

---

State Rep. Harold James

---

## Follow Lincoln's policy for reconstruction

*Mr. James is a Democratic state representative from Philadelphia, and former head of Pennsylvania's Legislative Black Caucus.*

I wish to add my voice to those around the world, who are calling for a program of economic reconstruction. The reconstruction should be of *all* the nations in the Balkans. And when considering the American reconstruction policy in the Balkans, we should keep in mind the principle expressed by Abraham Lincoln at the close of our own Civil War, "With malice toward none; with Charity for all."

It is my hope that cooperation among the United States, China, European countries including Russia, and other nations, to establish peace through economic development in the Balkans, will spread from there to encompass all of Asia and Africa, and lead to worldwide peace and economic progress in the twenty-first century.

There are some who will question where the money will come from to realize such a grand design. Many of these same people had no problem while our government spent billions of dollars in the bombing campaign. Many African-Americans throughout the years have wondered how our government could be so liberal and generous when it came to bombs and warplanes, and budgets for the military, but so conservative and stingy when it comes to creating jobs and social programs.

In any case, there are several plans on the table, such as the one developed by Lyndon LaRouche and the Schiller Institute, which will cost nothing in the long run, and will have tremendous benefit to the United States itself in terms of creating manufacturing jobs to meet the demand for construction of railroads, power plants, bridges, homes, and other infrastructure, in the Balkans and all over the world.

For example, I look forward to the day, when a great transcontinental railroad will be completed from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean coasts of Africa, which will link up, by means of bridges across the Suez Canal, with the Eurasian Land-Bridge, thereby connecting the continent of Africa

directly with China, Europe, and all points in-between. This is a vision not merely of economic benefit and profit for business and industry, but of peaceful economic cooperation among all the nations of the world.

I believe this was one of Ron Brown's goals when he, as Commerce Secretary, travelled around the world, promoting long-term economic development and supporting the involvement of American industry and engineering in big infrastructure projects in the Balkans, China, the Middle East and elsewhere.

### The issue of financing

Furthermore, we need to put the question of financing into perspective. I am the author of a bill, House Bill 1651 in the Pennsylvania legislature, to create a small, 0.2% tax on the sale or transfer of financial securities. And this is a painless means of financing medical assistance for the poor, education, and other public programs that have been under attack by our Republican Governor, Tom Ridge, who also wants to be Vice President.

We found that such a small tax could yield \$1.5 billion a year in Pennsylvania alone, because the amount of money involved in financial transactions is so fantastically huge. President Clinton himself has pointed out that \$1.5 trillion of currency trading goes on every day in the world. There are *trillions* of dollars of financial derivatives outstanding in the United States alone, which amounts to a massive waste of resources and pure gambling on financial markets. We only need a small percentage of that money to pay for world economic development, including reconstruction of all the nations of the Balkans, and thereby possibly avert bigger wars and worse genocides in the future.

### Geopolitics behind the NATO bombing

I must also add that I questioned the legitimacy of the NATO war in Yugoslavia from the beginning. We were told that the goal was to stop "ethnic cleansing." But why was there no action taken when the worst genocide of the post-World War II period was taking place in Central Africa, where more than 6 million Africans have died? Why do the British Foreign Office and the U.S. State Department support policies of war and genocide in Africa even to this day?

And in conclusion, as an important part of reestablishing good relations with our friends around the world, I call upon President Clinton to take prompt and vigorous action against those in the NATO command structure responsible for the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, which may include even court-martial proceedings. Also, on behalf of the 58,000 constituents in my Philadelphia legislative district, I wish to express my most profound condolences to the families of the innocent Chinese diplomats and journalists who were killed or injured in the NATO attack, as well as all the casualties in this undeclared war.

