

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

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ANTI-TERRORISM BILL

DOLE, HATCH & NICKLES INTRODUCE COMPREHENSIVE TERRORISM PREVENTION ACT OF 1995

America will not be intimidated by the madmen who masterminded last week's vicious and cowardly bomb attack in Oklahoma City.

America will not be paralyzed into inaction by those who have committed this evil deed.

And, yes, justice will be rendered. The guilty will be punished. And America--slowly, but with determination--will begin to heal herself.

Our job today is not to dwell on the past, but to look to the future...To lay the foundation for a comprehensive anti-terrorism plan for America. We must take every reasonable step, every responsible action, to reduce the chances that other, similar tragedies will occur elsewhere in the United States.

That's why I am pleased today to join with the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Senator Hatch, and with my distinguished colleague from Oklahoma, Senator Nickles, in introducing the Comprehensive Terrorism Prevention Act of 1995.

Many Provisions Previously Introduced

Many of the provisions of this Act were contained in S.3, the anticrime bill introduced by Senate Republicans last January: increased penalties for those who conspire to commit firearms and explosives offenses; expanded extradition authority for the Attorney General; the Alien Terrorist Removal Act, designed to deport alien terrorists in a prompt manner without disclosing vital national security information; and increased funding for federal law enforcement, including the F.B.I.

Habeas Corpus Reform

Today's legislation also contains comprehensive habeas corpus reform, which should go a long way in preventing violent criminals from gaming the system--with more delays, more unnecessary appeals, and more grief for the victims of crime and their families. During a recent television interview, President Clinton said we needed strong, comprehensive habeas reform so that those who committed this evil deed will get what they deserve--punishment that is swift, certain, and severe. This legislation will help accomplish this goal.

Isolate State Sponsors of Terrorism

With respect to international efforts to counter terrorism, the legislation expands efforts to isolate the worst of the rogue regimes: state sponsors of terrorism. It would make it easier to support international anti-terrorism efforts. We need to send a strong signal to our allies and our adversaries--if you are with us in fighting the scourge of terrorism, we will try to help...but if you are aiding terrorists and terrorist states, it's no more business as usual.

Includes Administration Reforms

Finally, this legislation contains many of the reforms sought by President Clinton himself--prohibitions on fundraising for foreign terrorist organizations; the tagging of plastic explosives to make them more detectable; and amendments to the Fair Credit Reporting Act to ease access to financial and credit reports in terrorism cases.

Not A Partisan Issue

The bottom line is that fighting terrorism is not, and should not be, a partisan issue. America must stand together--Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives--to confront the terrorist threat wherever it may exist.

And, of course, I look forward to working with President Clinton and my distinguished colleague, Senator Daschle, in
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refining this proposal, and perhaps considering other worthy proposals, to strengthen America's anti-terrorism hand. Today's legislation is not the end, but the beginning of the process that hopefully will lead to a strong anti-terrorism action plan for our country.

But, as we move forward with legislation, let me add a cautionary note: no legislation can make America completely safe. In a free society, there is no such thing as absolute security. We must work to make our country safer from the terrorist threat, but there are no guarantees that every terrorist, every madman, can be stopped. The American people deserve the straight story, and the straight story is that America is not an impregnable fortress.

Review Attorney General Guidelines

Let me also say that there has been a great deal of speculation about the so-called "Attorney General Guidelines." These guidelines are the internal Justice Department policies that govern if, and when, the F.B.I. can monitor and infiltrate domestic organizations suspected of being engaged in terrorist activities. Some say the guidelines are too restrictive and, in fact, hamstringing the F.B.I. Others argue that the guidelines go too far.

This is a complex issue...And one made more complex and more urgent by the fact that our constitutional liberties are at stake. Before rushing to judgment, we should get all the facts out on the table: Have the guidelines been effective? Do they provide adequate authority to the F.B.I. to monitor the activities of domestic terrorist organizations? Have there been any instances when an F.B.I. agent sought authority to initiate an investigation and this authority was denied? And if so, why?

F.B.I. Report to Congress on Adequacy of Guidelines

In my view, we should hear from the law enforcement professionals themselves first before drawing any conclusions. And that's why this legislation asks the Director of the F.B.I. to provide Congress with a detailed report on the adequacy of the guidelines and any other laws regulating the surveillance of suspected terrorist groups operating within the United States. Facts first, decisions later.

I join with all of my Senate colleagues in extending our thoughts and prayers to the good people of Oklahoma City. The self-sacrifice and heroism they have displayed this past week has been an inspiration to us all.

The citizens of Oklahoma City are doing their duty. It is now our obligation to lay the groundwork for an America that is more secure for all her citizens.

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