



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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DOLE ASKS FOR U.S. RELIEF FOR CAMBODIAN REFUGEES

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- In a speech scheduled to be given today at a commemoration ceremony by People United for Human Rights in Cambodia, Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) will urge the United States to improve immigration conditions to allow "many more Cambodian refugees to enter this country." The rally will be held on the west steps of the U.S. Capitol this afternoon.

"More than 15,000 Cambodian refugees are now living in camps next to the Cambodian border, and we are concerned about the constant danger and severe conditions under which they live," Dole says. "I have already contacted the secretary of state and the Immigration Department to urge that special accommodations be made to permit many more of these refugees to come to our shores to begin a new life."

Dole also urges the United States to insist that the leaders of the Peoples Republic of China bring pressure to bear on the Cambodian regime to apply more humane standards towards the Cambodian people. "China is one of the few nations that deals directly with the Cambodian regime, and Peking's leaders must know that we expect positive efforts on their part if 'normalization' steps are to continue," Dole says.

Following is the text of Dole's speech:

I want to join with you in condemning the most brutal and inhumane situation in the world today. It involves the struggle of the Cambodian people to survive under the bloody rule of communism.

The mass executions and subhuman living standards have shocked all of us. This reign of terror is a throwback to mankind's most primitive and uncivilized condition. The Cambodian regime is certainly the cruelist since Nazi Germany, and we are here today to proclaim that this modern-day holocaust must be ended.

At a time when both Congress and the President are focusing attention on human rights violations around the world, there can be no excuse or alibi for ignoring the deaths-by disease, starvation and execution - of literally millions of Cambodians.

I recall so well how some of my colleagues in the Senate spoke out loudly and eloquently against American military action in Cambodia seven years ago. I recall so well how outraged American students protested on campuses and how the public media railed against the action. Where, then, is the justified indignation at the horrors that are taking place in Cambodia today?

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A CALL TO ACTION

We cannot delay any longer. It is time for Congress, the President, the United Nations and the public media to initiate action to denounce and - to the extent possible - relieve the persecutions and oppressions that exist in Cambodia.

First of all, we have to make the public aware of what is happening in Cambodia. Little by little, progress is being made. The House of Representatives has already approved a resolution condemning the Cambodian atrocities, and I have introduced a similar resolution in the Senate, which I understand will be the focus for hearings by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee this summer.

My resolution - Senate Resolution 323 - would place the Senate squarely on record as condemning this total disregard for basic human rights, and it calls upon the President to take all possible effective measures to help bring about an end to the atrocities in that country.

A few weeks ago, after too long a delay, the President finally issued a one-page statement calling the Cambodian situation "the worst violation of human rights in the world." But this is not enough.

An aggressive campaign must be undertaken to educate the American people and the rest of the world about the extent of the horrors in Cambodia today, and I want to help with that effort. I have spoken out several times on the Senate floor about the Cambodian atrocities, and will continue to do so until the holocaust is brought to an end.

REFUGEES

Beyond simply educating the public, we also have to take action wherever possible to relieve the suffering of the Cambodian people, and to deny the Communist regime the support it needs to retain its authority. Action always speaks louder than words. Unfortunately, our means for action at this time are limited, as you all know, because Cambodia is an isolated and closed society. Because of this, the regime itself is insulated from outside pressures, and we find we cannot apply direct diplomatic leverage.

However, there are several things we can do, and which we must do. Last year, I proposed legislation in the Senate to ensure that no American contributions to international financial institutions could be used to prop up the brutal Communist regime in Cambodia, nor those in Laos and Vietnam. That amendment was approved by the Senate last June, but unfortunately it was watered down in conference committee. I intend to propose the same amendment this year, when the International Monetary Organization bill reaches the Senate floor.

Second, we must insist that the Peoples Republic of China bring pressure to bear on the Cambodian regime, to apply more humane standards towards the Cambodian people. China is one of the few nations that deals directly with the Cambodian regime, and Peking's leaders must know that we expect positive efforts on their part if "normalization" steps are to continue.

Finally, and most immediately, we can provide for improved immigration conditions, to allow many more Cambodian refugees to enter this country. More than 15,000 Cambodian refugees are now living in camps next to the Cambodian border, and we are concerned about the constant danger and severe conditions under which they live. I have already contacted the Secretary of State and the Immigration Department to urge that special accommodations be made to permit many more of these refugees to come to our shores to begin a new life.

Furthermore, I intend to propose an appropriate legislative remedy for this problem, and I have asked my staff to prepare such legislation for introduction later this session.

So, this is what we need: education and action. Not all of this can be accomplished by a single institution like the Senate, nor by a single nation like the United States. But, with your help, we can make a beginning. I pledge to you my strongest efforts in this direction, and join you in hoping that the Cambodian people can be spared further suffering through our efforts.