

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 11, 1999

Dear Senator Dole:

Thank you for your letter describing your recent trip to the former Yugoslavia and the progress the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) has made over the past year under your Chairmanship. I deeply appreciate your extraordinary personal commitment of time and energy to the vital cause of advancing the healing process in the Balkans.

Overcoming lingering animosity through encouraging inter-ethnic cooperation is, as you point out, essential to establishing a lasting peace in the region. I am particularly heartened by your assessment of the progress made toward building confidence among the three ethnic groups. That the Bosniaks, Bosnian Serbs, and Bosnian Croats are now regularly and constructively talking to each other on critical missing persons issues, is, in large part, attributable to the tireless efforts of the ICMP. That progress can serve as a foundation for even greater cooperation on other challenging issues in the months ahead.

Clearly, obtaining a full accounting of the status of detainees is a sensitive and emotional issue for the people of the region, and its resolution should continue to be a high priority. Your recent positive conversations on this matter with the political leaders of Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia should help significantly to unlock the impasse. I believe that your approach of having each government simultaneously and without pre-condition release information on a specific number of detainees provides a blueprint for significant progress on this contentious issue.

Finally, as you are aware, the State Department recently approved a contribution of \$2 million to the ICMP, allowing it to carry on its fine and much needed work.

The new spirit of cooperation that your personal efforts have helped foster is central to our objectives in the Balkans. I am deeply grateful for all that you have done to promote peace in that region.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

The Honorable Bob Dole
901 15th Street, N.W., Suite 410
Washington, D.C. 20005