventional Demilitarization Program, a contractor working with the Department of Defense was paid \$1 per ton to take possession of its excess armor-piercing ammunition, which it was free to refurbish and resell to the general public.

The Department of Defense should not be a party to making this extraordinarily destructive ammunition available to the general public. Once available on the market, this powerful ammunition is subject to virtually no restriction, making it easier for someone to purchase armor piercing ammunition capable of piercing an armored car, than it is to buy a handgun. These loose restrictions make armor piercing ammunition highly popular among terrorists, drug traffickers and violent criminals.

An investigation by the General Accounting Office (GAO) found that armor piercing .50 caliber ammunition is "among the most destructive and powerful ammunition available in the United States" and the "widespread availability" of the bullets "poses a threat to public safety." In the year ending in March, 1999, more than 113,000 rounds of military surplus armor piercing .50 caliber ammunition were sold in the United States.

The amendment to prohibit the resale of military surplus armor piercing ammunition is a small but important step in keeping our streets safe.

COUNTERING THE THREAT TO MONTENEGRO

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the threat to Montenegro, the sole remaining free part of the Yugoslav federation.

In the decade of the 1990s, there were four mornings on which my colleagues

and I awoke to a recurring headline: new war in the former Yugoslavia, started by Slobodan Milosevic.

First, in Slovenia. Next, in Croatia. Then, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Finally, in Kosovo.

I do not want to ever read that headline again. I never want to read the headline that says: Milosevic starts new war in Montenegro.

So let's say it loud and clear: hands off Montenegro, Mr. Milosevic!

What is going on today in the so-called Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, specifically, in the relationship between Serbia and Montenegro?

Why is it important for us to pay attention?

And what should be our stance toward developments there?

These are the questions I aim to answer in my remarks today.

Most of my colleagues are aware that "Yugoslavia" is an invented term. It was not the name with which that nation was born after the First World War. Rather, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes officially changed its name in 1929 to the "Kingdom of Yugoslavia," meaning the kingdom of the South Slavs.

That was the first Yugoslavia, the one which perished in the course of the Second World War. Out of the ashes of World War II, the second Yugoslavia arose. That was Tito's Yugoslavia. Tito had been dead for a less than a decade when his Yugoslavia began to unravel at the start of the 1990s. And now, today, all that remains of Yugoslavia is an increasingly quarrelsome couple: Serbia and Montenegro.

Once Yugoslavia was a state of 20 million inhabitants, with five constituent republics plus two semi-autonomous provinces. And today? Slovenia, gone. Croatia, gone. Bosnia and Herzegovina, gone. Macedonia, gone. Kosovo, for all intents and purposes, gone.

The two republics of Serbia and Montenegro are what is left of Yugoslavia, Mr. President. And the undeniable fact is that many people in Montenegro want no more to do with that Yugoslav federation with Serbia as it is today.

Will Montenegro someday split off to become an independent nation-state, like Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina? Maybe.

Will Montenegro someday become a partner with Serbia in a revitalized and restructured Yugoslavia? Maybe.

Will Montenegro wind up as a Serbian puppet-state, ruled from Belgrade by the likes of Slobodan Milosevic or some other Serbian authoritarian jingoist? Not if I have anything to say about it, and I hope my colleagues and the U.S. Government agree with me.

We simply must not take our eye off the ball, Mr. President. There is still a very serious risk that Milosevic will undermine and then overthrow the elected government of the Republic of Montenegro.

What would be the result of such a development? At a minimum—Montenegrins executed or thrown in jail, others forced to flee abroad as refugees, Milosevic in charge of new borders with Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, and Kosovo. At a maximum—war with a capital "W", in the Balkans, once again.

What is the seriousness of the threat today to Montenegro?

Earlier this month Milosevic made his latest move from Belgrade. He got the obedient legislature to approve changes to Yugoslavia's constitution.

The first major change was that henceforth the President of Yugoslavia will be directly elected. Guess who gets to run? Yes, Milosevic himself—who otherwise would have been obliged by the constitution to step down next year at his term's end. This means that Mr. Milosevic has, in effect, extended his legal "shelf-life" by as many as eight years.

The second major constitutional change was that the upper house of Yugoslavia's parliament henceforth will be elected proportionally. Mr. President, that's easy for us to understand. It means that, by comparison, in this Chamber, there would be a heck of a lot more Senators from California than from Delaware. In the case of Yugoslavia, it isn't hard to figure out the significance: Montenegro has 650,000 inhabitants; Serbia has 10 million.

This constitutional re-jiggering has fooled absolutely no one.

That it was immediately condemned, on July 8, both by Montenegrin President Milo Djukanovic and by the legislature of the Republic of Montenegro. The vote in the Montenegrin legislature was 36 to 18 in favor of a vigorous condemnation of the constitutional changes as "illegal and illegitimate."

The changes have also been condemned by the political opposition within Serbia.

The changes have even been condemned by the Russians, who joined in the recent G-8 communique statement condemning Milosevic's constitutional fiddling.

Milosevic and his cronies are clearly trying to topple the democratically elected government of President Djukanovic. These constitutional changes are but the latest gambit.

In contrast with Milosevic's hopelessly inept long-term strategies, most of his tactics are clever. If these constitutional changes were ultimately to be accepted by, or forced upon, the Montenegrins, they would facilitate his control of Montenegro through peaceful means. Given, however, that the Montenegrins have rejected the changes, Mr. Milosevic now can claim, spuriously, that the Montenegrins are acting "unconstitutionally" or "illegally" and that, therefore, Belgrade has some right to "intervene."