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American Troops Don't Belong in Kosovo

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The Washington Post reported on January 30 that "senior Pentagon officials for the first time said they would be willing to place U.S. troops under foreign command" in Kosovo. We are eagerly awaiting any expression of outrage from Republican leaders for this latest Clintonian "wag the dog" ploy, but the silence is deafening.

Bob Dole and the usual list of globalists have signed a newspaper ad supporting Bill Clinton's expedition into Kosovo. No surprise here; Dole gave Clinton "cover" for his lies about an exit from Bosnia, his other phony "peacekeeping" forays, the Mexican bailout, and repeated handouts of U.S. taxpayers' money to corrupt foreigners.

We certainly can't depend on a Dole or a Bush to articulate a Republican foreign policy. They are of one mind with Clinton in his desire to be a player on the world stage by a succession of expensive interventionist escapades.

The 1996 Republican Platform promised that "Republicans will not subordinate United States sovereignty

to any international authority. We oppose the commitment of American troops to U.N. 'peacekeeping' operations under foreign commanders."

Even the overpublicized 1994 "Contract With America" promised that "We would prohibit the Defense Department from taking part in military operations that place U.S. troops under foreign command." So, where are the words of protest we have a right to expect from any of the many Members of Congress who signed that Contract?

The sending of American troops to intervene in the fighting in Kosovo proves the accuracy of the many warnings made by those who opposed the ratification of the NATO Expansion Treaty last year. That treaty wasn't merely a promise to go to war to defend the borders of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic; it was a device to entrap the United States into sending our service personnel, under foreign commanders, to answer 911 calls to break up any domestic brawl anywhere in the world.

Not only is there nothing in the U.S. Constitution to justify U.S. intervention in Kosovo, there is also nothing in the NATO Charter to justify it. Kosovo is an example of what Madeleine Albright meant when she talked vaguely last year about how the NATO Expansion Treaty would authorize "out of area" operations extending even to "the Middle East to Central Africa."

NATO action in Kosovo is a radical departure from anything NATO has done in the past or has ever been authorized to do. Kosovo is outside of NATO's own territorial domain, and by its threats of air strikes and ground troops, NATO is breaching the territory of a sovereign nation.

We still have 6,900 U.S. troops in our $7-billion-dollar-a-year NATO-led peacekeeping project in Bosnia (plus another 350 troops in Macedonia). Clinton has no exit strategy for Bosnia or Kosovo and no reliable estimates of Kosovo's cost.

Every now and then, some Americans voice the hope that, if these domestic brawls are a bother to Europe, European countries should take over the task of dealing with them. But Europeans, who are busy trying to make the euro the world's premier currency, continue to expect American mercenaries to do OUR duty as THEIR policemen.

Sending U.S. troops to Kosovo cannot possibly solve the problems there any more than our years in Bosnia have solved that problem. Americans simply are not capable of erasing ethnic enmities that have festered for centuries.

The Serbs consider Kosovo the cradle of their culture and Christian orthodox religion and want the Albanians removed. The ethnic Albanians, who are mostly Muslims, want the Serbs removed and, meanwhile, resist Serb control, institutions and language.

The Clinton Administration pretends to fear that the Kosovo conflict could spread if we don't act. It is far more likely that, if the conflict spreads, U.S. intervention will be the cause.

Events in Kosovo are no threat to U.S. national security in any way. Sending U.S. troops might actually endanger U.S. security in ways we cannot now foresee.

Republicans who seek to replace Clinton in the White House are already starting to announce their Presidential candidacies. The big issue that will divide them is, Do they stand for American national security interests, or do they stand with Clinton in his foolish interventionist policies?

Presidential candidates would do well to listen to the advice of President John Quincy Adams, who as Secretary of State in 1821 rejected the request for U.S. intervention in support of Greek independence. America, said Adams, "is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own."

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