

SENATE BILL REPORT

HJM 4005

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, APRIL 2, 1993

Brief Description: Asking the White House to condemn rape and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and create a war crimes tribunal.

SPONSORS: Representatives Basich, Linville, Kessler, Riley, Romero, Orr, Brumsickle, Chappell, Leonard, Quall, Jacobsen, Ballard, Dunshee, Miller, Heavey, Sheldon, Anderson, Eide, Bray, Lemmon, G. Cole, Kremen, Vance, Wineberry, Pruitt, Sheahan, Campbell, King, Cothorn, Flemming, Johanson, Padden, Schoesler, J. Kohl and Lisk

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Loveland, Oke, Owen, and Winsley.

Staff: Barbara Howard (786-7410)

Hearing Dates: March 19, 1993; April 2, 1993

BACKGROUND:

Various international agreements enacted in this century prohibit the abuse of civilians in wartime. Most recently, the Genocide Convention of 1951 prohibited acts which are intended to destroy a national, ethnic or religious group. The Genocide Convention also requires that the United Nations (U.N.) take action to stop genocide.

Reports out of Bosnia suggest that the Serbians are committing a campaign of massive, organized and systematic genocide or "ethnic cleansing" against Muslims in the area. Estimates of the number of victims range from 30,000 to 50,000.

On December 18, 1992, the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to condemn "atrocities committed against women, particularly Muslim women, in Bosnia and Herzegovina." Various calls have been made for a war crimes tribunal. In response, the U.N. Security Council has created a five-member Commission of Experts to investigate war crimes in the Balkans. The last time a similar group was assembled was in 1943 when the Allies began assembling evidence against the Nazis in World War II.

SUMMARY:

The members of the Washington State Senate and the House of Representatives ask the White House to condemn the ethnic

cleansing and rape of women in Bosnia and to create an international war crimes tribunal.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

This is not directed at involving American or United Nations troops in the struggle in Yugoslavia. It is an effort to ask our national government to make a strong protest about the atrocities that have been committed against Bosnian Muslim officials, and particularly the Muslim women.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Representative Basich, prime sponsor (pro)