

Republicans respond to Bosnia accord

by Kathleen and Mel Klenetsky

The response from Republican Presidential candidates to the Bosnian peace accords, and to President Clinton's proposal for sending U.S. troops to the region as part of a NATO peace implementation force, ranged from conditional support to vitriolic opposition. Here's what the leading GOP presidential hopefuls had to say:

Bob Dole (R-Kan.): The Senate majority leader gave the Clinton administration's Bosnia initiative the most favorable response of any of the Republican candidates. Dole had been in the forefront of Congressional efforts to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia, and has been critical of both the Bush and Clinton administrations for their failure to do so.

"The President took the first step. It was a good statement," Dole commented, in an interview with CBS News immediately following the President's Nov. 27 address to the nation explaining the Bosnian accords and why it was necessary to deploy U.S. soldiers to implement the peace.

"We're going to be under the command of an American general—that's going to be very helpful. He [Clinton] didn't mention the United Nations. But what the President didn't talk about was the failure to do anything for 30 months while this ethnic cleansing was going on, and the fact that we tried and tried and tried in a bipartisan way to lift the arms embargo so the Bosnians could defend themselves. Had we done that . . . he wouldn't be addressing the American people tonight about sending 20,000 American troops."

Dole was reminded by the interviewer that under the Bush administration "there wasn't much done." Dole: "That's right. I've said so—it started in the Bush administration. President—candidate—Clinton said if he were elected he would have air strikes and lift the embargo. We talked about that at the White House. But, again, I'm just laying the premise. I think the President made a good statement. . . ."

"I obviously want to support the President. I talked to the President yesterday. He called me from Camp David. I have a strong belief in the power of the President, the constitutional authority the President of the United States has, and must have. And no doubt about it, whether Congress agrees or not, troops will go to Bosnia. So those are facts. And I think we need to wait and see what the American reaction is. I told him very honestly—I said, 'Mr. President, if you can't persuade the American people, I don't believe you'd be able to sway the Congress of the United States.' . . ."

"We need to find some way to be able to support the

President. . . . We only have one President at a time. President Clinton is the commander-in-chief. And when he makes the case, as he started to make tonight, if he makes that complete case, then he should have our support."

Dole said that the United States needs "to find a way to arm and train the Bosnians, because if they're going to—if we're going to depart there in six months or a year, they've got to be able to defend themselves. And we can't have this so-called build-down, with the Serbs still, you know, in a stronger position than the Croats and the Muslims combined."

Phil Gramm (R-Tex.): The Senate's equivalent of Newt "Crybaby" Gingrich went on ABC-TV's "This Week with David Brinkley" on Nov. 26, where he denounced President Clinton's work to achieve a Bosnian peace as "social work," even while acknowledging that were Congress to succeed in blocking the deployment of U.S. troops to Bosnia, this would disrupt the peace agreement.

"I don't think [Clinton] has made his case. . . . Foreign policy is not social work," Gramm said. "You don't look around the world for things you could do to make things better. I think you have to have some real test for using American military power. . . ."

"This is an intervention the President has wanted to make. . . . I think it is an unworkable agreement. And I'm not going to feel better about adding American names to the casualty list. And therefore, I am not in favor of sending American troops to Bosnia."

Asked by George Will what would happen if the United States, which produced the agreement, which is premised on American peacekeeping, refused to participate, Gramm replied: "I don't deny that if we decide not to send troops, if that disrupts this agreement, that there are not costs involved—given what the President has done to this point."

Asked what would happen if the war spreads to Greece, Gramm said that, "if the war started to spread, that is something that we'd have to look at."

Lamar Alexander: The former Tennessee governor and U.S. secretary of education issued a press release on Nov. 27 objecting to the U.S. troop-deployment aspect of the Bosnia agreement:

"I would never have made a commitment to send 20,000 U.S. troops to the former Yugoslavia in the first place. But now that President Clinton has made that commitment, the American people deserve to know the answers to at least these three questions: 1. Why is the protection of newly created borders in the former Yugoslavia a vital national interest of the United States? 2. How will we know the 'peace' put on paper in Dayton actually exists on the ground before we send American troops there? 3. How can you assure the American people you will know when the peacekeeping mission is done and our troops can come home?"

"The President is our commander-in-chief and he has the right to make his case to the Congress and to the American people. But he has not yet done that—and he must, before our

troops are sent into an open-ended peacekeeping mission.”

Steve Forbes, the publisher of *Forbes* magazine whose multimillion-dollar personal fortune is fueling his dark-horse Presidential race, put out a statement on Nov. 22 calling for a Republican mobilization to block the U.S. troop commitment to Bosnia:

“While the settlement is applaudable and one hopes lasting, it would still be a murderous mistake to send American ground forces as peacekeepers. If the settlement is real, such a presence will not be necessary.

“Putting American troops in Bosnia would set the stage for another Lebanon or Somalia. Even worse, this debacle may set in motion forces that could destroy NATO and form xenophobic nationalist forces in Russia.

“I call upon Congress and Republican Congressional leaders to fight such a deployment with every ounce of energy they have. It must be blocked.”

Pat Buchanan: Buchanan has been the most outspoken opponent of the Clinton administration’s Bosnian peace plan. He held a press conference in Washington, D. C. on Nov. 27, prior to the President’s television broadcast, to excoriate the plan:

“We’re here to talk about the President’s plan to intervene with 20,000 American troops in Bosnia. In my judgment, President Clinton has no authority to do this. These American troops are NATO troops. Bosnia is not covered by NATO. No Americans have been attacked in Bosnia. There is no vital interest at risk in Bosnia. . . . I don’t know where in the Constitution Mr. Clinton gets the authority to wage war against Bosnian Serbs in a country that is not even covered by NATO without the authority of the Congress of the United States. . . . I think what is transpiring is an act of folly, and it’s inviting a tragedy of historic dimensions. . . .

“Let me talk about the President now. While I disagree with the President and while I don’t believe he has the authority without specific congressional approval to put an American army into Bosnia, he is leading. The President is taking a stand. He is articulating a vision about peace and democracy, utopian though it may be. . . .

“The Republican Party should likewise take a stand. I think the Republican Party should stand up and say, ‘We oppose American troops in Bosnia and we should deny the President the authority in the Congress to send those forces into Bosnia.’ I think it’s time Congress asserted a co-equal role with the President in the shaping of foreign policy.”

Richard Lugar (R-Ind.): The second-in-command of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee issued a statement through an aide on Nov. 28:

“His [Lugar’s] general policy is that, before troops are sent, there should be Congressional approval, and it has to be a clear and defined mission. As far as the President’s statement was concerned, he was pleased with it, he thought it was positive, but he still would like some more questions to be answered.”

Newt’s freshmen are ‘gangsta reps’

by Mark Sonnenblick

It’s no secret that, were the next elections to take place today, Newt Gingrich and his band of Republican “revolutionaries” would be swept out of Congress. It’s not just the “message” that has turned off the American public. But increasingly, the “messengers” are turning out to be very different than their slick public relations images.

In fact, some of Gingrich’s most devoted Congressional freshmen are turning out to be “sleaze personified.”

A ‘Mormon Maggie Thatcher’

Take the case of Rep. Enid Waldholtz (R-Utah), who paraded conservative Mormon virtues to defeat a feminist incumbent Democrat in Salt Lake City. During the campaign, she repeatedly pledged, “I promise to bring Utah values to Washington, not Washington values to Utah.”

Waldholtz came from third place in the election race to win, thanks to an infusion of \$1.8 million in what she claimed was “personal money.” Grilled by the press as to the source of the mystery money, she reassured the voters in her best Mormon manner, “We were very blessed for our hard work.” They chose to believe her.

Now, the FBI is investigating the myriad of federal election law violations by her campaign. These include falsified campaign reports to hide unlawful contributions, embezzlement of campaign funds, falsified personal asset reports, bounced checks, and misuse of Congressional funds. Husband Joseph Waldholtz has also been subpoenaed as a material witness in an alleged \$1.7 million check-kiting scheme. He is negotiating a deal with prosecutors which could include helping to convict his wife. The congresswoman claims that all misconduct was hidden from her until recently by “misrepresentations made to me by Joe Waldholtz.”

Once in Washington, Enid Waldholtz promptly became Newt’s darling and rose to an influential position in the class of ’94. The *New York Times* reported, “Her fellow freshmen bow exaggeratedly in her presence.” Eighty-five percent of the freshmen vote with the Speaker over 90% of the time. That huge voting bloc has been the source of Gingrich’s power.

Gingrich gave her a seat on the Rules Committee, much to the chagrin of many more senior Republicans. She was the