

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

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BOSNIA UPDATE

STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE

The facts are out: the New York Times reported last weekend that the Milosevic regime is actively aiding its Bosnian Serb allies -- sending military assistance and fuel, SAM-6s, and even paying the salaries of many Bosnian Serb officers. This comes as little surprise to me, since I have been extremely skeptical of Slobodan Milosevic's reincarnation as peacemaker -- an image the Clinton administration has actively promoted in a desperate bid to devise a Bosnia policy.

Indeed, the recent hostage taking by the Bosnian Serbs, followed by their release as a result of Milosevic's efforts, has called into question the theory of a split between Milosevic and Radovan Karadzic.

In my view the issue is not whether or not Milosevic and Karadzic are friends or political rivals, but whether or not their objectives are the same. The real question is, do Milosevic and Karadzic both want a greater Serbia?

It seems to me that the answer is yes -- and that this charade of good cop, bad cop, has been useful in furthering that objective.

Apparently administration sources were aware of this support from Belgrade but continued with the approach of easing sanctions on Serbia. Those of us in the Congress who believed this policy was unwise for a number of reasons -- including the fact that it removed leverage on the deteriorating situation in Kosova -- were told that lifting sanctions would help bring peace to Bosnia because Milosevic would recognize Bosnia.

This report should prompt an immediate review of the administration's approach. Now is not the time to lift or further suspend sanctions on Serbia. The Milosevic regime is clearly supporting Bosnian Serb and Krajina Serb forces -- and maybe even orchestrating their actions. In addition, it is continuing to oppress the Albanian majority in Kosova -- which is in its sixth year under martial law.

I intend to offer an amendment to the foreign aid bill which would amend current Serbian sanctions legislation -- originally sponsored by Senator Levin -- to include strict criteria for the lifting of U.S. sanctions on Belgrade. This criteria will include a complete cut-off of military, political, or other material support from Belgrade to the Bosnian Serb and Krajina Serb militants; a restoration of civil rights to all minorities in Serbia; and a restoration of civil and human rights and political autonomy to the two million Albanians in Kosova.

It is time to stop this farce. Milosevic is no peacemaker. He is the author of the tragedies in Croatia, in Bosnia, in Kosova. His regime must be held responsible for its actions, not rewarded for its pretensions.

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