

Bob Dole



NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

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LOBBYING REFORM

STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE

Earlier this year, Congress took an important step forward in reforming the way we conduct the nation's business by passing Congressional-coverage legislation. Now, we will think twice before imposing new regulatory burdens on the private sector because these burdens will be imposed on Congress, too.

Today, we will pass another key element of the reform agenda--lobbying reform.

Unlike last year's bill, this legislation strikes the right balance: it tightens up the registration and disclosure requirements for the Washington-based lobbyists, without infringing upon the rights of ordinary citizens at the grassroots to petition their government. This was the main bone of contention during last year's debate, and I believe we have resolved our disagreements. While I was hopeful that we could have made a number of additional changes, including codifying President Clinton's Executive Order which imposes a five-year ban on post-employment lobbying by executive branch officials, I am nonetheless pleased that the bill includes my amendment restricting the post-employment activities of our nation's top trade negotiators.

This amendment will prohibit anyone who has served as U.S. Trade Representative or Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, from ever representing, aiding, or advising any foreign government, foreign political party, or foreign business entity with the intent to influence a decision of any officer or employee of an executive agency.

Current law prohibits the U.S. Trade Representative from aiding or advising a foreign entity for a period of three years after his service has ended. My amendment transforms this 3-year ban into a lifetime ban and applies the ban to the Deputy Trade Representative as well.

The real problem here is one of appearance...the appearance of a revolving door between government service and private-sector enrichment. This appearance problem becomes all the more acute when former high-government officials work on behalf of foreign interests.

Service as a high government official is a privilege, not a right. This amendment may discourage some individuals from accepting the U.S.T.R. job, but in my view, this is a small price to pay when the confidence of the American people is at stake.

Finally, I want to congratulate my distinguished colleagues, Senators Levin, Cohen, McConnell, and Lott, for all the hard work they have put into this effort. The bill they have crafted is sensible and clear, and should go a long way to help restore the trust of the American people in their elected representatives.

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* Remarks delivered on Senate floor, approximately 11:50 p.m.

As leader of the free world, we cannot escape responsibility. The issue is how we exercise that responsibility -- in support of our principles or not.

Last Fall, the Congress passed the Nunn-Mitchell provision as part of the FY 1995 Defense Authorization Bill. I would like to remind everyone what was in that legislation. In the Sense of Congress section it stated, and I quote,

"The acceptance of the Contact Group Proposal by the Government of Bosnia should lead to lifting of the arms embargo."

Well, the Bosnian government signed a year ago and there has been no lifting of the arms embargo.

In the section entitled, "interim policy," it states, and I quote,

"If the Bosnian Serb faction attacks any area within those areas that have been designated by the United Nations as 'safe areas', the President (or his representative) should promptly formally introduce and support in the United National Security Council a resolution that authorizes a selective lifting of the Bosnian arms embargo in order to allow the provision of defense weapons (such as anti-tank weapons, counter-battery radars, and mortars) to enable the forces of the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to defend the safe areas."

Well, as of today, two safe havens have fallen. Not only has there been no attempt to lift the arms embargo even selectively, but there has been no attempt to prevent these safe havens from falling. How long will we support this U.N. operation? -- until there are no safe havens left?

The time since our last vote on lifting the arms embargo has passed quickly for us here in the Senate. But, for the Bosnian people each day has been brutally long and bloody -- for mothers with hungry children, for wives with missing husbands, for the men and boys from Srebrenica who have been rounded up each day is an eternity.

No Excuse for Denying Right to Self Defense

While the Bosnian people may understand the international community's unwillingness to protect them, they cannot understand the international community's unwillingness to allow them to protect themselves against genocidal aggression.

The excuses we have heard over and over again.

(1) The NATO alliance. It seems to me that NATO is not well-served by this unity in failure. Furthermore NATO has only been weakened as a result of its subordination to the United Nations.

(2) The Serbs will attack. This is what Secretary Christopher said earlier today -- that if the Dole/Lieberman legislation is passed, and I quote, "the Serbs will attack." The Serbs have attacked. The Serbs are attacking. The Serbs will continue to attack as long as they are given a green light -- or even a yellow light -- and clearly the London conference was no red light.

(3) Humanitarian aid will end. Yes, the Bosnians are living a subsistence existence. But, the bigger picture is that they have no protection. What good is food against snipers and shells. And, the Bosnians have no future. They are at the mercy of Western leaders who think they know best.

Let us not forget that the arms embargo on Bosnia is illegal. Indeed, an arms embargo was never imposed on the independent and sovereign state of Bosnia. An arms embargo was imposed on Yugoslavia -- which no longer exists -- at the request of Belgrade -- and at the suggestion of Britain. Bosnia is a member of the United Nations with a fundamental right to self-defense.

This vote is not just about Bosnia. It is about America -- about what we stand for, about our humanity and our principles. I hope that my colleagues will keep this in mind. This should be a strong bipartisan vote.

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* Remarks delivered on Senate floor, approximately 5:05 p.m.