

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

2213 Dirksen Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

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CONTACT: BILL KATS
(202) 224-6521

LOGAN ACT SHOULD BE APPLIED IN RAMSEY CLARK TEHRAN VISIT

WASHINGTON -- Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) today re-iterated his intention to actively pursue action against Ramsey Clark and other Americans attending the anti-American conference in Iran last week, and that he would speak to this issue today in a colloquy on the Senate floor between the hours of noon and 1 p.m.

On Friday, Dole introduced a sense of the Senate resolution calling upon President Carter to prosecute these Americans under the Logan Act, which carries a maximum penalty of three years in jail and a fine of \$5,000. The Logan Act specifies these penalties for American citizens who intervene, directly or indirectly, in an effort to influence a foreign government in any dispute with the United States.

"I do not believe it was right for Mr. Clark to go to Iran as a private citizen, set himself up as a quasi-official representative of our country, and then to condemn the United States -- as he did -- while 53 Americans are still held hostage," Dole said.

"President Carter should make this his test case. Clearly, Ramsey Clark has defied the ban on travel to Iran. Yet, it remains to be seen whether he will be detained. We have yet to see whether there will be an investigation, and to what extent.

"What we have now is a situation where the families of the 53 hostages are afraid to go to Iran to see their loved ones, or to plead on their behalf, while Ramsey Clark goes over and adds the aura of legitimacy to a conference called to condemn American actions. If the President isn't going to follow through in enforcing this travel ban, then he should lift the restriction.

"But the resolution that I and about 25 other senators introduced Friday addresses a more fundamental concept than merely a ban on travel to restricted countries. This concept concerns the taking of the law into one's own hands, the formulating of national public policy without any authority or responsibility whatsoever.

"This resolution, S. Res. 453, urges the enforcement of the Logan Act, which bans unauthorized Americans from dealing with a foreign government, or representing this country in matters of dispute with foreign governments. Mr. Clark and the others have claimed they have a constitutional right to freedom of travel. It is not the Logan Act, but the President's order under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, that was supposed to prohibit Mr. Clark's trip to Iran. Whether or not that law infringes on the Constitution's guarantees may be open to question, but it does not alter the facts about what Ramsey Clark did after he got to Iran. He broke the law, and he condemned America.

"As I understand it, the Logan Act was dropped from the new revision of the Criminal Code, scheduled to be considered by this session of Congress, not for any reason based in law, justice or right, but merely because it seldom needed to be used. Mr. Clark's trip to Iran demonstrates a need for that law to remain on the books. I will offer an amendment to the new Criminal Code restoring the language of the Logan Act.

"One of the members of the Clark group said, upon returning to the United States at Boston's Logan Airport, that 'the whole point (of going to) the conference was to represent the United States.' By urging the enforcement of the law by the passage of this resolution, the Senate can make it clear that Ramsey Clark did not represent the United States, did not represent our policies or views, and that his condemnation of the United States will not pass muster with the American people."