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UNCLASSIFIED
NSC/RMO PROFILE

RECORD ID: 9806957
RECEIVED: 10 OCT 98 14

TO: MCCAIN, JOHN

FROM: PRESIDENT

DOC DATE: 16 DEC 98
SOURCE REF:

KEYWORDS: KOSOVO
NATO
CO

HUMAN RIGHTS
PUBLIC STATEMENTS

PERSONS:

SUBJECT: POTUS LTR TO SEN MCCAIN RE KOSOVO

ACTION: PRESIDENT SGD LTR

DUE DATE: 22 OCT 98 STATUS: C

STAFF OFFICER: HURLEY

LOGREF:

FILES: WH

NSCP:

CODES:

D O C U M E N T D I S T R I B U T I O N

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO

BOUCHARD
FARRAR
HURLEY
NSC CHRON
SCHULTE

COMMENTS: _____

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DOC 5 OF 5

UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION DATA SUMMARY REPORT

RECORD ID: 9806957

DOC ACTION OFFICER

CAO ASSIGNED ACTION REQUIRED

001 HURLEY	Z 98101014 PREPARE MEMO FOR BERGER
002 BERGER	Z 98111915 FWD TO PRESIDENT FOR SIGNATURE
002 HURLEY	Z 98112017 FOR REDO
003 BERGER	Z 98121016 FWD TO PRESIDENT FOR SIGNATURE
003 STEIN, L	Z 98121414 FOR SIGNATURE
004 PRESIDENT	Z 98121420 FOR SIGNATURE
005	X 98121520 PRESIDENT SGD LTR

DISPATCH DATA SUMMARY REPORT

<u>DOC</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>DISPATCH FOR ACTION</u>	<u>DISPATCH FOR INFO</u>
004	981214		VICE PRESIDENT
004	981214		WH CHIEF OF STAFF
005	981216	WH STRIPPING DESK	CIA
005	981216	MCCAIN, JOHN	DEFENSE
005	981216		STATE

UNCLASSIFIED

National Security Council
The White House

PROOFED BY: _____

LOG # 6957

URGENT NOT PROOFED: _____

SYSTEM PRS NSC INT ARS

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DOCLOG HC A/O 01

	SEQUENCE TO	INITIAL/DATE	DISPOSITION
Cosgriff	<u>1</u>	<u>lgr</u>	_____
Rice	_____	_____	_____
Davies	_____	_____	_____
Kerrick	_____	_____	_____
Steinberg	_____	_____	_____
Berger	_____	_____	_____
Situation Room	_____	_____	_____
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A = Action I = Information D = Dispatch R = Retain N = No Further Action

cc:

1998 DEC 16 11:24 AM

COMMENTS:

DATE December 16, 1998

Exec Sec Office has diskette _____

National Security Council
The White House

11/20
1444

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SEQUENCE TO INITIAL/DATE DISPOSITION

Cosgriff			
Rice	1	11/19	done
Davies			
Kerrick	2	11/19	
Steinberg	3		
Berger			
Situation Room			
West Wing Desk	4	11/20 DMK	STAFF
Records Mgt.			

THREE

THIS MAKES NO SENSE
letter written before we
got deal - REUSE

TRD
o Further Action

cc:

COMMENTS:

This makes no sense - letter written before we got the deal - REUSE

Exec Sec Office h

National Security Council
The White House

11/20
1444

PROOFED BY: _____ LOG # 6957
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Kerrick	<u>2</u>	<u>(C) 11/19</u>	
Steinberg	<u>3</u>		
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Records Mgt.			
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A = Action I = Information D = Dispatch R = Retain N = No Further Action

cc:

1988 NOV 19 04:14:04

COMMENTS:

Exec Sec Office has diskette *we*

This makes no sense
letter written before we
got deal - REUSE

This makes no sense - letter written before we got to deal - REUSE

National Security Council
The White House

140730
103F

PROOFED BY: _____ LOG # 6957

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	SEQUENCE TO	INITIAL/DATE	DISPOSITION
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Davies			
Kerrick	<u>2</u>	<u>(u)</u>	
Steinberg	<u>3</u>	<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>inf done</u>
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Situation Room			
West Wing Desk			
Records Mgt.			

A = Action I = Information D = Dispatch R = Retain N = No Further Action

cc:

COMMENTS: POTUS Letter to Sen. McCain
re Crisis in Kosovo

98 DEC 9 14:27

Exec Sec Office has diskette yes

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 16, 1998

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter about the crisis in Kosovo. The issues and concerns that you raised have helped guide our decisions over the last two months. I know members of my Administration provided you and other Members of Congress with a briefing on our Kosovo policy, but I wanted to personally let you know where we stand.

From the outset, we have had three overriding objectives in Kosovo. First, to end the violence that threatens the fragile stability of the Balkans. Second, to prevent a humanitarian crisis from becoming a catastrophe and third, to help the Kosovar people achieve a high-degree of self-government.

We have made substantial progress on each of these objectives. NATO determination backed by a credible threat of force has led to a cease-fire, followed by a substantial reduction of Serb security forces in Kosovo. Now that aggressive operations have stopped, tens of thousands of displaced people have returned to their villages. We have also made progress toward a political settlement that will address the root causes of the conflict. The current draft agreement offers the Kosovars a high-degree of autonomy, an indigenous police force and complete control over education, health and other institutions that most affect their daily lives.

In order to verify Belgrade's compliance, a number of actions have been taken. NATO has implemented an intrusive air surveillance regime that allows it to monitor the situation. Under the leadership of Bill Walker, an experienced American diplomat, a 2,000-person verification mission is being constituted, with personnel and funds contributed by OSCE nations. In support of this mission, NATO is establishing a force in Macedonia that will be close at hand to extract verifiers should that become necessary. In line with your counsel, the combat forces deployed in Macedonia will be provided exclusively by our allies.

With respect to your concern about the over-extension of U.S. military forces, my Administration is committed to work with Congress to provide adequate resources for readiness and other defense programs in FY 1999 and beyond. Over the longer-term, I have directed the Office of Management and Budget and the National Security Council to work with Secretary Cohen and the Joint Chiefs to develop a multi-year plan that provides the resources necessary to preserve military readiness, support our troops and modernize aging weapons systems. This plan will be incorporated in my FY 2000 budget request to Congress.

I do not underestimate the difficulties that lie ahead, but I believe we are headed in the right direction. Again, thank you for writing and sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Clinton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science and
Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
DISTRIBUTION RECEIPT

LOG 9806957
DATE 16 DEC 98

SUBJECT: POTUS LTR TO SEN MCCAIN RE KOSOVO
DOCUMENT CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

EXTERNAL DISTRIBUTION:

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TIME

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PAGE 01 OF 01 PAGES

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ID 9806957

REFERRAL

DATE: 15 DEC 98

MEMORANDUM FOR: WH STRIPPING DESK

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: TO: MCCAIN, JOHN

SOURCE: PRESIDENT

DATE: 16 DEC 98

SUBJ: POTUS LTR TO SEN MCCAIN RE KOSOVO

REQUIRED ACTION: FOR DISPATCH

DUE DATE: 16 DEC 98

COMMENT:

DMK

FOR

JOHN W. FICKLIN

NSC RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICE

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

December 14, 1998

98 DEC 14 PM 7:30

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

SAMUEL BERGER *MB*
LARRY STEIN *LSS*

SUBJECT:

Presidential Letter to Senator McCain on the
Crisis in KosovoPurpose

Respond to a letter from Senator McCain on the situation in Kosovo.

Background

We provided Senator McCain an interim reply in October via a briefing on our Kosovo policy. However, as we prepare to send your budget to the Hill, we wanted to address his criticism of national defense spending.

Your reply summarizes NATO pressure that has led to Milosevic's acceptance of intrusive verification regimes and describes the improving situation on the ground as refugees gradually return to their homes. It also addresses Senator McCain's concern about the military readiness issue and his recommendation that any ground forces deployed be European only.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the letter to Senator McCain at Tab A.

Attachments

Tab A Letter to Senator McCain
Tab B Incoming Correspondence

signed 12-15-98

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20504

6957
REDO

December 7, 1998

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR SAMUEL R. BERGER

THROUGH: GREG SCHULTE *DS*
FROM: MICHAEL HURLEY *mh*
SUBJECT: Presidential Letter to Senator McCain Regarding
the Crisis in Kosovo

Senator McCain wrote the President to express his concern about the situation in Kosovo. He outlined a series of steps for the Administration to follow before taking military action against Serbia. He recommended that any forces deployed to the region be European only; and he referred to Congressional anxiety regarding the over-extension of U.S. military commitment and insufficient funding for the military.

We initially held off replying to this letter because much of its focus -- prescriptions on how/if military force should be used -- was moot when the letter arrived, as the Holbrooke-Milosevic Agreement was concluded without resort to military action. Additionally, Senator McCain attended an Administration briefing in early October and was kept current with Kosovo policy.

Concurrences by: Jay Farrar *JF* Joseph Bouchard *JB*

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the memorandum to the President at Tab I.

Attachments

Tab I Memorandum for the President
Tab A Letter to Senator McCain
Tab B Incoming Correspondence

JOHN MCCAIN
ARIZONA

CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

United States Senate

241 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0303
(202) 224-2238

1839 SOUTH ALMA SCHOOL ROAD
SUITE 375
MESA, AZ 85210
(602) 491-4300

2400 EAST ARIZONA
BILTMORE CIRCLE
SUITE 1150
PHOENIX, AZ 85016
(602) 952-2410

450 WEST PARADISE REDONDO
SUITE 200
TUCSON, AZ 85701
(520) 670-6334

TELEPHONE FOR HEARING IMPAIRED
(202) 224-7132
(602) 982-0170

October 7, 1998

President Bill Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

OCT 7 PM 7:25

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing because of my serious concern about developments in Kosovo. With a brutality that would be almost unimaginable were anyone else responsible for it, Slobodan Milosevic has subjected yet another innocent population to the bloody carnage of ethnic cleansing. The stark depravity of his actions gravely offends the basic moral values of Western civilization. Moreover, the conflict in Kosovo threatens the stability of Europe, as the prospects are quite real that it may eventually embroil other countries in the region in a larger war. More than once, the United States has warned Serbia that NATO will not tolerate its continued aggression against Kosovo. Serbia has ignored our warnings, thereby challenging the credibility of the United States, obliging us and our NATO allies to consider using military force to prevent further aggression against our values and interests in Kosovo.

Congress has reservations about such a course of action, however. While I am inclined to support military action, I understand the basis for my colleagues' reservations, and I believe it is imperative that prior to ordering any military strike on Serbia you take all necessary steps to ensure both Congress and the American people that the action is necessary, affordable, and designed to achieve clearly defined goals.

First, you must state clearly the American interest in resolving this terrible conflict; describe in detail the facts on the ground; identify all parties responsible for perpetrating the terrible atrocities committed in Kosovo while making clear that Serbia is indisputably the primary culprit; explain how our own security is threatened by Serbian aggression and justifies risking the lives of American pilots, and how the use of air power can prevent further aggression. You must also define for the public what will constitute the operation's success so that Americans know that air strikes were launched with a realistic end game in mind.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

*** TOTAL PAGE.03 ***

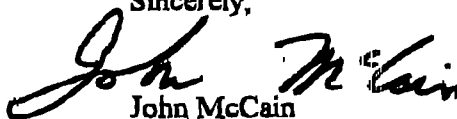
Second, you must convincingly explain to the American people why it is that we should be involved in a conflict that to many people seems to affect our interests indirectly, and that should be resolved exclusively by those countries most directly threatened by it -- our European allies. As I am sure you appreciate, Congress and the public's frustration over Europe's lack of willingness to bear a greater share of the burden for maintaining peace in their own backyard is at an all time high, threatening the nation's consensus that our leadership in NATO should remain a priority interest for the United States. You could go a long way toward alleviating that frustration by ensuring that any ground forces that might ultimately be needed to keep the peace in Kosovo will be provided by European countries alone.

Third, should you order air strikes you must ensure the nation that they will be of sufficient magnitude to achieve their objectives. I hope you will view the following criticism in the constructive spirit in which it is offered. In the past, your administration has too often threatened and then backed down from the use of force, or authorized cruise missile strikes that amounted to little more than ineffective gestures intended, I suspect, to send a message to our adversaries, but because of their small scale interpreted by our adversaries as a lack of resolve on the part of the United States to defend our interests vigorously. Your administration's failure to support UNSCOM inspectors in Iraq has also greatly exacerbated our adversaries' lack of respect for America's resolve.

Finally, you should explain how you intend to find additional resources to fund the operation in order to alleviate well-founded Congressional anxiety regarding the over-extension of U.S military commitments at a time when spending on national defense is woefully inadequate.

Mr. President, should you convincingly address the issues I have raised, which I believe you can do, I am confident you will have the support of Congress and our constituents for operations against Serbia. You will certainly have mine. I believe there exists a clear and compelling case for such an action that Americans will accept if you avoid the mistakes made in the past when your administration has attempted to build public support for the use of force. I urge to give these concerns your most serious consideration.

Sincerely,



John McCain
United States Senator

JM/ms

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 9, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR GLYN DAVIES
NSC Executive Secretariat

FROM: JANET MURGUIA
Legislative Affairs

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Attached are copies of letters sent to the President by various Members of Congress. Since these letters address national security issues, we would appreciate your assistance in drafting the responses.

Thank you very much for your assistance. If you have any questions, please call Eli Joseph at x67500.

The following is a brief description of the letters:

- 1) Sen. Max Cleland (D-GA), expressing concern over Kosovo;
- 2) Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT), regarding Mr. John Kamm and the Prisoner Information Project with China;
- 3) Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC), concerning the U.S. forest products industry;
- 4) Sen. Trent Lott (R-MS) and several other Senators, expressing concern over Kosovo;
- 5) Sen. Trent Lott (R-MS) and several other Senators, concerning a Presidential letter regarding the status of the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty;
- 6) Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), expressing concern over Kosovo;
- 7) Sen. Paul D. Wellstone (D-MN) and Sen. Spencer Abraham (R-MI), expressing concern over the economic sanctions against Iraq;

98 OCT 16 12:00

- 8) Rep. Tom Campbell (R-CA) and thirty-three Members of Congress, expressing concern over Kosovo;
- 9) Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), concerning the U.S.-Japan trading agreement on flat glass;
- 10) Rep. George Radanovich (R-CA), expressing concern over the treatment of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia;
- 11) Rep. Curt Weldon (R-PA) and twenty-six other Members of Congress concerning U.S. and Iraqi relations; and,
- 12) Rep. Heather Wilson (R-NM), expressing concern over Kosovo.

ENCLOSURES

6957

I know you and your staff
stop have received briefing on
our Kosovo policy, but I wanted
to personally let you know
where we stand.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter about the crisis in Kosovo. I wish to assure you that the issues and concerns that you raised in your letter have helped to guide our decisions over the last two months.

From the outset, we have had three overriding objectives in Kosovo. First, to end the violence that threatens the fragile stability of the Balkans. Second, to prevent a humanitarian crisis from becoming a catastrophe. And third, to help the Kosovar people achieve a high-degree of self-government.

We have made substantial progress toward each of these objectives. NATO determination backed by a credible threat of force has led to a cease-fire, followed by a substantial reduction of Serb security forces in Kosovo. Now that aggressive operations have stopped, tens of thousands of displaced people have returned to their villages. Finally, we have ^{also made good progress} been successful in giving renewed insights toward a political settlement ^{that will} meant to help address the root causes of the conflict.

The current draft agreement offers the Kosovars a high-degree of autonomy, an indigenous police force and complete control over education, health and other institutions that most affect their daily lives.

In order to verify Belgrade's compliance, a number of actions have been taken. NATO has implemented an intrusive air surveillance regime that allows it to monitor the situation. Under the leadership of Bill Walker, an experienced American diplomat, a 2,000-person verification mission is being constituted, with personnel and funds contributed by OSCE nations. In support of this mission, NATO is establishing a force in Macedonia that will be close at hand to extract verifiers should that become necessary. In line with your counsel, the combat forces deployed in Macedonia will be provided exclusively by our allies.

With respect to your concern about the over-extension of U.S. military forces, my Administration is committed to work with Congress to provide adequate resources for readiness and other defense programs in FY 1999 and beyond. Over the longer-term, I have directed the Office of Management and Budget and the National Security Council to work with Secretary Cohen and the Joint Chiefs to develop a multi-year plan that provides the resources necessary to preserve military readiness, support our troops and modernize aging weapons systems. This plan will be incorporated in my FY 2000 budget request to Congress.

IP I do not underestimate the difficulties that lie ahead, but I believe we are headed in the right direction. Again, thank you for writing and sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

The Honorable John McCain
Committee on Commerce, Science and
Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER
LARRY STEIN

SUBJECT: Presidential Letter to Senator McCain on the
Crisis in Kosovo

Purpose

Respond to a letter from Senator McCain on the situation in Kosovo.

Background

we provided Senator McCain an interim reply in October via a briefing on our Kosovo policy. However, as we prepare to send your budget to the Hill we wanted to address Senator McCain's criticism of national defense spending.

R Your reply summarizes NATO pressure that has led to Milosevic's acceptance of intrusive verification regimes and describes the improving situation on the ground as refugees gradually return to their homes. It also addresses Senator McCain's concern about the military readiness issue and his recommendation that any ground forces deployed be European only.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the letter to Senator McCain at Tab A.

Attachments

Tab A Letter to Senator McCain
Tab B Incoming Correspondence

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

6957

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter about the crisis in Kosovo. The issues and concerns that you raised have helped guide our decisions over the last two months. I know ~~you and your staff~~ *members of my Administration provided you* and other members of Congress with briefings on our Kosovo policy, but I wanted to personally let you know where we stand.

From the outset, we have had three overriding objectives in Kosovo. First, to end the violence that threatens the fragile stability of the Balkans. Second, to prevent a humanitarian crisis from becoming a catastrophe and third, to help the Kosovar people achieve a high-degree of self-government.

We have made substantial progress on each of these objectives. NATO determination backed by a credible threat of force has led to a cease-fire, followed by a substantial reduction of Serb security forces in Kosovo. Now that aggressive operations have stopped, tens of thousands of displaced people have returned to their villages. We have also made good progress toward a political settlement that will address the root causes of the conflict. The current draft agreement offers the Kosovars a high-degree of autonomy, an indigenous police force and complete control over education, health and other institutions that most affect their daily lives.

In order to verify Belgrade's compliance, a number of actions have been taken. NATO has implemented an intrusive air surveillance regime that allows it to monitor the situation. Under the leadership of Bill Walker, an experienced American diplomat, a 2,000-person verification mission is being constituted, with personnel and funds contributed by OSCE nations. In support of this mission, NATO is establishing a force in Macedonia that will be close at hand to extract verifiers should that become necessary. In line with your counsel, the combat forces deployed in Macedonia will be provided exclusively by our allies.

With respect to your concern about the over-extension of U.S. military forces, my Administration is committed to work with Congress to provide adequate resources for readiness and other defense programs in FY 1999 and beyond. Over the longer term, I have directed the Office of Management and Budget and the National Security Council to work with Secretary Cohen and the Joint Chiefs to develop a multi-year plan that provides the resources necessary to preserve military readiness, support our troops and modernize aging weapons systems. This plan will be incorporated in my FY 2000 budget request to Congress.

I do not underestimate the difficulties that lie ahead, but I believe we are headed in the right direction. Again, thank you for writing and sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science and
Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter about the crisis in Kosovo. I share your concern and appreciate your views on the actions that should be taken prior to the use of force.

I agree with you on the importance of consulting with Congress and conveying to the American people our interest in ending the violence and the rationale for our policy. Throughout the conflict, and with ever greater frequency over the last several months, both I and senior members of my Administration have consulted with Congress and informed the public about the crisis, articulating for the American people why the measures we are taking are necessary.

On the question of military readiness and over-extension that you raise, my Administration is committed to working with Congress to provide adequate resources for readiness and other defense programs in FY 1999 and beyond. Over the longer-term, I have directed the Office of Management and Budget and the National Security Council to work with Secretary Cohen and the Joint Chiefs to develop a multi-year plan that provides the resources necessary to preserve military readiness, support our troops and modernize aging weapons systems. This plan will be incorporated in my FY 2000 budget request to Congress. The men and women of our armed forces will have the resources they need to do their job.

Your counsel, that the United States should not act alone and that any ground forces deployed to the area be supplied by our European allies, is precisely the policy we are following. Ground forces attached to the NATO force positioned in Macedonia to provide emergency support to OSCE verifiers will be provided ~~exclusively~~ by our European allies.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER
LARRY STEIN

SUBJECT: ~~Presidential Letter to Senator McCain on the
Crisis in Kosovo~~

Purpose

Respond to a letter from Senator McCain ~~urging use of NATO
military force to resolve the Kosovo situation.~~ *on Kosovo.*

Background

*you ensure appropriate
you are not
wrote to urge that the Congress and the American people are that any military
action in Kosovo is necessary, affordable and designed to achieve clearly defined goals.*
~~Senator McCain calls for the use of force to stop the killing in
Kosovo.~~

~~Your reply summarizes NATO pressure that has led to Milosevic's
acceptance of intrusive verification regimes and describes the
improving situation on the ground as refugees gradually return
and relief agencies increase deliveries of needed supplies. It
also addresses Senator McCain's concern about military over-
extension; and his recommendations that the Administration
explain the reasons for U.S. involvement in Kosovo to the
Congress and the American people, and that any ground forces
deployed be European only.~~

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the letter to Senator McCain at Tab A.

Attachments

Tab A Letter to Senator McCain
Tab B Incoming Correspondence

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

Congress to provide adequate resources for readiness and other defense programs in FY 1999 and beyond. Over the longer-term, I have directed the Office of Management and Budget and the National Security Council to work with Secretary Cohen and the Joint Chiefs to develop a multi-year plan that provides the resources necessary to preserve military readiness, support our troops and modernize aging weapons systems. This plan will be incorporated in my FY 2000 budget request to Congress. The men and women of our armed forces will have the resources they need to do their job.

① *agree with you*
I ~~fully agree~~ on the importance of consulting with Congress and conveying to the American people our interest in ending the violence and the rationale for our policy. Throughout the conflict, and with ever greater frequency over the last several months, both I and senior members of my Administration have consulted with Congress and informed the public about the crisis, articulating for the American people why the measures ~~we~~ *are* were taking ~~were~~ *are* necessary.

There are compelling reasons for the actions NATO has taken in Kosovo. I share your view that Serbia's policy of ethnic cleansing threatened the stability of the region and could have embroiled neighboring countries in a larger conflict. We have a strong national interest in preventing the conflict in Kosovo from spiraling out of control.

Your counsel, that the United States should not act alone and that any ground forces deployed to the area be supplied by our European allies, is precisely the policy we are following. Ground forces attached to the NATO force positioned in Macedonia to provide emergency support to OSCE verifiers will be provided exclusively by our European allies.

I do not underestimate the difficulties that lie ahead, but I believe we are headed in the right direction. Again, thank you for writing and sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

The Honorable John McCain
Committee on Commerce, Science and
Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter expressing concern about the crisis in Kosovo. I ^{Share} appreciate hearing your advice and your support for strong NATO action, and am heartened that working with our NATO partners, in line with your recommendation, we have dramatically improved the situation for the better.

① → ^{beginning} From the outset, we have had three overriding objectives in Kosovo. First, to end the violence that threatens the fragile stability of the Balkans. Second, to prevent a humanitarian crisis from becoming a catastrophe, ^{or} and third, to help the Kosovar people achieve a high-degree of self-government.

We have made substantial progress ^{on} toward each of these objectives. NATO put forth a credible threat of force which led to a cease-fire that has held since early October. This was followed by a substantial reduction of Serb security forces in Kosovo. Now that aggressive operations have stopped, tens of thousands of displaced people are returning to their homes.

We have also taken a close look at the root causes of the crisis. The current draft agreement offers the Kosovars a high-degree of autonomy, an indigenous police force and complete control over education, health and other institutions that most affect their daily lives. We are working hard to convince armed insurgent groups in Kosovo that they, too, must cooperate to bring about a peaceful settlement.

~~There is much work ahead to make this cease-fire and a settlement last. In order to verify Belgrade's compliance, NATO has implemented an intrusive air surveillance regime. And under the leadership of Bill Walker, an experienced American diplomat, a 2,000-person verification mission is being constituted, with personnel and funds contributed by OSCE nations. In support of this mission, NATO is establishing a force in Macedonia that will be close at hand to extract verifiers in an emergency. Further, I am hopeful that we will be able to advance the cause of a just solution for Kosovo without resorting to force.~~

On the ~~overall~~ question of military readiness and over-extension that you raise, my Administration is committed to work ⁱⁿ with

your concern and appreciate your views on the actions that should be taken prior to the use of force.

✓

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20504

6957

November 17, 1998

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR SAMUEL R. BERGER

THROUGH: GREG SCHULTE *PS*

FROM: MICHAEL HURLEY *omh*

SUBJECT: Presidential Letter to Senator McCain Regarding
the Crisis in Kosovo

Senator McCain has written the President to urge that the United States join its allies to end atrocities in Kosovo and alleviate the human suffering there.

Concurrences by: Jay Farrar *omh*, Joseph Bouchard *omh*

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the memorandum to the President at Tab I.

Attachments

Tab I Memorandum for the President
Tab A Letter to Senator McCain
Tab B Incoming Correspondence

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: SAMUEL BERGER
LARRY STEIN

SUBJECT: Letter to Senator McCain

Purpose

Respond to a letter from Senator McCain on Kosovo.

Background

Senator McCain wrote to urge that you ensure Congress and the American people that any military action Kosovo is necessary, affordable and designed to achieve clearly defined goals.

Your reply addresses Senator McCain's concern about military over-extension; and his recommendations that the Administration explain the reasons for U.S. involvement in Kosovo to the Congress and the American people, and that any ground forces deployed be European only.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the letter to Senator McCain at Tab A.

Attachments

Tab A Letter to Senator McCain
Tab B Incoming Correspondence

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter about the crisis in Kosovo. I share your concern and appreciate your views on the actions that should be taken prior to the use of force.

I agree with you on the importance of consulting with Congress and conveying to the American people our interest in ending the violence and the rationale for our policy. Throughout the conflict, and with ever greater frequency over the last several months, both I and senior members of my Administration have consulted with Congress and informed the public about the crisis, articulating for the American people why the measures we are taking are necessary.

On the question of military readiness and over-extension that you raise, my Administration is committed to working with Congress to provide adequate resources for readiness and other defense programs in FY 1999 and beyond. Over the longer-term, I have directed the Office of Management and Budget and the National Security Council to work with Secretary Cohen and the Joint Chiefs to develop a multi-year plan that provides the resources necessary to preserve military readiness, support our troops and modernize aging weapons systems. This plan will be incorporated in my FY 2000 budget request to Congress. The men and women of our armed forces will have the resources they need to do their job.

Your counsel, that the United States should not act alone and that any ground forces deployed to the area be supplied by our European allies, is precisely the policy we are following. Ground forces attached to the NATO force positioned in Macedonia to provide emergency support to OSCE verifiers will be provided by our European allies.

I do not underestimate the difficulties that lie ahead, but I believe we are headed in the right direction. Again, thank you for writing and sharing your concerns with me.

Sincerely,

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science and
Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510-0303

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter about the crisis in Kosovo. The issues and concerns that you raised have helped guide our decisions over the last two months. I know members of my Administration provided you and other Members of Congress with a briefing on our Kosovo policy, but I wanted to personally let you know where we stand.

From the outset, we have had three overriding objectives in Kosovo. First, to end the violence that threatens the fragile stability of the Balkans. Second, to prevent a humanitarian crisis from becoming a catastrophe and third, to help the Kosovar people achieve a high-degree of self-government.

We have made substantial progress on each of these objectives. NATO determination backed by a credible threat of force has led to a cease-fire, followed by a substantial reduction of Serb security forces in Kosovo. Now that aggressive operations have stopped, tens of thousands of displaced people have returned to their villages. We have also made good progress toward a political settlement that will address the root causes of the conflict. The current draft agreement offers the Kosovars a high-degree of autonomy, an indigenous police force and complete control over education, health and other institutions that most affect their daily lives.

In order to verify Belgrade's compliance, a number of actions have been taken. NATO has implemented an intrusive air surveillance regime that allows it to monitor the situation. Under the leadership of Bill Walker, an experienced American diplomat, a 2,000-person verification mission is being constituted, with personnel and funds contributed by OSCE nations. In support of this mission, NATO is establishing a force in Macedonia that will be close at hand to extract verifiers should that become necessary. In line with your counsel, the combat forces deployed in Macedonia will be provided exclusively by our allies.