

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HAITI POLICY

U.N. AUTHORIZATION NO SUBSTITUTE FOR SUPPORT FROM CONGRESS & AMERICAN PEOPLE

Before invading Haiti, the United States has checked in with the United Nations Security Council but I would also hope they check in with Congress. They have the support of Nigeria, Djibouti, Britain, France, Russia, Argentina, the Czech Republic, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan, and Spain. But they do not have the American people's support. International support is fine, but it is no substitute for the support of Congress and the American people.

Administration Opposed Efforts for Congressional Authorization

I don't know what's going on with this administration. They sought and received United Nations authorization to invade Haiti. They fought and opposed every effort for congressional authorization. The outlines of a new "Clinton Doctrine" are apparent: seek the U.N.'s approval and ignore Congress and the American people.

The United Nations approved a resolution yesterday authorizing the use of "all necessary means" to oust the Haitian military leadership and restore President Aristide. Some of us have stated our opposition to using American forces for that purpose. Our views so far have been ignored by the administration. The administration has even opposed a fact-finding commission -- apparently because they have all the facts they need to risk American lives.

No Emergency Requiring Dispatch of American Troops

There is no emergency in Haiti requiring the dispatch of American troops. It is not Grenada or Panama where a quick response was needed. This is more like Operation Desert Shield -- with a deliberate buildup of forces leading to war if one side does not back down.

In 1991, President Bush took a risk. He came to Congress to seek authorization for U.S. military action in the Persian Gulf. He could have lost the vote, and faced a very difficult decision. But President Bush gained the support of the American people -- through the support of Congress. President Bush's hands were not tied by Congress -- his hand was strengthened with bipartisan congressional support.

It is not too late for this administration to reconsider its' policy toward Haiti. Instead of creating conditions which force Haitians to flee, we could look honestly at Haiti's tragedy. I remain ready to work with this administration on a bipartisan Haiti policy -- if they desire.

Don't Set Dangerous Precedent

I commend the Senator from New Hampshire, Senator Gregg, on his amendment. The amendment simply points out the obvious -- U.N. authorization is not congressional authorization. Congress has a role to play, and we have not done so.

Let's not set a dangerous precedent and abdicate our war powers to the United Nations. Let's not throw out the Monroe Doctrine, in favor a new U.N. Doctrine. Let's pass the Gregg-Dole amendment, and let's debate whether invading Haiti is in the American national interest.

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* Remarks delivered on the Senate floor, approximately 1:35 PM.