

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 23, 1990

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**DOLE TELEPHONES THANKS TO SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FOR HELP IN
HOSTAGE RELEASE; URGES "MORE OF THE SAME" FOR REMAINING HOSTAGES.**

OTTAWA, CANADA -- SENATE MINORITY LEADER BOB DOLE (R-KS) TELEPHONED DAMASCUS TODAY TO PERSONALLY THANK SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FAROUQ AL-SHARA FOR HIS EFFORTS IN HELPING SECURE THE RELEASE OF AMERICAN HOSTAGE ROBERT POLHILL.

DOLE LED A 5-MEMBER SENATE DELEGATION TO DAMASCUS 14 DAYS AGO, WHERE HE MET WITH MINISTER SHARA AND SYRIAN PRESIDENT HAFEZ ASSAD TO DISCUSS, AMONG OTHER TOPICS, THE FATE OF THE HOSTAGES AND TO URGE CONTINUED SYRIAN ASSISTANCE IN SEEKING THEIR RELEASE.

DOLE MADE THE PHONE CALL TODAY FROM OTTAWA, WHERE HE IS A GUEST OF CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER BRIAN MULRONEY.

"I THANKED THE SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FOR HIS HELP AND ASKED HIM TO PASS ON OUR THANKS TO PRESIDENT ASSAD," DOLE SAID. "I ALSO URGED THEM TO CONTINUE THEIR GOOD WORK. DURING OUR VISIT, THE SYRIAN OFFICIALS PROMISED US THAT EFFORTS WERE ONGOING AND THAT THEY VIEWED THE HOSTAGE PROBLEM AS A 'HUMANITARIAN' ISSUE.

"TODAY, FOREIGN MINISTER SHARA TOLD ME THAT HE APPRECIATED OUR MISSION TO DAMASCUS. I TOLD HIM I WOULD ENCOURAGE OTHER SUCH OFFICIAL U.S. VISITS IN THE FUTURE. WHEN I LEFT DAMASCUS TWO WEEKS AGO, I FELT THAT SOMETHING COULD BE IN THE WORKS. NOW THAT ONE HOSTAGE IS FREE, IT'S NO TIME TO REST EASY. WE WANT ALL THE HOSTAGES OUT. IF SYRIA CAN CONTINUE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE -- TO DO MORE OF THE SAME -- THEN SO MUCH THE BETTER."

DOLE ALSO MADE A PHONE CALL TO AMERICA'S AMBASSADOR TO SYRIA, ED DJEREJIAN, TO THANK HIM FOR HIS TIRELESS EFFORTS.

"WE'VE GOT A TOP-NOTCH AMBASSADOR IN DAMASCUS. HE KNOWS THE PLAYERS THERE AND HAS DEMONSTRATED GREAT SKILL AND DIPLOMACY IN HIS 'ROUND-THE-CLOCK WORK ON BEHALF OF THE HOSTAGES," DOLE CONCLUDED.

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