

Thank you for C-Span. At least we get rational discussion rather than one-sided bombast. I hope you will consider these thoughts.

President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500
Dear Mr. President:

[REDACTED]
Lewes, DE 19958

April 7, 1999

Stop the Bombing

SP 4/9
O. KOSOV
PC

The US and NATO are equally culpable as Mr. Milosevic in bringing about the disastrous refugee problem re Kosovo. The problem was reasonably small until negotiations failed and bombing was initiated. These actions stimulated Milosevic to greatly increase his efforts to displace Albanians in Kosovo. Americans are too quick to bomb, and too arrogant and impatient to use diplomacy properly. The US is acting too much like dictator of the planet Earth.

Fact: Today, EVERYONE including Mr. Holbrooke admits that the ultimatum given to the Serbs at Rambouillet was far too harsh to be acceptable. Everyone involved knew what the outcome had to be if the US insisted on the conditions specified. What kind of negotiation is that? Milosevic was not given a way to save face. What kind of negotiations were you conducting that you did not want to get the Russians involved? Knowingly insulting the Russians is silly. How do you suppose this whole affair looks to neutral nations? To those of us who are spectators, it looks like unbelievably arrogant gameplaying by very high US officials. I thought that the Treaty of Versailles was well understood. Apparently, not.

Fact: The level of action by the Serbs against the Kosovars was much lower before negotiations broke down and the bombing started. It greatly escalated on March 24th. Your insisting otherwise is a provable lie. Milosevic could see what was about to happen, and was ready to act accordingly. Was NATO so anxious to expand its importance that it was looking for a fight? Apparently, so.

Fact: It is imperative for the US to maintain the best possible relations with all nations particularly Russia. Excluding Russia from negotiations was a tragic mistake. The problem should have been handled by the UN. It would have taken longer to solve, but it is difficult to see how things could have turned out worse than they did.

Fact: The Serbs are more united behind Milosevic today than at any time in the past, as the English were under Churchill during the bombing by the Nazis. Serbian citizens cannot understand why the US is bombing them. They never harmed the US. They were our allies in WW2, and saved 500 downed US fliers from the Nazis. They cannot understand why the airforce they helped save is destroying them, and neither can a great many of us.

Fact: The US broke international law and precedent by bombing a sovereign nation engaged in a civil war. How can we emphasize the need and importance of lawfulness when we break the law when we feel like it? If you want to challenge civil strife within a nation, change the law first!

Fact: NATO was designed as a defensive alliance. Serbia did not attack any NATO nation. NATO can not legally be used to attack a sovereign nation engaged in a civil war. US credibility re lawfulness has been greatly diminished, particularly in Third World nations.

Fact: The US is unquestionably the most powerful nation on Earth. Everyone knows it. Why is Senator McCain, and others claiming we have to win this struggle even if it requires invading Serbia? Do they have some kind of inferiority complex? We have made a terrible mistake. Bombing should be stopped, and negotiations renewed this time including Russia. The UN, not NATO, should be where the debate takes place. It is tragic that at the 50th anniversary of NATO, it is not being used according to its charter.

Fact: The US Department of Defense is not. It should be renamed the Department of the Crusades, and its slogan should be, "We bomb to do good." Mr. Cohen's title should be changed to Secretary of the Crusades.

Fact: The US Military should be divided into two groups, one designed for defense of the nation and the second designed for humanitarian purposes, IF THAT IS WHAT THE COUNTRY WANTS. I would certainly be willing to serve in the first mentioned, but not the second, since I don't think we ought to be minding everybody's business. Senator Biden would much prefer the second.

Fact: The US should overcome its "unconditional surrender" ideology. Didn't the people who engaged in the negotiations understand Balkan history?

Fact: NATO claims they knew bombing would create a large refugee problem. Yet, all of the effort went into the bombing campaign, and essentially none into planning to care for refugees. Why was the refugee problem ignored, to make exciting TV? The claim begs the question.

Fact: Peace is boring. Too many people benefit from war. Have you noticed how CNN reporters have "come alive" in recent weeks? History has shown that if you want a war that will last forever, go to the Balkans. What a tragedy! Also, thank heavens for C-Span.

I am ashamed of my nation for making a bad situation much worse.

CC: Many

PhD Scientist, Retired
COL USAR, Retired

[REDACTED]
Lewes, DE 19958

April 4, 1999

President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Clinton:

On March 24, 1999, a day which will live in infamy, the United States with NATO assistance, began massive, daily, unprovoked air attacks on the Sovereign nation of Serbia. Serbia had not attacked the US, any of its allies, or anyone outside of Serbia. These unprecedented attacks by the US link us with our former enemies, Nazi Germany, and Japan whom we claimed to detest for breaking international law. Young students in the US have always been taught to detest nations which acted illegally. The Congress took exactly one half hour to decide to support you re your wish to bomb Serbia, an overtly illegal act. Don't you have any common sense?

The boundaries of a sovereign nation are easy for anyone to understand. When the German Army crossed the boundary into Poland in 1939, this triggered a mutual defense treaty which Poland had with England, and England declared war on Germany. While this whole situation was a great tragedy, at least entry of England into the war was understandable and predictable to all.

In attacking Serbia, the US relied on a value judgement, i.e. on a decision that reports of atrocities coming out of the area were true, unacceptable and that, therefore, Serbs should be bombed. Well, there are innumerable reports of atrocities coming out of a large number of nations that are true. How is it that the US is ignoring all of these other reports and focusing only on Yugoslavia? To listen to US propaganda, one would think that the Albanians were completely innocent which they are not! The US air attacks have greatly increased and intensified Serbia's attacks on Kosovars that was totally predictable. The bombing hasn't and will not reduce Serbia's dislike of Albanians. The only thing which you and your silly advisors have done is to make matters much worse.

Would you please admit to making an error in judgement, call off the bombing, and reinstate peace talks. We don't have to WIN this horrible undeclared war. It is just another stain on your presidency. We didn't win in Vietnam and everything finally turned out satisfactorily there. Using NATO rather than the UN was a terrible mistake. At what stage of the conflict will we all be so ashamed of what we are doing to the Serbs that massive demonstrations in Washington will turn the war off for us as it did for Vietnam. Better sooner than later.

Stop the bombing. No use of ground troops. Stop it now!

Sincerely,

CC: Biden, Castle, and Roth
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Lewes, DE 19958
March 28, 1999

President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

NO BOMBING

I notice that Senator Biden, and a few others, in a one-half hour congressional debate, supported you in destroying the concept of National Sovereignty, substituting for it the vaporous concept of value judgement. The tragedy embodied in this change will haunt the US forever unless something is done very rapidly to refute it. The question in many people's minds is whether the senators who voted for the bombing even understood the conceptual change they were bringing about. Some certainly did so with their veiled statement of concern, but there was no explicit reference to, or discussion of, this change. A policy change of this magnitude requires more than cursory consideration by the Senate.

The concept of National Sovereignty is easily understood by all, but one person's value judgement is probably not much better than another's, and the difference between two world political value judgements is difficult to understand by diverse people. When Hitler started WWII to obtain "living space" for his people, that seemed to be a beneficial value judgement for Germans considering their treatment by the Allies after WWI. When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor in support of their "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere", that seemed to be a beneficial value judgement to the Japanese. By ignoring the National Sovereignty of Yugoslavia, we have now classified ourselves with the illegal aggressors of the past. This is not a very happy thought for me. How is what we are doing to the Serbs so different from what the Serbs are doing to the Kosovars? Bombing the Serbs may provide many with a certain degree of moral superiority, but it has nothing whatsoever to do with solving the problem, which has been made immensely more complicated by the bombing. You have made us a rogue nation.

That the ordinary people of the US may not know or understand the long, tortured history of the Balkans is not unexpected, but for powerful politicians and appointees to either be ignorant of such history, or to deliberately ignore it, is a travesty to this nation. Julius Caesar did not take his legions to Illericum as ordered because he was not interested in trying to subdue the fierce, savage, mountain tribes who lived there. Their history in the intervening years has not changed that assessment at all. This is a European problem, not ours. All we are doing is making the situation worse. STOP THE BOMBING RIGHT NOW!

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Ph.D. Scientist, Retired
COL, USAR, Retired

CC: Senator Biden
Senator Roth
Representative Castle
Attach.